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*Meddelelse til læseren*

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| | |
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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 277 E/01)

**Indhold** **Side**

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008263/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(20. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Bestimmungen über Rechte des geistigen Eigentums im umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) mit Kanada

Der Verfasser dieser Anfrage wurde mehrfach von Bürgern kontaktiert, die Fragen zum umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) stellten, das die Kommission derzeit im Auftrag der EU mit Kanada aushandelt. Die Bedenken dieser Bürger betreffen insbesondere die in CETA enthaltenen Bestimmungen über Rechte des geistigen Eigentums.

Als Reaktion auf Medienberichte, wonach das Abkommen „ACTA durch die Hintertür" einführe, hat die Kommission ein Merkblatt ([1]) zu diesem Thema veröffentlicht. Darin heißt es unter anderem: „Eine wirksame und moderne Urheberrechtsregelung ist entscheidend, um kreatives Originalmaterial, wie zum Beispiel Musik, dramatische und literarische Werke, zu schützen. Die EU ist bestrebt, sicherzustellen, dass künstlerisches Material, das in der EU urheberrechtlich geschützt ist, in Kanada ebenfalls in angemessener Weise geschützt ist, ebenso wie kanadisches Material in der EU geschützt ist".

Da in der Öffentlichkeit schwere Bedenken in dieser Hinsicht bestehen, wird die Kommission gebeten, folgende Fragen zu beantworten:

1. Kann die Kommission entweder alle Teile des CETA veröffentlichen, in denen Fragen des geistigen Eigentums behandelt werden, oder die im derzeitigen Wortlaut enthaltenen genauen Bestimmungen nennen und ausführlich erläutern? Insbesondere sollten diejenigen Passagen veröffentlicht werden, in denen digitale Rechte behandelt werden, um eine öffentliche Kontrolle zu ermöglichen und das Vertrauen in die Kommission und in die EU wiederherzustellen, das die Bürger infolge des ACTA-Streits verloren haben.

2. Kann die Kommission angeben, ob derzeit noch Fragen im Zusammenhang mit Rechten des geistigen Eigentums mit den kanadischen Partnern verhandelt werden?

3. Kann die Kommission angeben, ob in CETA Klauseln über Sanktionen im Fall des Verstoßes gegen Rechte des geistigen Eigentums enthalten sind, die entweder die Länder oder ihre Bürger betreffen?

4. Kann die Kommission angeben, welche Unternehmen, Wirtschaftsverbände, Wirtschaftsvertreter, „unabhängige" Experten und außenstehende Akteure zum einen an den Verhandlungen zu CETA beteiligt waren und zum anderen Entwürfe des Abkommens einsehen und/oder kommentieren durften?

**Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission**
*(8. November 2012)*

Es entspricht einem allgemeinen Grundsatz, dass Texte und Bestimmungen, über die noch verhandelt wird, vertraulich sind, und deshalb nicht vor Abschluss der Verhandlungen öffentlich gemacht werden. Die Einhaltung dieses Grundsatzes wird auch von allen unseren Verhandlungspartnern — so im Fall des umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommens (CETA) von Kanada — einerseits eingefordert und andererseits gewährleistet.

In Übereinstimmung mit diesem Grundsatz waren lediglich die zuständigen Mitarbeiter der Kommission und keine außenstehenden Akteure an der Erarbeitung der Entwürfe und den Verhandlungen über den CETA-Wortlaut beteiligt. Der verhandelte Wortlaut wird zudem in regelmäßigen Abständen dem Ausschuss für Handelspolitik des Rats und dem Ausschuss für internationalen Handel (INTA) des Parlaments vorgelegt. Ferner werden der Rat und das Europäische Parlament entsprechend der Rahmenvereinbarung zwischen der Kommission und dem EP regelmäßig über den Stand der CETA-Verhandlungen unterrichtet. Allerdings sind alte Entwurfsfassungen des CETA-Textes an die Öffentlichkeit gelangt und wurden von Dritten auf bestimmten Webseiten veröffentlicht.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/august/tradoc_149866.pdf

Über einige Fragen in Zusammenhang mit Rechten des geistigen Eigentums (IPR) verhandelt die Kommission derzeit noch mit den kanadischen Behörden. Dabei geht es im Wesentlichen um Schutzrechte für Arzneimittel und um Grenzmaßnahmen. Was die „digitalen Rechte“ sowie alle anderen aktuell im CETA-Entwurf enthaltenen IPR-Bestimmungen angeht, achtet die Kommission sorgfältig darauf, dass diese sich mit den geltenden EU-Vorschriften möglichst weitgehend decken und nicht über diese hinausgehen. Das EU-Recht und frühere bilaterale Handelsabkommen, wie das Abkommen mit Korea, stellen daher eine geeignete Informationsquelle für die Öffentlichkeit dar.

Über strafrechtliche Vorschriften für die IPR-Durchsetzung wird ebenfalls noch verhandelt. Die Kommission und der EU-Ratsvorsitz, der die Interessen der Mitgliedstaaten vertritt, arbeiten gemeinsam daran sicherzustellen, dass in dieser Hinsicht keine strittigen Inhalte aus dem ACTA-Text „durch die Hintertür“ eingeführt werden.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008263/12**
**to the Commission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(20 September 2012)*

*Subject:* IPR provisions in the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

I have been contacted on several occcasions by citizens having questions regarding the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) which the Commission is negotiating with Canada on behalf of the EU. These citizens are particularly concerned over the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) clauses in CETA.

In response to media reports that CETA introduces 'ACTA through the back door', the Commission has published a factsheet ([1]) on the topic. This factsheet includes the passage: 'An effective and up to date copyright regime is essential to protect original creative material, such as music, dramatic and literary works. The EU wants to ensure that the EU artistic material under copyright is properly protected in Canada, just as Canadian material is protected in the EU'.

Since there are serious concerns among the public, can the Commission:

1. either make public all the passages in CETA that relate to IPR issues, or list and explain the exact provisions contained in the present text in detail? In particular those passages relating to digital rights ought to be made public in order to allow public scrutiny and rebuild the trust in the Commission and the EU that citizens have lost in the wake of the ACTA controversy;

2. state whether there are any IPR issues still being discussed with its Canadan counterparts;

3. state whether CETA includes any penalty clauses for IPR infringement affecting either the countries or their citizens;

4. state which companies, industry groups, industry representatives, 'independent' experts and outside actors were: (a) involved in the CETA negotiations or: (b) allowed to see and/or comment on draft versions of the agreement?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 November 2012)*

As a general rule, texts and provisions under negotiation are confidential and therefore no drafts are made public before the negotiation is completed. This rule is also requested and applied by all our negotiation partners, such as Canada in the case of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

In accordance with this rule, no external parties have been involved in the drafting and negotiation of the CETA text apart from the Commission staff concerned. Furthermore, the text under negotiation is sent on a regular basis to the Council's Trade Policy Committee and to the INTA Committee of Parliament. Both the Council and EP are also regularly kept up-to-date on the state-of-play of the CETA negotiations in accordance with the framework Agreement between the Commission and the EP. That being said, outdated drafts of the CETA text have been leaked and published on certain websites by third parties.

A few Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues are still being discussed with the Canadian authorities; they relate essentially to the protection of pharmaceuticals and to border measures. Regarding 'digital rights' as well as any other IPR provisions currently included in the draft CETA, the Commission is carefully ensuring that they correspond as much as possible to existing EU legislation, without exceeding it. EU legislation, and previous bilateral trade agreements such as the one concluded with Korea, therefore constitute an adequate source of information for the public.

Criminal IPR enforcement provisions are also still being discussed. The Commission and the EU Presidency that acts on behalf of the Member States are working to ensure that no controversial text from ACTA in this field will be introduced through the back door

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/august/tradoc_149866.pdf

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008264/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Werner Langen (PPE)**
*(20. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Diskriminierende Bustarife auf Malta

Das öffentliche Autobusnetz auf Malta wird vom Unternehmen Arriva betrieben. Dieses wendet für Anwohner (d. h. Personen mit maltesischem Ausweis, offiziell registrierte EU-Bürger und Personen mit Aufenthaltserlaubnis) niedrigere Tarife an als für Nicht-Anwohner.

Ist der Kommission dieser Umstand bekannt?

Wenn ja, ist er nach Meinung der Kommission mit dem EU-Recht vereinbar?

**Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission**
*(9. November 2012)*

Die Kommission hat sich darauf verpflichtet, die uneingeschränkte Achtung des in Artikel 18 AEUV verankerten Verbots der Diskriminierung aus Gründen der Staatsangehörigkeit und des in Artikel 21 Absatz 1 AEUV vorgesehenen Rechts aller Unionsbürgerinnen und -bürger sicherzustellen, sich vorbehaltlich der in den Verträgen und in den Durchführungsvorschriften vorgesehenen Beschränkungen und Bedingungen im Hoheitsgebiet der Mitgliedstaaten frei zu bewegen und aufzuhalten.

Unter Verweis auf die Artikel 18 und 21 Absatz 1 AEUV hat der Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union in der Vergangenheit entschieden, dass EU-Bürger außerhalb ihres Herkunftsmitgliedstaates ähnlich den Staatsangehörigen des Aufnahmemitgliedstaates zu behandeln sind, wenn sie sich in einer ähnlichen Situation befinden, soweit die unterschiedliche Behandlung nicht auf objektiven, von der Staatsangehörigkeit der Betroffenen unabhängigen Erwägungen beruht und in einem angemessenen Verhältnis zu dem Zweck steht, der mit den nationalen Rechtsvorschriften zulässigerweise verfolgt wird (Rechtssache C 103/08, Gottwald).

Was die maltesischen Bustarife und deren Vereinbarkeit mit dem Unionsrecht angeht, so hat sich die Kommission bereits mit den maltesischen Behörden in Verbindung gesetzt.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008264/12**
**to the Commission**
**Werner Langen (PPE)**
*(20 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Discriminatory bus fares in Malta

The public bus network in Malta is operated by the firm of Arriva, which charges lower fares to residents (i.e. Maltese nationals, officially registered EU citizens and persons with a residence permit) than to non-residents.

Is the Commission aware of this fact?

If so, does it consider that this is compatible with EC law?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

The Commission is committed to ensuring the full respect of the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality enshrined in Article 18 of the TFEU (the Treaty) and the right of every Union citizen to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in the Treaties and by the measures adopted to give them effect as forseen in Article 21(1) of the Treaty.

Articles 18 and 21(1) of the Treaty have given rise to case law of the Court of Justice that requires that Union citizens should be treated outside of their Member State of origin similarly to the nationals of the host Member State when they are in a similar situation unless differential treatment can be justified by objective considerations of public interest that are independent of nationality of the persons concerned and are proportionate to the legitimate aim of the national provisions (Case C-103/08 Gottwald).

The Commission is already in contact with the Maltese authorities regarding the Maltese bus fare scheme and its compatibility with Union law .

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008265/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)**
*(20. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Spuren von synthetisch hergestelltem Sudan-IV-Farbstoff in importiertem Paprikapulver

Der synthetisch hergestellte Farbstoff Sudan IV wurde kürzlich von der österreichischen Agentur für Gesundheit und Lebenssicherheit (AGES) in aus China erzeugtem und Korea abgepacktem Paprikapulver, welches von einem deutschen Unternehmen importiert wurde, festgestellt. Seit zwei Tagen gilt eine Produktwarnung für dieses Pulver, da der Verzehr als potenziell krebserregend eingestuft wird.

Laut Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 1277/2011 der Kommission vom 8. Dezember 2011 fällt „*Capsicum annuum*, gemahlen oder sonst zerkleinert" unter eines jener „Futtermittel und Lebensmittel nicht tierischen Ursprungs, die verstärkten amtlichen Kontrollen am benannten Eingangsort unterliegen", da die Gefahr in den „Sudan-Farbstoffen" liegt.

1. Was ist bezogen auf diesen Fall die Meinung der Kommission?

2. Sind der Kommission weitere Fälle bekannt, in denen Sudan-Farbstoffe in importierten Lebens- oder Futtermitteln festgestellt wurden?

3. Sind die Kontrollmechanismen der Europäischen Union ausreichend, um zu gewährleisten, dass österreichische und europäische Konsumenten beim Verzehr von importierten Gewürzen/Lebensmitteln keiner potenziellen Gefahr ausgesetzt sind?

4. Wie wird die Kommission die Einfuhr von Lebensmitteln, welche mit gefährdenden Substanzen versetzt wurden, verhindern, beziehungsweise wie wird sie die angemessene Kontrolle, welche in der Durchführungsverordnung festgemacht wurde, durchsetzen?

**Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission**
*(27. November 2012)*

Nachdem der nicht zulässige Sudan-Farbstoff IV in Paprikapulver aus China festgestellt und über das Schnellwarnsystem für Lebens- und Futtermittel (RASFF) gemeldet wurde, ergriffen die zuständigen Behörden umgehend die erforderlichen Maßnahmen, um das kontaminierte rote Paprikapulver vom Markt zu nehmen. Die Kommission ist der Ansicht, dass die notwendigen Maßnahmen zum Schutz der öffentlichen Gesundheit ergriffen wurden.

Im Jahr 2012 wurden bislang sechs Fälle über das RASFF gemeldet, die das nicht zulässige Vorhandensein von Sudan-Farbstoffen in Lebensmitteln betrafen. 2011 wurden 18 Fälle gemeldet.

Es gibt eine Vielzahl von Rechtsvorschriften, mit denen die Sicherheit von Lebensmitteln, einschließlich eingeführter Gewürze, gewährleistet werden soll. Insbesondere die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 178/2002 und die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 882/2004 zählen zu den wichtigsten Instrumenten im Hinblick auf das Erreichen dieses Ziels.

Die Mitgliedstaaten sind für die Durchsetzung des Lebens- und Futtermittelrechts der EU zuständig. Amtliche Kontrollen müssen regelmäßig auf Risikobasis und mit angemessener Häufigkeit durchgeführt werden. Außerdem müssen angemessene Maßnahmen ergriffen werden, um Risiken zu beseitigen und die Durchsetzung des EU-Lebens- und Futtermittelrechts für einheimische und importierte Produkte sicherzustellen.

Die Kommission ist ihrerseits dafür zuständig, die ordnungsgemäße Durchführung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften zu gewährleisten. Außerdem können auf EU-Ebene Kontrollmaßnahmen eingesetzt werden, um ermittelten Risiken entgegenzuwirken. Dies ist im Fall der Sudan-Farbstoffe in Lebensmitteln erfolgt, für die gemäß der in der Frage genannten Verordnung eine Kontrollhäufigkeit bei der Einfuhr festgelegt wurde.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008265/12**
**to the Commission**
**Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)**
*(20 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Traces of synthetic dye Sudan IV in imported paprika powder

The Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES) recently detected the synthetic dye Sudan IV in paprika powder which had been produced in China, packed in Korea and imported by a German firm. A product warning was issued two days ago for this powder, since its consumption is classified as potentially carcinogenic.

According to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1277/2011 of 8 December 2011, 'Capsicum annuum, crushed or ground' falls under the heading of 'Feed and food of non-animal origin subject to an increased level of official controls at the designated point of entry', since the risk lies in the Sudan dyes.

1. What is the Commission's opinion of this case?

2. Is the Commission aware of any other cases in which Sudan dyes have been found in imported food— or feedstuffs?

3. Are the European Union's monitoring mechanisms sufficient to ensure that Austrian and other European consumers are not exposed to any potential risk when consuming imported spices or foodstuffs?

4. How will the Commission prevent the import of foodstuffs to which hazardous substances have been added, and/or how will it enforce the appropriate control stipulated in the Implementing Regulation?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 November 2012)*

Following the detection of the presence of Sudan IV in chilli powder from China with the non-authorised colour Sudan IV and the notification through the Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF), the necessary action was immediately taken by the competent authorities to remove the contaminated red chilli powder from the market. The Commission is of the opinion that the necessary measures were taken to protect public health.

In 2012, there have been six cases of unauthorised presence of Sudan dyes in food notified through the RASFF so far. In 2011 there were 18 cases reported.

There is a comprehensive body of legislation to ensure that food, including imported spices, is safe. In particular Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and Regulation (EC) 882/2004 are the two main tools to achieve this objective.

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of EU feed and food law. Official controls must be carried out regularly, on a risk basis, with appropriate frequency, and appropriate measures must be taken to eliminate risk and ensure enforcement of EU feed and food law in relation to both domestic and imported products.

From its side, the Commission has the responsibility to ensure that EU legislation is properly implemented across the whole EU. Furthermore, control measures can be put in place at EU level to counteract any identified risk. This was the case with the presence of Sudan dyes in food for which a control frequency at import was established by the regulation referred to in the question.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008266/12**
**to the Commission**
**Richard Ashworth (ECR)**
*(20 September 2012)*

*Subject:* European Union funding for the Institute for Public Policy Research

Can the Commission confirm the amount of appropriations received by the UK-based think tank known as the Institute for Public Policy Research for the years 2013, 2012, 2011 and 2010 from the EU budget?

In addition, can the Commission confirm from which budgetary lines this funding is taken, and under which regulation(s) it is permissible?

**Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

There is no unique comprehensive database with all EU beneficiaries given that EU funding can be granted by the Commission as well as individual Member States. For grants awarded under shared management (ERDF, CF, ESF, etc.), the Honourable Member is invited to contact relevant national authorities. Information on grants awarded by the Commission (commitments) is publically available in the Financial Transparency System at http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

The attached table was compiled based on data from the Financial Transparency System except grants awarded in 2012. The complete 2012 figures will be published in the FTS at the end of the first semester of 2013.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008268/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(20 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Trato impositivo para las mujeres que deciden ser madres siendo autónomas

Como sabe la Comisión, existen aún dificultades para las mujeres en su vida laboral. Este hecho, patente de muchos modos, es especialmente tangible para las mujeres emprendedoras que deciden trabajar como autónomas.

En España, el Gobierno ha aprobado el Decreto 20/2012 ([1]) que puede hacer aún más difícil a las mujeres trabajar como autónomas pues elimina la bonificación del 100 % sobre el pago a la Seguridad Social para el primer año después del parto.

Teniendo en cuenta que la productividad de la mujer puede bajar notablemente debido a los cuidados que deber dar a su hijo/hija, y que siendo autónoma es muy posible que haya visto muy reducido su volumen de trabajo, es obvio que esta medida es altamente desincentivadora para que las mujeres autónomas sean madres si quieren mantener su carrera laboral.

Esta es pues una discriminación hacia las mujeres, que parece que se contradice con lo aprobado en la Directiva 2010/18/EU.

Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre la medida citada incluida en el Decreto 20/2012?

¿Cree la Comisión que tal medida se contradice con la Directiva 2010/18/EU?

¿Cree la Comisión que tal medida debería ser revertida o por lo menos matizada para no perjudicar de forma tan notable a las mujeres autónomas que quieren ser madres?

**Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión**
*(14 de noviembre de 2012)*

La Directiva 2010/18 aplica el Acuerdo marco revisado sobre el permiso parental celebrado por los interlocutores sociales europeos en 2009 ([2]). Además de aumentar el permiso parental mínimo de tres a cuatro meses, el Acuerdo también protege a los trabajadores contra un trato menos favorable o el despido por haber solicitado o cogido un permiso parental, conforme a la legislación, a los convenios colectivos y a los usos nacionales ([3]).

Sin embargo, el Acuerdo no exige a los Estados miembros que apliquen un descuento en las cotizaciones a la seguridad social para las trabajadoras autónomas o empleadas en el primer año tras dar a luz. De hecho, con arreglo a la cláusula 5, apartado 5, del Acuerdo «todas las cuestiones de la seguridad social relacionadas con el presente Acuerdo habrán de ser examinadas y determinadas por los Estados miembros y los interlocutores sociales de conformidad con la legislación y los convenios colectivos nacionales».

Por otra parte, la supresión del descuento anteriormente contemplado por la legislación española no parece vulnerar ninguna otra disposición de la legislación de la Unión Europea relativa a la igualdad de trato entre hombres y mujeres. Por consiguiente, se trata de una cuestión exclusivamente de competencia nacional y, por lo tanto, les corresponde a los Estados miembros decidir qué medidas son adecuadas.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/07/14/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-9364.pdf
([2]) Directiva 2010/18/UE del Consejo, de 8 de marzo de 2010, por la que se aplica el Acuerdo marco revisado sobre el permiso parental, celebrado por Businesseurope, la Ueapme, el CEEP y la CES, y se deroga la Directiva 96/34/CE (DO L 68, de 18.3.2010, p. 13).
([3]) Cláusula 4, apartado 2, y cláusula 5, apartado 4, del Acuerdo marco, respectivamente.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008268/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(20 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Tax treatment of self-employed women who decide to have children

As the Commission knows, women still experience problems in their professional life. This fact, seen in many ways, is especially tangible for enterprising women who choose to be self-employed.

The Spanish Government has passed Decree 20/2012 ([1]) which may make being self-employed yet more difficult for women as it has removed the 100 % rebate on social security contributions for the first year after giving birth.

Bearing in mind that caring for a child may result in a considerable drop in a woman's productivity and that, being self-employed, the volume of work she has coming in may well have fallen significantly, it is clear that this measure acts as a strong disincentive to motherhood for women who are self-employed and wish to continue their professional career.

This is thus discrimination against women and appears to contradict Directive 2010/18/EU.

What is the Commission's opinion of the aforesaid measure in Decree 20/2012?

Does the Commission believe that this measure contradicts Directive 2010/18/EU?

Does the Commission think that this measure should be reversed or at least qualified so it does not put self-employed women who wish to become mothers at such a disadvantage?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 November 2012)*

Directive 2010/18 implements the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by the European social partners in 2009 ([2]). Besides increasing the minimum parental leave provision from three to four months, the Agreement also protects workers against less favourable treatment or dismissal on the grounds of an application for, or the taking of, parental leave in accordance with national law, collective agreements and/or practice ([3]).

However, the Agreement does not require Member States to grant a rebate on social security contributions for self-employed or employed women the first year after giving birth. In fact, according to Clause 5(5) of the Agreement 'all matters regarding social security in relation to this agreement are for consideration and determination by Member States and/or social partners according to national law and/or collective agreements'.

Moreover, the removal of the rebate previously existing in Spanish law does not seem to violate any other provision of the European Union legislation on equal treatment between men and women. Consequently, this is a matter entirely within the remit of national competence and it is therefore for Member States to decide which measures are appropriate.

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([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/07/14/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-9364.pdf
([2]) Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC, OJ L 68, of 18.3.2010, pg. 13.
([3]) Clauses 4(2) and 5(4) of the framework Agreement, respectively.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008311/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Renate Sommer (PPE)**
*(21. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Kennzeichnung von zugesetztem Wasser gemäß Artikel 17 Absatz 5 in Verbindung mit Anhang VI Teil A Nr. 5 VO (EU) Nr. 1169/2011

Traditionell enthalten Brühwürste, wie beispielsweise eine Fleischwurst oder eine Mortadella, herstellungs- bzw. sortenbedingt Trinkwasser. In ihrer Antwort vom 3.7.2012 auf die Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005036/2012 hatte die Kommission darauf hingewiesen, dass die neuen Vorschriften nur für Fleischzubereitungen und Fleischerzeugnisse gelten, die „als Aufschnitt, am Stück, in Scheiben geschnitten, als Fleischportion oder Tierkörper angeboten werden", und nicht für andere Fleischzubereitungen oder -erzeugnisse mit anderem Aussehen.

Kann die Kommission vor diesem Hintergrund folgende Fragen beantworten:

Ist die oben wiedergegebene Antwort der Kommission vom 3.7.2012 dahin gehend zu verstehen, dass die im Betreff genannte Kennzeichnungsregelung nur für solche Fleischerzeugnisse und Fleischzubereitungen gilt, die aufgrund ihrer Angebotsform bzw. Optik den Eindruck erwecken, es handele sich um Stücke oder Portionen gewachsenen Fleisches bzw. Aufschnitt/Scheiben von einem gewachsenen Stück Fleisch?

**Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission**
*(23. Oktober 2012)*

Wie aus der Antwort der Kommission vom 3. Juli 2012 auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-005036/2012 hervorgeht, gelten die neuen Bestimmungen der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel ([1]) hinsichtlich der Kennzeichnung von zugesetztem Wasser gemäß Anhang VI Nummer 6 dieser Verordnung lediglich für Fleischerzeugnisse und Fleischzubereitungen, die „als Aufschnitt, am Stück, in Scheiben geschnitten, als Fleischportion oder Tierkörper angeboten" werden, und nicht für in anderer Form angebotene Fleischerzeugnisse und -zubereitungen. Die Kommission ist der Ansicht, dass im konkreten Fall der Brühwürste, wie beispielsweise der von der Frau Abgeordneten genannten Fleischwurst oder Mortadella, nicht der Anschein erweckt wird, es handele sich um eine solche Fleischform, und daher keine Kennzeichnungspflicht für zugesetztes Wasser gilt.

Jedoch sollte die Feststellung, ob ein bestimmtes Fleischerzeugnis oder eine bestimmte Fleischzubereitung als „in der Form von Aufschnitt, am Stück, in Scheiben geschnitten, als Fleischportion oder Tierkörper angeboten" gilt, von den Mitgliedstaaten — die für die Durchsetzung der Verordnung zuständig sind — jeweils von Fall zu Fall entschieden werden.

([1]) ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 18.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008311/12**
**to the Commission**
**Renate Sommer (PPE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* The labelling of added water pursuant to Article 17(5) in conjunction with Annex VI Part A No 5 to Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011

Boiled sausages, such as Bologna or Mortadella, traditionally contain water as a result of the production process or their typical characteristics. In its answer of 3 July 2012 to question for written answer E-005036/2012, the Commission stated that the new provisions only apply to meat products and meat preparations 'which have the appearance of a cut, joint, slice, portion or carcase of meat' and not to other meat preparations or products with a different appearance.

In view of this, can the Commission answer the following:

Is the answer from the Commission of 3 July 2012 to be understood to mean that the labelling rule referred to in the subject line only applies to meat products and meat preparations that, because of the way in which they are marketed or their appearance, give the impression that they are joints or portions of whole carcases or slices from a whole carcase of meat?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(23 October 2012)*

As indicated in its reply of 3 July 2012 to Written Question E-005036/2012, the new requirements of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council on food information to consumers ([1]) concerning the labelling of added water, laid down in point 6 of Annex VI to the latter Regulation, apply only to meat preparations and meat products which have 'the appearance of a cut, joint, slice, portion or carcase of meat', and not to other meat preparations or products with a different appearance. It is the Commission's view that in the concrete case of boiled sausages, e.g. Bologna or Mortadella, cited by the Honourable Member, such an appearance is not apparent and therefore the obligation to label the presence of added water would not apply.

However, the determination whether a specific meat preparation or product has the appearance of a cut, joint, slice, portion or carcase of meat should be carried out on a case-by-case basis by the Member States, who are entrusted with the enforcement of the regulation.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008312/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Aree desertiche e specie in via di estinzione, quale il ruolo dell'uomo?

Il legame presente tra zone desertiche e specie animali è molto forte. Spesso in queste aree geografiche, che occupano circa 18 100 000 km² della superficie terrestre e sono caratterizzate da un ecosistema molto fragile, vivono anche specie animali in via di estinzione. In un ambiente inospitale, dove la biodiversità è molto bassa, tutti gli esseri viventi devono essere altamente specializzati.

In seguito a un recente studio condotto da più di ottomila scienziati della *International Union for Conservation of Nature's Species Survival Commission (Iucn Ssc) è stata pubblicata la lista delle cento specie animali a maggiore rischio di estinzione*. L'attività che l'uomo svolge nelle aree desertiche non sempre porta i benefici sperati: in zone aride e semiaride le attività umane quali pascolamento non controllato e intensivo di bestiame, mancanza di tutela dei pascoli, disboscamenti non regolamentati, introduzione di specie non autoctone e incendi, possono significativamente ridurre la biodiversità e la diversità funzionale. Una recente ricerca scientifica ha dimostrato che le attività umane possono avere un impatto negativo sul delicato equilibrio degli ecosistemi delle zone desertiche e influenzano fortemente anche i ritmi di vita di svariate specie animali, nonché in tal modo minacciare l'esistenza di diverse specie locali, in particolare mammiferi, che svolgono un ruolo determinante proprio nel mantenimento dell'equilibrio dell'ecosistema tipico dei deserti.

Considerato che l'uomo, per mezzo di diverse attività non regolamentate da piani di gestione mirati, minaccia quotidianamente habitat unici sia da un punto di vista ecologico che faunistico, può la Commissione comunicare se prevede attuare linee guida per tutelare aree terrestri uniche e di conseguenza specie animali strettamente e unicamente presenti in suddette zone?

**Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(20 novembre 2012)*

I principali strumenti di promozione della conservazione nonché di un'adeguata gestione degli ecosistemi e delle specie in pericolo sono costituiti dalla direttiva 2009/147/CE ([1]), dalla direttiva 92/43/CEE ([2]) e dalla rete Natura 2000, su cui troverà informazioni dettagliate sulle pagine web dell'Unione ([3]). Questi strumenti non sono certo volti a inibire le attività dell'uomo, ma piuttosto a raggiungere uno stato di conservazione favorevole per determinati habitat e specie.

L'UE sostiene la protezione internazionale degli ecosistemi desertici. Tra le iniziative più recenti e significative finanziate dall'UE figura il contributo a un progetto nella riserva naturale nazionale di Termit-Tin Toumma. Le regioni del Niger orientale sono gli ultimi spazi vitali dell'intero Sahara per diverse specie desertiche in pericolo, tra cui l'addax, la gazzella dama, la pecora di barbary e il ghepardo del deserto. L'impegno profuso per quasi un decennio ha consentito di istituire l'area protetta più estesa di tutta l'Africa, che proteggerà sia la fauna selvatica, sia la popolazione nomade locale grazie a una migliore gestione dell'habitat e allo sviluppo, tra l'altro, di un ecoturismo sostenibile.

L'impegno dell'UE nella protezione degli ecosistemi desertici è testimoniato anche dal suo contributo all'attuazione della cosiddetta iniziativa GGWSSI ([4]). L'obiettivo generale di quest'iniziativa è il rafforzamento della resilienza ai cambiamenti climatici della popolazione e della natura nella zona sahariana del Sahel grazie a una solida gestione degli ecosistemi nonché lo sviluppo sostenibile delle risorse del suolo, la protezione del patrimonio rurale (materiale e non) e il miglioramento delle condizioni di vita e dei mezzi di sostentamento della popolazione. Uno dei tre obiettivi strategici stabiliti per raggiungere tale obiettivo è dato dal miglioramento dello stato e della salute degli ecosistemi di questa regione.

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([1]) Direttiva sulla conservazione degli uccelli selvatici, GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.
([2]) Direttiva sulla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche, GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm
([4]) Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative — (GGWSSI), ossia l'iniziativa delle grande muraglia verde per il Sahara e il Sahel.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008312/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Desert areas and species facing extinction: what role do humans play?

There is a very strong link between desert areas and animal species. These geographical areas, which cover approximately 18 100 000 km$^2$ of the earth's surface and have a very fragile ecosystem, are often also home to animal species that are facing extinction. In an inhospitable environment, where there is a very low level of biodiversity, all living creatures have to be highly specialised.

Following a recent study carried out by over 8 000 scientists from the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Species Survival Commission (Iucn Ssc), a list of the 100 animal species at the greatest risk of extinction was published. Human activity in desert areas does not always bring the expected benefits: in arid and semi-arid areas, human activities such as uncontrolled and intensive grazing of livestock, failure to protect pastures, unregulated forest clearance, the introduction of non-indigenous species and fires, can significantly reduce biodiversity and functional diversity. A recent scientific study has shown that human activities can have an adverse impact on the delicate balance of desert ecosystems and also have a significant effect on the lifecycle of various animal species, thus threatening the survival of several local species, particularly mammals, which play a vital role in maintaining the balance of a typical desert ecosystem.

Since humans, through a range of activities that are not regulated by targeted management plans, pose a daily threat to habitats that are unique in terms of both their ecology and their fauna, does the Commission plan to implement guidelines to protect unique land areas and therefore animal species that are closely linked to and only present in these areas?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

Within the EU, the main instruments promoting the conservation and adequate management of threatened ecosystems and species are Directive 2009/147/EC ([1]) and Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]) and the Natura 2000 network, on which ample information is available on the Europa website ([3]). These are certainly not aimed at preventing human activities, but at achieving a favourable conservation status of specific habitats and species.

The EU supports the protection of desert ecosystems internationally. Among the most recent and significant projects funded by the EU, one can mention its contribution to a project in the Termit and Tin Toumme National Nature Reserve. These eastern Niger regions are the last remaining strongholds in the entire Sahara for a number of threatened desert species, including the addax, dama gazelle, Barbary sheep and desert cheetah. Work for nearly a decade has allowed the establishment of the largest protected area in Africa, whose management will benefit both wildlife and local nomadic people through improved habitat use and the development amongst others of appropriate ecotourism.

Another example of EU's commitment to the protection of desert ecosystems is its contribution to the implementation of the GGWSSI ([4]). The overall goal of the Initiative is to improve the resilience of human and natural system in the Sahel Saharan zone against climate changes, through a sound ecosystems management, and the sustainable development of land resources, the protection of material and immaterial rural heritage and the improvement of the living conditions and livelihoods of population. One of the three strategic objectives defined to achieve this goal is the improvement of the state and health of ecosystems in the region.

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([1]) Conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([2]) Conservation of natural habitats — Wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm
([4]) Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008313/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Frequenze in banda 700 MHz — le ombre del caso italiano

Dopo anni di dibattito «sordo» sul tema, si osserva solo ora in Italia un primo tentativo di riorganizzare l'uso di una risorsa che è e sarà essenziale nei prossimi anni per lo sviluppo del mercato televisivo e della larga banda mobile.

In particolare, rimane in discussione il pacchetto delle frequenze in banda 700 MHz. Tali frequenze sono pregiatissime e, come richiesto dalla Commissione europea e dalla conferenza mondiale di Ginevra 2012 nell'ambito dello sviluppo dell'agenda digitale, a partire dal 2015 dovranno essere assegnate ai servizi di larga banda mobile. Il governo italiano vorrebbe un'asta per l'assegnazione ai soli operatori TV di queste frequenze per tre anni, per poi liberarle e rimetterle all'asta per operatori TLC.

In realtà una simile soluzione solleva problemi evidenti: — aggiudicare ora una risorsa per soli tre anni porterebbe chiaramente i vari operatori TV a presentare rilanci modesti per frequenze che, invece, hanno un considerevole valore economico; — l'adozione tecnologica della banda larga mobile arriva in ritardo sulla «tabella europea» e non esclude — a partire dal 2015 — di liberare nuovamente queste frequenze per riassegnarle.

La soluzione allora potrebbe essere di aprire subito l'asta per questo specifico pacchetto anche agli operatori mobili e non limitarla agli operatori TV. Di fatto, così non sarà un'asta al ribasso perché vi parteciperanno anche operatori che valutano di più lo spettro, rispetto a quanto sembrano fare (e dichiarare) i broadcaster televisivi.

Inoltre, ulteriore confusione solleva la norma che permette la destinazione d'uso di frequenze riservate nel passato alla tecnologia mobile (ossia per la TV su cellulare tramite lo standard DVB-H) per trasmettere programmi televisivi su digitale terrestre (DVB-T). La norma approvata recepisce la direttiva comunitaria che si basa sul principio di neutralità tecnologica, e, dunque, quando una frequenza diviene sottoutilizzata per una specifica destinazione d'uso si può «riconvertirla» ad un altro.

Intende la Commissione:

— valutare l'impatto della normativa italiana al fine di eliminare ogni distinzione e discriminazione tra broadcaster (integrati o meno) e altri operatori?

— chiarire, con riferimento al principio di neutralità, diversi punti ambigui? Ad esempio, per queste frequenze si impone il pagamento di canoni di utilizzo? Oppure sono date gratuitamente? E in tal caso, gli operatori TV potranno poi rivenderle privatamente? Oppure si prevede la conversione d'uso a titolo temporaneo (ma quanto temporaneo?) per poi farle rientrare in possesso dello Stato, il quale potrà in seguito rimetterle all'asta?

**Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione**
*(12 novembre 2012)*

Il quadro normativo dell'Unione fa obbligo agli Stati membri di garantire un uso neutrale dello spettro sotto il profilo della tecnologia e del servizio, ma prevede deroghe al principio della neutralità del servizio per garantire il conseguimento di un obiettivo di interesse generale definito dagli Stati membri in conformità al diritto dell'Unione, compresa le fornitura di trasmissioni radio-televisive destinate a promuovere il pluralismo e la diversità culturale. Inoltre, la scelta di una procedura specifica, concorrenziale o comparativa, per l'assegnazione dei diritti d'uso è lasciata agli Stati membri, fermi restando i principi dell'oggettività, della proporzionalità, della non discriminazione e della trasparenza previsti dal quadro normativo dell'UE. Fatti salvi i principi del diritto unionale, gli Stati membri sono liberi anche di imporre il pagamento di contributi per i diritti d'uso dello spettro, il che riflette l'esigenza di garantire l'uso ottimale dello spettro e di rendere scambiabili tali diritti.

Per quanto riguarda la banda di frequenza di 700 MHz, la Conferenza mondiale della radiocomunicazione svoltasi nel febbraio 2012 ha convenuto che questa banda sarà allocata, a partire dal 2015, in via principale sia alle emittenti radiotelevisive che alla banda larga senza fili. Di conseguenza, le condizioni tecniche e regolamentari delle comunicazioni a banda larga senza fili dovranno essere definite a livello di UIT e l'Unione europea dovrà raggiungere un approccio coordinato in proposito.

A questo riguardo la Commissione fa notare che la legge italiana n. 44/12 prevede, nell'ambito generale dell'asta delle frequenze, una certa flessibilità per tener conto della futura politica in materia di spettro radio, poiché la durata dei diritti d'uso per lei emittenti radiotelevisive deve essere definita dall'autorità italiana di regolamentazione, AGCOM, allo scopo di garantire l'assegnazione tempestiva delle risorse dello spettro radio per qualsiasi uso, in linea con il diritto dell'Unione.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008313/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* 700 MHz band frequencies: the negative aspects of the situation in Italy

After years of a 'dialogue of the deaf' on the issue, only now is Italy taking the first steps towards reorganising the use of a resource which is, and will be in the coming years, vital for the development of the television market and mobile broadband.

Specifically, the package of 700 MHz band frequencies is still under debate. These frequencies are extremely valuable and, as called for by the European Commission and the World Radiocommunication Conference 2012 in Geneva with regard to advancing the digital agenda, from 2015 they are to be assigned to mobile broadband services. The Italian Government would like to hold an auction to assign these frequencies for three years to TV operators alone, then release them and re-auction them for telecommunications operators.

In reality, this kind of solution is clearly problematic: awarding a resource now for just three years would clearly lead to the various TV operators submitting modest bids for frequencies which are actually of considerable economic value; the technological adoption of mobile broadband is happening late in relation to the 'European timetable' and it is not out of the question — from 2015 — that these frequencies will be released again and reassigned.

The solution could therefore be to open the auction for this specific package immediately to mobile operators too, instead of restricting it to TV operators. This will not be a Dutch auction because it will include operators that value the spectrum more than television broadcasters seem to value it (or say that they do).

In addition, further confusion is caused by the rule permitting the use of frequencies formerly reserved for mobile technology (namely for TV on a mobile phone through the DVB-H standard) to transmit television programmes on digital terrestrial television (DVB-T). The adopted rule transposes the EU directive based on the principle of technology neutrality, and thus when a frequency becomes underused for a specific purpose it can be reconverted to another.

Does the Commission intend:

— to assess the impact of Italian legislation with a view to removing any distinction or discrimination between broadcasters (whether integrated or not) and other operators?

— to clarify several ambiguities regarding the principle of neutrality? For example, are usage fees payable for these frequencies or are they given free of charge? In that case, will TV operators be able to resell them privately or is it planned that the change of use will be temporary (but how temporary?) and that they will then revert to the State, which will then be able to auction them again?

**Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 November 2012)*

The EU Regulatory Framework requires Member States to ensure a technologically and service neutral use of spectrum, while allowing for derogations to the principle of service neutrality to ensure the fulfilment of a general interest objective as defined by the Member State in conformity with EC law, including the provision of radio and television broadcasting with a view to promoting pluralism and cultural diversity. Moreover, the choice of a specific competitive or comparative procedure for the assignment of rights of use is left to Member States, subject to the principles of objectivity, proportionality, non-discrimination and transparency provided for by the EU regulatory framework. Subject to the principles of EC law, Member States are also free to impose usage fees for the rights of use of spectrum which reflect the need to ensure the optimal use of spectrum and to make these rights tradable.

As to the 700MHz band, the World Radio-communication Conference in February 2012 agreed that this band will be allocated on a co-primary basis to both broadcasting and wireless broadband as of 2015. As a result, technical and regulatory conditions for wireless broadband communications will need to be defined at ITU level, and will require the EU to reach a coordinated approach.

In this regard, the Commission notes that Italian Law n. 44/12 provides, in the general framework of the broadcasting auction, for some flexibility in view of future spectrum policy, since the duration of rights of use for broadcasting shall be defined by the Italian regulator AGCOM with a view to ensure the timely allocation of the radio spectrum resources to any usage in line with EC law.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008315/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* OMT — Outright Market Transactions: quali soluzioni per i rischi del nuovo sistema?

La BCE ha avviato il nuovo sistema di «Outright Market Transactions». Si tratta del piano di acquisto di titoli sovrani sul mercato secondario. La motivazione generale alla base dell'OMT è di rimuovere il «tail risk», ossia il rischio catastrofico legato alla mancanza di fiducia sull'area euro.

Esso presenta quattro caratteristiche: è illimitato nella sua portata; gli acquisti saranno pienamente sterilizzati; riguarda titoli con scadenza breve; prevede condizioni per il paese che voglia accedervi. Il primo ed il secondo punto potrebbero sembrare positivi; in pratica, però, non è per nulla chiaro attraverso quali canali la BCE sterilizzerà i propri interventi. È realistico immaginare che ciò possa avvenire senza generare distorsioni sui mercati monetari, o del debito o valutari? Al riguardo, la BCE non ha fornito dettagli. Il terzo punto è molto controverso ed è il risultato di un chiaro compromesso con la Bundesbank. Ad esempio, la vita media del debito pubblico italiano è 6,65 anni (dati Bankitalia al 31 agosto 2012), ci si chiede allora che efficacia avranno gli eventuali interventi della BCE nello stabilizzare lo spread. Ma soprattutto: non creeranno l'incentivo per gli investitori di vendere i titoli a scadenze più lunghe (che sono la maggior parte)? Un intervento così selettivo rischia di essere, inoltre, altamente distorsivo. L'ultima caratteristica, la condizionalità, rivela apertamente la politica monetaria nell'area euro, cioè un'area valutaria con diversi paesi membri, priva di integrazione fiscale. Mai si era vista, nella storia, una banca centrale vincolare i propri interventi all'azione di un'autorità fiscale.

Considerato che: il meccanismo «Esm-intervento BCE» non fornisce un'assicurazione ai paesi per i quali sarebbe più efficace e contemporaneamente meno costosa, ossia i paesi in difficoltà, ma non ancora sull'orlo dell'abisso, come l'Italia oggi; difficilmente l'OMT contribuirà alla soluzione dei problemi dell'euro, per un motivo essenziale, ovvero rende esplicito un gioco competitivo tra BCE e autorità fiscali che difficilmente può migliorare il benessere collettivo.

Chiedo alla Commissione quali soluzioni intenda proporre per ovviare ai suddetti rischi di «rimbalzo» di responsabilità, poiché se fossero solo i «paesi peggiori» a ricorrere all'Esm, la BCE subirebbe una pressione fortissima per operare un salvataggio di fatto, senza poter ottenere in cambio riforme sostanziali.

**Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione**
*(23 ottobre 2012)*

La politica monetaria dell'area dell'euro è di competenza esclusiva della Banca centrale europea (BCE), la cui indipendenza è sancita dal trattato. La Commissione non interferisce con l'elaborazione e l'attuazione della politica monetaria della BCE.

Durante la conferenza stampa seguita alla riunione del Consiglio direttivo della BCE del 6 settembre 2012, il presidente Draghi ha fornito indicazioni riguardanti alcune delle domande poste dall'onorevole parlamentare. L'intervento può essere consultato alla seguente pagina web della BCE ([1]).

La Commissione accoglie con favore l'introduzione del sistema delle operazioni definitive monetarie (ODM) e rammenta che è subordinato a condizioni rigorose. La Commissione è pronta ad esercitare, secondo necessità, la vigilanza sul rispetto effettivo di tali condizioni. Tuttavia, la responsabilità principale nel superare gli attuali problemi, affrontando le debolezze di fondo, incombe agli Stati membri stessi.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/press/pressconf/2012/html/is120906.en.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008315/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Outright Monetary Transactions (OMTs): solutions for the new system's risks?

The European Central Bank (ECB) has launched the new 'Outright Monetary Transactions' system. This is the plan for the purchase of sovereign securities on the secondary market. The main motivation behind the OMT system is to remove tail risk, which is the catastrophic risk linked to lack of confidence in the euro area.

The plan has four characteristics: its scope has no limits; purchases will be fully sterilised; it relates to short-term securities; it lays down conditions for countries wishing to access the system. The first and second points might seem positive. In practice, however, it is by no means clear through which channels the ECB will sterilise its own interventions. Is it realistic to suppose that this might happen without giving rise to distortions on the monetary markets — either the debt markets or the currency markets? The ECB has not provided any details on this point. The third point is very controversial and is the result of a clear compromise with the Bundesbank. For example, the average life of Italian public debt is 6.65 years (Bankitalia data as of 31 August 2012), and we therefore wonder how effective any interventions by the ECB will be in stabilising spreads. Above all, though, will they not create an incentive for investors to sell more long-term securities (which account for the majority)? Such selective intervention is also liable to give rise to significant distortion. The final characteristic — conditionality — openly reveals monetary policy in the euro area, namely a currency area with various Member States that is without fiscal integration. Historically, we have never seen a central bank tie its interventions to action by a fiscal authority.

Given that the 'ESM-ECB intervention' mechanism does not provide a guarantee to the countries for which it would be more effective and at the same time less expensive, namely countries in difficulty but not yet at the edge of the abyss, as Italy is today; it is unlikely that the OMT system will help to solve the euro's problems, for the key reason that it makes the competition between the ECB and fiscal authorities apparent, which can do nothing to improve collective prosperity.

What solutions does the Commission intend to put forward to prevent the abovementioned risks of a 'rebound' of responsibility, since if it were only the 'worst countries' that had recourse to the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), the ECB would come under very significant pressure to carry out a *de facto* rescue, without being able to obtain substantial reforms in exchange.

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(23 October 2012)*

Monetary policy in the euro area is the exclusive competence of the European Central Bank (ECB), whose independence is enshrined in the Treaty. The Commission does not interfere in the ECB's design and implementation of monetary policy.

In the press conference that followed the ECB's Governing Council meeting on 6 September 2012, President Draghi sketched some details about some of the questions the Honourable Member is asking. His intervention can be consulted in the following ECB's webpage ([1]):

The Commission welcomes the introduction of the Outright Monetary Transactions (OMT) scheme, recalling that it is associated with strict conditionality. The Commission stands ready to carry out the surveillance of strict and effective conditionality, as needed. The key responsibility for overcoming the current problems by addressing underlying weaknesses lies with Member States themselves.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/press/pressconf/2012/html/is120906.en.html

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008316/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* XIX Giornata mondiale sull'Alzheimer — Il contributo della ricerca scientifica

Le varie forme di demenza colpiscono 35 milioni di persone nel mondo. Il 21 settembre 2012 verrà celebrata la XIX Giornata mondiale sull'Alzheimer, la tipologia di demenza senile più diffusa al mondo. A tutt'oggi non esistono cure efficaci per contrastare questa patologia, ed è possibile esclusivamente rallentarne il decorso se la diagnosi viene effettuata precocemente. Per questi motivi, la ricerca scientifica deve essere incentivata continuamente ed è importante porre in luce quali sono le nuove scoperte in campo scientifico da parte dei ricercatori italiani.

Una recente ricerca dell'Irccs Fatebenefratelli di Brescia, finanziata dal Settimo programma quadro, ha messo in luce il ruolo dell'ippocampo, ossia l'area cerebrale posta nel lobo temporale e inserita nel sistema limbico. Questo piccolissimo organo svolge un ruolo fondamentale, soprattutto per la memoria a lungo termine, ed è stato dimostrato che la misurazione nel tempo del suo volume rappresenta un marcatore sensibile della presenza dell'Alzheimer.

Il rapporto presentato dall'OMS e dall'Organizzazione internazionale dei malati di Alzheimer denuncia che oggigiorno nel mondo il numero di persone affette da tale malattia degenerativa è di 35,6 milioni, il che significa che ogni quattro secondi nasce un nuovo caso di demenza e che ogni anno i nuovi casi sono 7,7 milioni. Si prevede che questa cifra possa raddoppiare nel 2030 e triplicare nel 2050. Attualmente si registra un rischio di demenza che per le persone over 64 si attesta tra 1 e 8, mentre per gli over 85 si attesta tra 1 e 2,5. Questi dati mettono in seria difficoltà i sistemi sanitari di diversi paesi membri dell'OMS. Infatti, solo 8 paesi su 194 hanno attuato un piano nazionale sulle demenze, nonostante già nel 2008 il Parlamento europeo avesse adottato la dichiarazione scritta n. 80, con cui ha riconosciuto tale sindrome come priorità pubblica e ha auspicato lo sviluppo di un piano di azione comune.

Considerata l'assoluta importanza di comprendere quali siano i fattori indice per predisporre una diagnosi precoce e precisa al fine di contrastare l'incalzare di questa patologia, può la Commissione far sapere se intende incentivare, anche nell'ambito del prossimo programma per gli anni 2014-2020, misure di ricerca specifiche intese a trovare soluzioni concrete al progressivo aumento dei casi? Intende promuovere programmi di sostegno e di assistenza ai familiari che si trovano ad assistere i loro cari durante l'ultimo periodo di vita, stante le previsioni di crescita esponenziale di tale malattia degenerativa?

**Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione**
*(8 novembre 2012)*

La Commissione è al corrente dei risultati raggiunti con i progetti «neuGRID» ([1]) e «outGRID» ([2]) coordinati dall'ospedale Fatebenefratelli.

Il sostegno alla ricerca sulle malattie neurodegenerative ha rappresentato una priorità nel corso dell'intero Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013), nell'ambito del quale dal 2007 sono stati destinati alla ricerca in questo settore oltre 400 milioni di EUR, dei quali oltre 200 milioni di EUR per il morbo di Alzheimer.

Inoltre la Commissione finanzia l'attuazione dell'iniziativa di programmazione congiunta relativa alle malattie neurodegenerative, in particolare il morbo di Alzheimer (JPND — Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases), un'iniziativa condotta dagli Stati membri ([3]) che è intesa ad accrescere l'impatto della ricerca europea in questo settore coordinando gli sforzi compiuti nei vari paesi. L'iniziativa JPND intende valutare quali siano le migliori modalità per rispondere alle necessità dei pazienti mediante le tecnologie di assisted living (domotica) e come gli utenti possano essere efficacemente coinvolti nella ricerca sulle malattie neurodegenerative.

L'iniziativa Orizzonte 2020, il prossimo programma quadro dell'Unione europea per la ricerca e l'innovazione, offrirà molto probabilmente ulteriori opportunità di sostegno alla ricerca sul morbo di Alzheimer e su altre malattie neurodegenerative.

Un'iniziativa promossa dalle parti interessate, il «Partenariato europeo per l'innovazione sull'invecchiamento attivo e sano», è stata avviata dalla Commissione al fine di promuovere il potenziale innovativo dell'Europa e di far fronte alla

([1]) http://www.neugrid.eu/pagine/home.php.
([2]) http://www.outgrid.eu/site/pagine/home.php.
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/.

sfida del cambiamento demografico. Dalle parti interessate sono pervenuti 261 impegni per azioni concrete, incluse azioni volte a prevenire il declino funzionale e cognitivo.

Infine, nell'ambito del programma Salute-UE la Commissione cofinanzia l'azione comune «ALCOVE — ALzheimer COperative Valuation In Europe», nel cui ambito gli Stati membri collaborano allo sviluppo di una serie di strumenti e di parametri di riferimento, ad esempio per migliorare la diagnosi precoce e l'assistenza alle persone affette da forme di demenza.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008316/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* 19th World Alzheimer's Day — the contribution of scientific research

Worldwide, the various forms of dementia affect 35 million people. The 19th World Alzheimer's Day will be held on 21 September 2012. Alzheimer's disease is the most widespread type of senile dementia worldwide. At present there are no effective cures for the disease, and it is possible only to slow down its progress if it is diagnosed early. For these reasons, scientific research should be continuously encouraged, and it is important to highlight new scientific discoveries by Italian researchers.

A recent study by the Fatebenefratelli research hospital in Brescia, funded by the 7th Framework Programme, highlighted the role of the hippocampus, which is the area of the brain located in the temporal lobe and forming part of the limbic system. This tiny organ plays a vital role, particularly for long-term memory, and it has been shown that measuring its volume over time is a sensitive marker of the presence of Alzheimer's disease.

The report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Alzheimer's Disease International states that 35.6 million people worldwide are currently affected by this degenerative disease, meaning that a new case of dementia occurs every 4 seconds and that there are 7.7 million new cases each year. It is anticipated that this figure may double by 2030 and triple by 2050. Currently, the risk of dementia is 1 in 8 for those over 64 and 1 in 2.5 for those over 85. These figures pose a serious challenge to the health systems of several countries that are members of the WHO. Only 8 countries out of 194 have implemented a national dementia plan, despite the fact that back in 2008 the European Parliament adopted Written Declaration No 80/2008, recognising the syndrome as a public priority and urging the development of a joint action plan.

Given the vital importance of understanding the key factors leading to early, accurate diagnosis, with a view to easing the pressure of this disease, does the Commission intend to encourage specific research to find concrete solutions to the steady increase in the number of cases, as part of the next programme for 2014-20? Does it intend to promote programmes to provide support and assistance to relatives who look after their loved ones in the last stages of their life, given the predicted exponential growth of this degenerative disease?

**Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 November 2012)*

The Commission is well aware of the achievements of the projects 'neuGRID' ([1]) and 'outGRID' ([2]) coordinated by the Fatebenefratelli Hospital.

Support for research on neurodegenerative diseases was a priority throughout the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7, 2007-2013), with more than EUR 400 million dedicated to research in this area since 2007, including more than EUR 200 million on Alzheimer's disease.

The Commission also supports the implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases, in particular Alzheimer's (JPND), a Member States-led initiative ([3])which aims at increasing the impact of European research in this area by coordinating efforts across countries. The JPND plans to investigate how the needs of patients can be best addressed with assisted living technologies and how users can be best involved in neurodegenerative research.

Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, will likely provide further opportunities to support research on neurodegenerative diseases including Alzheimer's disease.

The 'European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing', a stakeholders' driven initiative was launched by the Commission to enhance Europe's innovation potential for addressing the demographic change challenge. 261 commitments for concrete actions were received from stakeholders, including actions to prevent functional and cognitive decline.

Finally, the Commission co-finances from the EU-Health Programme the Joint Action 'ALCOVE — ALzheimer COperative Valuation In Europe', where Member States work together to develop a toolbox and benchmarks for, e.g., improving early diagnoses and care for people with dementia.

([1]) http://www.neugrid.eu/pagine/home.php
([2]) http://www.outgrid.eu/site/pagine/home.php
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008317/12**
**à Comissão**
**Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL) e Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)**
*(21 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Despedimento dos trabalhadores da Finex Tech, na sequência da prevista deslocalização da mesma para países asiáticos

Ao longo dos últimos anos, a Finex Tech — empresa propriedade da Lutha Fashion Group Oy, com sede em Linjakatu 5, FIN-15501 — Lahti, Finlândia — com instalações no Concelho da Maia em Portugal, tem beneficiado de diversos fundos comunitários, além de portugueses, com o objetivo de modernizar a sua atividade produtiva de modo a torná-la mais competitiva nos mercados externos, que são o seu alvo principal.

Contudo, no dia 13 de julho de 2012, a Finex Tech colocou 110 trabalhadoras e trabalhadores em lay off, até 19 de setembro, com o argumento que necessitava garantir a sua sustentabilidade financeira e manutenção de postos de trabalho. Esta decisão revelou-se apenas como um mero mecanismo para ganhar tempo e dar entrada a um processo de insolvência, justificando o mesmo pela prevista deslocalização para os mercados asiáticos, e que terá como principal consequência o despedimento do(a)s 110 trabalhadore(a)s.

Trata-se assim, aparentemente, de uma insolvência fraudulenta, em desrespeito total pelos direitos dos trabalhadores e trabalhadoras, em clara fuga e violação das responsabilidades legais e sociais, nomeadamente as decorrentes do facto de terem beneficiado de apoios financeiros de cariz comunitário.

1. Quando irá a Comissão tomar posição sobre as empresas europeias que beneficiam de fundos comunitários e não cumprem as suas obrigações?

2. Tenciona a Comissão tomar alguma medida legislativa ou complementar à legislação existente (nomeadamente prevendo sanções desencorajadoras), de modo a evitar futuras situações semelhantes?

3. Não considera a Comissão que estas deslocalizações por parte das empresas europeias para países onde não há normas reguladoras das relações laborais podem constituir uma concorrência desleal para com as empresas que atuam no mercado interno em conformidade com as regras comunitárias e nacionais?

**Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão**
*(26 de novembro de 2012)*

A Comissão não tem competência para intervir em decisões específicas das empresas relativas ao encerramento de instalações. A Comissão convida as empresas a prever os processos de reestruturação e a geri-los de forma responsável, como sublinhado no recente Livro Verde, cujos resultados estão atualmente a ser acompanhados ([1]) pela Comissão.

De acordo com informações das autoridades portuguesas, a Finex Tech não recebeu nenhuma contribuição financeira do Fundo Social Europeu.

O Regulamento (CE) n.° 1083/2006 ([2]) estabelece que a participação dos fundos só fique definitivamente afetada a uma operação se esta não sofrer qualquer alteração substancial no prazo de cinco anos a contar da sua conclusão, ou de três anos no caso dos Estados-Membros que tenham optado por reduzir este prazo. A proposta da Comissão para o futuro Regulamento sobre Disposições Comuns introduziu uma norma análoga ([3]): as operações apoiadas pelos Fundos QEC devem reembolsar a participação dos Fundos sempre que haja cessação de atividade ou deslocalização da atividade produtiva no período estabelecido pelas regras aplicáveis em matéria de auxílios estatais.

A Comissão prossegue o diálogo político bilateral e regional no domínio da política de emprego e da política social com os países asiáticos, encorajando-os a respeitar os princípios e direitos fundamentais do trabalho, a desenvolver os seus sistemas de proteção social e a encetar um diálogo com os parceiros sociais. Além disso, os acordos de comércio livre recentemente negociados incluem um capítulo dedicado ao comércio e ao desenvolvimento sustentável que exige das partes que se empenhem no sentido de alcançar níveis elevados de proteção laboral. A Comissão também incentiva as empresas a aderir aos instrumentos internacionais no domínio da RSE, como as orientações da OCDE para as empresas multinacionais.

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([1]) Livro Verde «Reestruturação e antecipação da mudança: que lições tirar da experiência recente?» COM(2012) 7 final.
([2]) Artigo 57.°, n.° 1.
([3]) Artigo 61.°, n.° 2.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008317/12**
**to the Commission**
**Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL) and Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Dismissal of workers at Finex Tech, following its planned relocation to Asia

Over the past few years, Finex Tech — a company owned by Lutha Fashion Group Oy, based in Linjakatu 5, FIN-15501, Lahti, Finland, with facilities in the Portuguese municipality of Maia — has benefited from various EU and Portuguese funds to modernise its production activities and make it more competitive in foreign markets, which are its main target.

On 13 July 2012, however, Finex Tech laid off 110 workers until 19 September, arguing that it needed to guarantee its financial sustainability and protect jobs. This decision merely proved to be a stalling mechanism to buy time and begin insolvency proceedings, which have been justified by the company's planned relocation to Asian markets. This will primarily result in the dismissal of 110 workers.

This therefore appears to be a fraudulent insolvency, in total breach of workers' rights, departing from and violating legal and social responsibilities, particularly those arising from the fact that the company has benefited from EU financial support.

1. When will the Commission adopt a stance on European companies benefiting from EU funds and failing to fulfil their obligations?

2. Will it take any legislative action or supplement existing legislation (particularly by providing discouraging sanctions) to prevent similar situations in the future?

3. Does the Commission not believe that these relocations by European companies to countries where no rules govern labour relations may constitute unfair competition for companies operating in the domestic market, in accordance with EU and national legislation?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific companies' decisions leading to closure of plants. The Commission urges companies to anticipate restructuring and to manage it in a responsible way as stressed in the recent Green Paper ([1]), of which the results are currently being followed up by the Commission.

As per information from the Portuguese authorities, Finex Tech has received no financial contribution from the European Social Fund.

EC Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([2]) sets out that an operation can retain the contribution from the Funds only if it does not undergo a substantial modification either within five years from the completion of the operation or within three years from the completion in Member States which have exercised the option of reducing that time limit. The Commission proposal for the future Common Provisions Regulation introduced a similar rule ([3]): operations supported by the CSF Funds must repay the contributions from the Funds in cases where these operations undergo a cessation or relocation of a productive activity within the period laid down in the applicable state aid rules.

The Commission pursues bilateral and regional policy dialogues in the area of employment and social policy with Asian countries encouraging them to respect fundamental principles and rights at work, to further develop their social protection systems and to engage in a dialogue with social partners. Moreover, the recently negotiated Free Trade Agreements include a trade and sustainable development chapter committing Parties to strive towards high levels of labour protection. The Commission also encourages companies to adhere to international instruments in the area of CSR, such as OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

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([1]) Green Paper 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: What lessons from recent experience?' COM(2012) 7 final.
([2]) Article 57 (1).
([3]) Article 61 (2).

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008318/12**
**à la Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Partenariat FC Barcelone-Commission européenne

La Commission européenne et le FC Barcelone annoncent, aujourd'hui, l'établissement d'un partenariat sans précédent. L'initiative «Quit Smoking with Barça» [Arrêtez de fumer avec le Barça] (quitsmokingwithbarca.eu) entend tirer parti du succès de la campagne «Les ex-fumeurs, rien ne les arrête» menée par la Commission européenne et profiter du soutien des millions de supporters du Barça pour aider 28 millions de fumeurs européens à en finir pour de bon avec la cigarette.

Tout d'abord, je tiens vivement à saluer cette initiative. En effet, réunir au sein d'un partenariat l'un des clubs sportifs les plus prestigieux au monde et une institution européenne constitue un projet ambitieux qui, me semble-t-il, n'avait encore jamais été tenté à cette échelle. «Quit Smoking with Barça» est la dernière initiative, et la plus audacieuse, de la campagne primée «Les ex-fumeurs, rien ne les arrête», et il s'agit de la première fois que la Commission européenne collabore avec un partenaire sportif présent dans le cœur de millions de gens. Le programme ne vise pas à juger les fumeurs, mais souligne au contraire les nombreux avantages liés à l'arrêt du tabagisme, en combinant ces messages positifs aux outils concrets de la campagne.

1. La campagne «Les ex-fumeurs, rien ne les arrête» aide combien de personnes à travers l'Europe?

2. Est-il prévu d'établir d'autres partenariats de ce genre avec des clubs de football?

3. Est-il prévu de créer d'autres partenariats de cette nature dans d'autres sports tels le basket ou le rugby par exemple?

4. Existe-t-il des objectifs chiffrés de cette initiative avec le FC Barcelone?

**Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission**
*(7 novembre 2012)*

Depuis le lancement de la campagne «Les ex-fumeurs, rien ne les arrête» en juin 2011, plus de 260 000 Européens se sont inscrits sur iCoach, un outil gratuit d'aide à l'arrêt du tabac qui propose des conseils professionnels de manière interactive. 40 % des utilisateurs interrogés ont indiqué avoir arrêté de fumer après avoir utilisé iCoach pendant trois mois.

La campagne atteint un large public par divers canaux de communication, comme Facebook (24 985 861 personnes), le site officiel de la campagne (exsmokers.eu), qui comptabilise 242 143 visiteurs uniques, et l'application iCoach pour téléphone portable, téléchargée 40 000 fois jusqu'ici.

La campagne est régulièrement promue lors de manifestations sportives dans tous les pays de l'Union (marathons, matchs de basket de l'Euroleague, matchs de football). La campagne a notamment pour priorités l'action de proximité et la mise en valeur d'un mode de vie sain comme alternative attrayante du tabagisme.

La Commission a établi des indicateurs spécifiques afin de mesurer les résultats (pour différentes périodes) de la campagne sur la base des inscriptions sur iCoach et des téléchargements de l'application pour téléphone mobile. La Commission et le FC Barcelone n'ont pas fixé d'objectifs quantitatifs à proprement parler en raison du caractère novateur du partenariat et de l'absence de chiffres de référence.

Ce partenariat a déjà donné lieu à 517 articles dans les médias des États membres, qui ont généré 1 035 162 158 impressions dans toute l'Europe. Il n'existe pas d'autres projets de partenariat avec des clubs de football à l'heure actuelle.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008318/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* FC Barcelona — European Commission Partnership

Today the European Commission and FC Barcelona are announcing the establishment of an unprecedented partnership. The 'Quit Smoking with Barça' initiative (quitsmokingwithbarca.eu) intends to draw on the success of the 'Ex-smokers are unstoppable' campaign run by the European Commission and to take advantage of the support of millions of Barça fans to help 28 million European smokers give cigarettes up for good.

First of all, I would very much like to welcome this initiative. Bringing one of the most prestigious sports clubs in the world and a European institution together in a partnership is an ambitious project which, to my mind, has never been attempted on this scale. 'Quit Smoking with Barça' is the latest and boldest initiative of the award-winning 'Ex-smokers are unstoppable' campaign, and it is the first time that the Commission has collaborated with a sports partner loved by millions of people. The programme does not aim to judge smokers but on the contrary underlines the many advantages linked to quitting smoking by combining these positive messages with the specific tools of the campaign.

1. How many people does the 'Ex-smokers are unstoppable' campaign help across Europe?

2. Are there plans to establish other partnerships of this kind with football clubs?

3. Are there plans to create other partnerships of this nature in other sports, such as basketball or rugby for example?

4. Are there quantitative targets for this initiative with FC Barcelona?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

Since the launch of the 'Ex-Smokers are Unstoppable' campaign in June 2011, more than 260 000 Europeans have registered on iCoach — a free smoking cessation tool offering professional advice in an interactive way. After three months of using iCoach, 40% of users surveyed reported that they had quit smoking.

The campaign has a significant outreach on different communication channels. On Facebook, it has reached 24 985 861 people so far. The official website exsmokers.eu has received 242 143 unique visitors. iCoach mobile application has been downloaded 40 000 times so far.

The campaign is regularly promoted at sport events in all EU countries (marathons, Euroleague basketball games, football matches). One of the campaign's priorities is to 'go local' and underline the importance of a healthy lifestyle as an attractive alternative to smoking.

The Commission has set specific indicators to measure campaign results — for different periods of the campaign — based on iCoach registrations and downloads of the mobile application. The Commission and FC Barcelona did not formulate quantitative targets as such, because of the pioneering character of the partnership and the absence of relevant benchmarks.

The partnership has already generated 517 media articles across EU Member States with 1 035 162 158 media impressions across Europe. There are currently no plans to launch similar initiatives with other football clubs.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008320/12**
**to the Commission**
**Syed Kamall (ECR)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Fees for visa processing

I have been contacted by a constituent who is a British citizen and who is married to a South African citizen who needs a visa to travel to other EU countries, including countries in the Schengen area.

He informs me that most EU embassies in London have outsourced the processing of their visas to third-party companies who charge a processing fee on top of official visa fees.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. if it is aware of any way of avoiding paying these processing fees?

2. if there are any EU or Schengen rules preventing the charging of processing fees?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 October 2012)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007610/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008321/12**
**to the Commission**
**Syed Kamall (ECR)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Alleged discrimination by trade union in the Republic of Cyprus

I have been contacted by a constituent who is of Turkish Cypriot origin and has been working in the Republic of Cyprus for two years. My constituent tells me that his application to join a Greek Cypriot teaching union has been rejected.

When he visited the relevant department of the Ministry of Education to find out the reasons, he discovered that one of the compulsory conditions attached to membership of the union is to be proficient in written and spoken Greek.

My constituent believes that this law is in violation of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, which he claims recognises both the Greek and Turkish languages. He claims that he has since found out that other institutions of the Republic of Cyprus also block Turkish-speakers.

When he raised this issue with the European Commission in Nicosia, he was told that the Commission has more involvement with the Turkish Cypriot community in Northern Cyprus than with the Turkish-Cypriot minority in the Republic of Cyprus.

Can the Commission confirm whether:

1. the Republic of Cyprus is violating any EC laws on discrimination against minorities in refusing to allow Turkish-speakers to join trade unions or government organisations?

2. it plans to take any action against the Cypriot Government concerning this alleged discrimination against Turkish-speakers in the Republic of Cyprus?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 November 2012)*

The Treaties do not provide for any direct legislative competence for the European legislator in terms of language requirements in the employment sector and labour relations.

Language as such, whether main or additional, is not a criterion for which discrimination is prohibited under the Race Directive 2000/43/EC ([1]).

As explained in its reply to Written Question E-001067/2012 ([2]), the Commission has no competence over matters concerning the definition of what is a national minority, the recognition of the status of minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the regime governing the use of regional or minority languages. Therefore the Commission does not plan to take action against the Cypriot government concerning the alleged discrimination against Turkish speakers in the Republic of Cyprus.

Member States must use all legal instruments available to them in order to guarantee that fundamental rights of persons belonging to minorities living on their territories are effectively protected in accordance with their constitutional order and obligations under international law, including the relevant instruments of the Council of Europe. It is up to the Council of Europe to monitor the application of the framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities as well as of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Cyprus is a State Party to the Convention since 1996 and ratified the Charter in 2002.

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([1]) Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin (OJ L 180, 19.7.2000).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008322/12**
**to the Commission**
**Syed Kamall (ECR)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Follow-up to parliamentary question on demolition of residential structures in Area C of Palestinian Territories

Following my previous Parliamentary Question E-006231/2012, the constituent who first raised the issue has asked about compensation.

Please could the Commission confirm whether any compensation will be paid to the EU and to residents following these demolitions?

**Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission**
*(30 October 2012)*

Although the community of Kahn al Ahmar — Kurshan has received demolition orders for their rehabilitated temporary shelters and latrines, the demolitions have been frozen by the Israeli courts thanks to the mobilisation of the community with the support of local and international organisations. Therefore, the question of compensation has not yet arisen.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008323/12**
**to the Commission**
**Syed Kamall (ECR)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Alleged breach of free movement of people and data protection by the Hungarian authorities

With reference to my Written Question E-004325/2012 — my constituent is concerned about the protection of his personal data which he submitted to the Hungarian authorities. They are refusing to delete his information from their immigration database.

My constituent tells me that he was contacted by the Immigration Office which stated: 'In conclusion, according to the abovementioned legislation and the SubSection 7 of Section 21 of the Privacy Act (Act. CXII of 2011 on Informational Self-Determination and Freedom of Information) your data cannot be erased from the database of the Immigration Office of Győr because the processing of the data was ordered by the law'.

Could the Commission confirm what action it plans to take in order to force the Hungarian authorities to either delete my constituent's records or to explain why they refuse to do so?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

The processing of the data in question falls under Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) as they are personal data processed for immigration purposes. The directive specifies the principles for any processing activity to be legitimate: it must be fair and lawful, for legitimate, specified and explicit purposes, data processed must be adequate, relevant, accurate and not excessive and kept up to date and must be processed for no longer than necessary. Article 12(b) of the directive explicitly grants the right to data subjects to request the controller to erase the personal data which are not processed in compliance with the provisions of that directive.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation falls within the competence of national authorities, in particular data protection supervisory authorities and courts (Article 28). Therefore I would suggest the Honourable Member to advise his constituent to address his case to the Hungarian data protection authority. He should request the data protection authority seek the application of the data protection rules. He can also request the authority to seek the erasure of his personal data by the Hungarian Immigration Office.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008324/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**
*(21 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* El derecho de autodeterminación en la UE

Entre 1,5 y 2 millones de ciudadanos se manifestaron el 11 de septiembre pasado en Barcelona a favor de la independencia de Cataluña. Es evidente que, en el corazón de la Unión Europea, hay en marcha un proceso democrático, inclusivo y europeísta que vira hacia posiciones independentistas, y que cuenta con un apoyo masivo de la población. Así las cosas, dentro de la situación política catalana, cabría la posibilidad que se convocara, en un futuro, un referéndum de autodeterminación.

¿Cree la Comisión que un referéndum democrático de autodeterminación en una región europea es conforme a los principios democráticos del Tratado de la UE, especialmente, los artículos 2 y 10?

Puesto que el dictamen del Tribunal Internacional de Justicia sobre la declaración unilateral de Kosovo establece que el principio democrático está por encima del de integridad territorial y, por lo tanto, del derecho estatal, ¿cree la Comisión que, para el buen funcionamiento de la Unión, le corresponde establecer una hoja de ruta democrática y transparente, para un eventual proceso de independencia de Cataluña?

¿Cree la Comisión que un proceso claro y democrático es indispensable para garantizar los derechos democráticos y políticos de los catalanes —ciudadanos europeos—, así como los derechos adquiridos de los ciudadanos europeos con nacionalidad no española que residen en Cataluña? ¿No cree la Comisión que hay que dar seguridad jurídica también a las inversiones internacionales y europeas en Cataluña, especialmente por el hecho que este territorio europeo integra el mercado común y la zona euro, y teniendo en cuenta la grave crisis económica que afecta la UE?

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008752/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)**
*(28 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Consecuencias en el ámbito europeo de una posible salida de Cataluña de la Unión Europea

La asamblea legislativa (Parlamento) de una comunidad autónoma de España (Cataluña) ha aprobado una declaración en virtud de la cual se propone convocar un referéndum para iniciar un proceso de secesión del resto del territorio español.

A la vista de estas intenciones, será necesario que los representantes del nuevo poder político inicien las negociaciones pertinentes para su reconocimiento en el orden internacional como paso previo a la solicitud de ingreso en la Unión Europea, de la que obviamente habría quedado excluida.

La Comisión a la que me dirijo será consciente de que, al menos mientras se desarrolle este largo proceso político, volverían a restaurarse las fronteras de ese territorio con España y Francia comportando ello, entre otras consecuencias, una quiebra del mercado interior actualmente existente.

¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión Europea para que no se perjudique el comercio entre los actuales Estados de la Unión como consecuencia del nacimiento de una nueva frontera?

¿Qué posición piensa adoptar ya en relación con los proyectos europeos en curso de infraestructuras de transporte, energía u otros de los que se beneficia ese territorio?

¿Qué instrumentos pondrá en pie para proteger a los inversores europeos teniendo en cuenta las abultadas cifras de déficit y deuda pública de la actual Comunidad Autónoma de Cataluña?

¿Qué piensa hacer con los procedimientos hoy en marcha de solicitud de ayudas de los fondos europeos teniendo en cuenta las cantidades ya percibidas con cargo a ellos, como fueron —entre otras— los tres millones de euros para el sector de la automoción aprobadas por el Parlamento Europeo en 2010?

**Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Barroso en nombre de la Comisión**
*(28 de noviembre de 2012)*

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-008133/2012 ([1]).

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([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009009/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(8 oktober 2012)*

*Betreft:* Gevolgen van onafhankelijkheid

Recente ontwikkelingen in Spanje doen vermoeden dat er nu daadwerkelijk een gerede kans bestaat dat Catalonië een onafhankelijke staat wordt. Zo gaf bij een onlangs gehouden opiniepeiling 51 % van de Catalanen aan dat zij vóór onafhankelijkheid zouden stemmen.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de ontwikkelingen in Catalonië?

2. Wat is — in de ogen van de Commissie — de wettelijke status van een onafhankelijk Catalonië?

De kans op vergelijkbare afscheidingen in andere lidstaten, bijvoorbeeld België en het VK, lijkt toe te nemen.

3. Wat zijn — volgens de EU — de mogelijke gevolgen van dit soort afscheidingen?

4. Zouden de nieuwe staten het lidmaatschap van de EU moeten aanvragen en, zo ja, wat gebeurt er indien zij daarvan afzien? Zouden zij opnieuw kunnen onderhandelen over de voorwaarden voor het lidmaatschap?

**Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie**
*(28 november 2012)*

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-008133/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008324/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Self-determination rights in the EU

On 11 September 2012, between 1.5 and 2 million people in Barcelona marched in favour of Catalan independence. A democratic, inclusive and pro-European process is clearly underway in the heart of the European Union, veering towards pro-independence movements and attracting huge public support. Given the Catalan political situation, it might soon be possible to call a self-determination referendum.

Does the Commission believe that a democratic self-determination referendum in an EU region is consistent with the Treaty on European Union democratic principles, in particular Articles 2 and 10?

The International Court of Justice's opinion on Kosovo's unilateral declaration states that the democratic principle is above territorial integrity and, therefore, state law. Therefore, does the Commission believe that it must define a democratic and transparent road map for a possible Catalan independence process?

Does it believe that a clear and democratic process is essential to guarantee the political and democratic rights of Catalans — EU citizens — and the acquired rights of non-Spanish EU citizens living in Catalonia?

Does it believe that legal certainty must also be given to international and European investments in Catalonia, especially as this EU territory is part of the common market and the euro area, and taking into account the severe economic crisis affecting the EU?

**Question for written answer E-008752/12**
**to the Commission**
**Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)**
*(28 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Consequences at European level of the possibility of a Catalan exit from the European Union

The parliament of the Spanish autonomous community of Catalonia has approved a motion to hold a referendum on independence from the rest of Spain.

If Catalans vote for independence, their new government will need to enter into negotiations with a view to the international recognition of Catalonia before it can apply for membership of the European Union (of which it would have ceased to be a part).

The Commission is doubtless aware that a vote for independence would lead to the reestablishment of national borders between Catalonia, Spain and France, at least until such time as the aforementioned protracted political process is concluded. One consequence of Catalan independence would therefore be the breakdown of the internal market as it currently stands.

In the event that Catalonia secedes from Spain, what measures does the Commission intend to take to prevent trade between current EU Member States from being disrupted?

What position does it intend to adopt with regard to ongoing European transport infrastructure, energy and other projects in Catalonia?

What instruments would it establish to protect European investors, given Catalonia's vast budget deficit and public debt?

What action would it take with regard to ongoing applications for EU funding, bearing in mind that Catalonia has already received substantial support, such as the EUR 3 million approved by the European Parliament in 2010 for the automotive sector?

**Question for written answer E-009009/12**
**to the Commission**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(8 October 2012)*

*Subject:* Consequences of independence

The latest events in Spain show that Catalonia now has a real chance of becoming an independent state. This has been demonstrated by a number of opinion polls: for example, in a recent poll 51 % of Catalans surveyed said they would vote yes to independence.

1. Is the Commission aware of developments in Catalonia?

2. What is the Commission's opinion on the legal position of Catalonia should it gain independence?

There seems to be an increasing possibility of similar splits occurring in other Member States, for instance in Belgium or the UK.

3. What would be the consequences in the view of the European Union should these scenarios become reality?

4. Would the new states have to apply for EU membership? If so, what would be the consequences should they not wish to do so? Could they renegotiate the terms?

**Joint answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008133/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008325/12**
**to the Commission**
**Chris Davies (ALDE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Laying Hens Directive

How many Member States are now in compliance with the terms of the Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, and how long does the Commission think it will take before all Member States are in compliance?

Can the Commission confirm that eggs from hens in Member States that are not in compliance with the directive are not being exported to other Member States?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

In response to the question as to how many Member States comply with the ban on unenriched cages as laid down in Council Directive 1999/74/EC on the protection of laying hens ([1]) the Commission wishes to point out that the information provided by several Member States on their state of compliance is being assessed within the frame of ongoing infringements proceedings. The Commission is therefore currently not in a position to provide a precise figure on the number of Member States that may be considered to comply.

With regard to eggs produced in non-compliant systems, they are illegal since 1 January 2012. Member States are responsible for ensuring, through efficient national controls and traceability systems, that no distortion of the market is caused by the circulation of eggs not produced in compliance with the applicable legislation.

([1]) OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 53.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008326/12**
**to the Commission**
**Chris Davies (ALDE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Farmed butterfly pupae

Butterfly exhibits in zoos, museums and elsewhere rely on weekly imports of farmed tropical pupae to stock their displays. It is claimed that the export of such butterfly or moth pupae is a good example of sustainable development for rainforests.

Council Directive 91/496/EEC requires, for animal imports including all insect imports, that a common veterinary entry document (CVED) be issued. Does the Commission acknowledge that this requirement places a particularly, and perhaps uniquely, onerous burden on the importers and exporters of farmed tropical butterfly and moth pupae?

Will the Commission assess the case for ranched and farmed tropical butterfly and moth pupae being exempted from the current CVED requirements, or for special provisions to be introduced that address the particular nature of the trade?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(25 October 2012)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-000154/2012, E-001494/2012 and E-004576/2010 ([1]) which are equally relevant for the import of butterfly pupae.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-4576&language=EN

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008327/12**
**to the Commission**
**Chris Davies (ALDE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Aarhus Convention on Access to Information

What is the Commission's response to the findings and recommendations of the Compliance Committee of the UN Economic Committee for Europe (UNECE) to the effect that the EU, although a party to the Aarhus Convention, does not have in place an appropriate legislative framework to implement Article 7 of the Convention with respect to the adoption of National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAPS) by Member States in accord with Directive 2009/28/EC? What action will it take as a consequence?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 November 2012)*

The Commission has taken due note of the findings and recommendations of the non-judicial and consultative review of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee under Article 15 of the Aarhus Convention with regard to Communication ACCC/C/2010/54.

Should a Member State be requested to submit an amended National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP), as provided by Article 4(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC ([1]), the Commission will instruct the respective Member State to ensure that its national arrangements for public participation are in compliance with Article 7 and Article 6, paragraphs 3, 4 and 8 of the Aarhus Convention. In the same way, the Commission will make Croatia aware of these requirements as regards its obligation to submit a NREAP following its accession to the EU as of 1 July 2013.

The Commission will consequently adapt its method of evaluating any future NREAPs in order to better reflect the recommendations of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008328/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Use of drones by the US military in Waziristan

The use of drones by the US military in the Pakistani region of Waziristan is alleged to be illegal under international law. Furthermore, the human cost of drones is high, with many innocent civilians losing their lives in attacks from this source.

What pressure is the EU applying on the USA to encourage an end to the use of drones by US military forces?

**Answer given by High-Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 November 2012)*

The EU has repeatedly stated its position that the fight against terrorism must be conducted with respect for the rule of law and in full conformity with international law including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law.

The members of the Public International Law Working Party of the Council (COJUR) conduct a regular informal dialogue with the US with the US State Department's Legal Adviser. Participants on the EU side have, in the context of this in-depth dialogue, raised a number of questions and concerns with the US regarding counter-terrorism and international law *inter alia* on the use of drones.

In the light of the new elements and positions made public with regard to the US drone program, we will continue to address this issue with the United States in the coming months, including in its upcoming informal dialogue with the State Department's Legal Advisor.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008329/12**
**à la Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Classement européen des villes engorgées

Les villes européennes sont le principal moteur de la croissance économique, mais les véhicules particuliers demeurent très polluants et entraînent des embouteillages, malgré des efforts pour renverser la tendance.

L'année dernière, la Commission a adopté une feuille de route pour la prochaine décennie, le Livre blanc sur les transports, qui vise un système de transport plus propre, capable de promouvoir la mobilité tout en soutenant la croissance économique.

L'objectif est ici de diminuer fortement la dépendance de l'Europe face au pétrole importé et de réduire de 60 % les émissions de carbone dans les transports d'ici à 2050.

Lors d'une audience publique organisée dans le cadre de la semaine de la mobilité, les autorités européennes ont expliqué que, je cite, «le moment était bien choisi pour faire le point sur la mobilité dans les villes dans le but d'évaluer les progrès effectués» et que «bon nombre de villes européennes ne progressaient pas, car elles restaient coincées dans un modèle urbain dominé par les voitures».

1. Sur quel document se basent ces affirmations?

2. Existe-t-il un classement de ces villes européennes?

3. Quel est ce classement?

4. Est-il accessible et où est-il disponible?

5. Sur quels paramètres se fonde-t-il?

**Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission**
*(31 octobre 2012)*

(1.) Le Livre blanc «Feuille de route pour un espace européen unique des transports» ([1]) est le principal document dans lequel la Commission européenne présente son point de vue sur la situation du système européen de transport et son développement futur. Le livre blanc consacre une place considérable à la mobilité urbaine et définit le contexte urbain comme celui qui pose les plus grands défis à la mobilité durable. Par exemple, les zones urbaines sont à l'origine de 23 % des émissions de $CO_2$ provenant des transports (16 % du total des émissions sont liées à l'utilisation de la voiture en ville) et 69 % des accidents de la route ont lieu dans les zones urbaines. Les villes sont également affectées par les embouteillages qui, à leur tour, sont essentiellement liés aux taux de possession de voitures. En même temps, le Livre blanc souligne l'importance pour les zones urbaines de relever ces défis, en constatant que ce sont les transports urbains qui offrent le plus de possibilités de mobilité alternative et de réduction des émissions.

(2.-5.) La Commission européenne n'a pas établi de classement des villes. Par ailleurs, l'idée d'un tableau de bord de la mobilité urbaine a été présentée dans le cadre de l'initiative n° 31 du Livre blanc. Les principales composantes de ce tableau de bord doivent encore être précisées.

([1]) Livre blanc «Feuille de route pour un espace européen unique des transports» [COM(2011) 144 final] ainsi que le document de travail des services de la Commission SEC(2011) 391 final et le rapport d'analyse d'impact — SEC(2011)358 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008329/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* European ranking of congested cities

European cities are the main drivers of economic growth, but certain vehicles are still very polluting and lead to traffic jams, despite efforts to reverse the trend.

Last year, the Commission adopted a road map for the next decade, the White Paper on Transport, which aims to create a cleaner transport system, capable of promoting mobility while supporting economic growth.

The objective here is to significantly decrease Europe's dependency on imported oil and reduce carbon emissions from transport by 60 % by 2050.

During a public hearing organised as part of European Mobility Week, the European authorities explained that, I quote, 'it is a good time to look at mobility in cities to see what progress has been made' and that 'there are a lot of cities in Europe that are not making progress as they are stuck in an urban model dominated by cars'.

1. On which document are these claims based?

2. Is there a ranking of these European cities?

3. What is this ranking?

4. Is it accessible or available?

5. On what parameters is it based?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

(1.) The White Paper 'Towards a European transport area' ([1]) is the main document in which the European Commission provides its views on the current state of the European transport system and its future development. The White Paper gives considerable attention to urban mobility, stating the urban context poses the biggest challenges to the sustainability of transport. For instance, urban areas account for 23 % of $CO_2$ emissions from transport (16 % of total from car use in cities) and 69 % of road accidents. Cities also suffer most from congestion, which in turn depends mainly on car ownership levels. At the same time, the White Paper underlines the importance to urban areas to address above challenges, observing that urban transport offers the biggest scope for a different type of mobility and an abatement of emissions.

(2.-5.) The European Commission has not compiled a ranking of cities. At the same time, the concept of an urban mobility scoreboard has been put forward through the White Paper's Initiative 31. The main elements of the scoreboard still need to be developed.

([1]) White Paper 'Towards a European transport area' (COM(2011) 144 final), also: Staff Working Document — SEC(2011) 391 final — and Impact Assessment report for the White Paper — SEC(2011)358 final.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008330/12**
**à la Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Écarter des agglomérations les voitures fonctionnant à l'essence d'ici 2050

Les villes européennes sont le principal moteur de la croissance économique, mais les véhicules particuliers demeurent très polluants et entraînent des embouteillages, malgré des efforts pour renverser la tendance

L'année dernière, la Commission a adopté une feuille de route pour la prochaine décennie, le livre blanc sur les transports, qui vise un système de transport plus propre, capable de promouvoir la mobilité tout en soutenant la croissance économique.

L'objectif est ici de diminuer fortement la dépendance de l'Europe au pétrole importé et de réduire de 60 % les émissions de carbone dans les transports d'ici 2050.

L'un des objectifs de la Commission est d'écarter des agglomérations les voitures fonctionnant à l'essence d'ici 2050.

1. Quels sont les objectifs fixés entre 2012 et 2050?

2. Est-ce aussi prévu pour les véhicules diesel?

3. Quels sont les transports durables préconisés?

4. Existe-t-il une évaluation des incidences *(impact assessment)* liées à l'utilisation de ces transports durables?

**Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission**
*(5 novembre 2012)*

1-2. Le Livre blanc sur les transports publié par la Commission en 2011 ([1]) a fixé, comme objectif intermédiaire, une division par deux de l'utilisation des véhicules à carburants classiques dans les transports urbains d'ici à 2030. La Commission entend adopter, d'ici à la fin de l'année 2012, le paquet «Énergie propre pour les transports», qui contribuera à la réalisation de cet objectif intermédiaire par le déploiement d'une stratégie sur les carburants alternatifs en vue du remplacement à long terme de l'essence comme source d'énergie dans les transports. Cette stratégie couvrira tous les modes de transport, y compris les véhicules diesel.

3. Le document de travail des services de la Commission ([2]) joint au Livre blanc sur les transports de 2011 reconnaît la nécessité d'une transition entre une mobilité des personnes dans les villes essentiellement fondée sur la voiture et une mobilité fondée sur d'autres modes de déplacement (marche, vélo, transports publics de qualité et véhicules plus propres). Le livre blanc souligne l'importance de plans de mobilité urbaine durable, pour favoriser le passage à des services de transport et de mobilité plus efficaces et plus respectueux de l'environnement.

4. L'analyse d'impact ([3]) qui appuyait le Livre blanc sur les transports de 2011 a évalué la contribution actuelle des zones urbaines aux émissions globales de gaz à effet de serre et de polluants dans le secteur des transports.

([1]) Livre blanc «Feuille de route pour un espace européen unique des transports — Vers un système de transport compétitif et économe en ressources», COM(2011) 144 final.
([2]) SEC(2001) 391 final.
([3]) SEC(2011) 358 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008330/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Removing petrol cars from cities by 2050

European cities are the main drivers of economic growth, but certain vehicles are still very polluting and lead to traffic jams, despite efforts to reverse the trend.

Last year, the Commission adopted a road map for the next decade, the White Paper on Transport, which aims to create a cleaner transport system, capable of promoting mobility while supporting economic growth.

The objective here is to significantly decrease Europe's dependency on imported oil and reduce carbon emissions from transport by 60 % by 2050.

One of the Commission's objectives is to remove petrol cars from cities by 2050.

1. What objectives have been set between 2012 and 2050?

2. Will this also apply to diesel vehicles?

3. What sustainable modes of transport does the Commission recommend?

4. Is there an impact assessment on the use of these sustainable modes of transport?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 November 2012)*

1 & 2. An intermediate objective of halving the use of 'conventionally-fuelled' cars in urban transport by 2030 has been set in the Commission's 2011 White Paper for Transport ([1]). The Commission plans to adopt by the end of 2012, the 'Clean Power for Transport Package', which will contribute to this objective by laying out an alternative fuels strategy for the long-term substitution of oil as energy source for transport, comprising all modes of transport, including diesel-powered vehicles.

3. The Staff Working Document ([2]) attached to the Commission's 2011 White Paper for Transport identifies the need for a transition from a primarily car-based personal mobility in cities to a mobility based on walking, cycling, high-quality public transport, and cleaner vehicles. The White Paper underlines the importance of sustainable urban mobility plans to foster a transition towards more efficient and sustainable transport and mobility services.

4. The impact assessment ([3]) supporting the Commission's 2011 White Paper for Transport investigated the current contribution of urban areas to overall emissions of greenhouse gas and pollutants from transport.

([1]) White Paper Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, COM(2011)144 final.
([2]) SEC(2001)391 final.
([3]) SEC(2011) 358 final.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008331/12**
**à la Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Naissance controversée du corps de volontaires humanitaires européens

La Commission, en charge de l'action humanitaire (Echo) ([1]) a dévoilé mercredi 19 septembre les contours du «corps de volontaires humanitaires de l'Union européenne» ([2]). Il s'agit de former et d'envoyer 10 000 Européens de plus de 18 ans dans des pays touchés par des crises humanitaires. Sont principalement visés des jeunes cherchant à acquérir une expérience dans ce domaine, mais aussi des retraités de l'action humanitaire.

Les volontaires suivront une formation de plusieurs semaines avant d'exercer des missions d'un mois à un an auprès des organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) reconnues par les services d'Echo. Le coût du projet est estimé à 239,1 millions d'euros, dont 58 millions pour la formation et 137 millions pour l'envoi des volontaires sur le terrain, le reste étant consacré aux programmes. Ce budget doit encore être approuvé par le Parlement européen.

«Les volontaires humanitaires afficheront la solidarité de l'Europe en venant en aide aux populations qui en ont le plus besoin», a précisé Kristalina Georgieva ([3]), la commissaire à la coopération internationale, l'aide humanitaire et la réaction aux crises.

1. C'est une décision pour le moins étonnante quand on se souvient que la création d'un corps de volontaires humanitaires avait été jugée *«ni réaliste ni même souhaitable»* dans une étude de la Commission publiée en 2006. Le rapport parlait de *«projet basé sur l'offre plus que sur les besoins du terrain»* et s'inquiétait du *«rapport coût-efficacité faible»*. Qu'est ce qui explique ce revirement soudain depuis le traité de Lisbonne?

2. Les régions sinistrées pour une raison ou pour une autre n'ont-elles pas plutôt besoin de personnel surqualifié comme en engagent exclusivement la Croix-Rouge, l'Unicef et bien d'autres?

3. Que répond la Commission au détracteur du projet qui estime qu'avec l'argent dépensé pour un volontaire, nous pourrions plutôt apporter de l'eau potable à 10 000 personnes?

**Réponse donnée par Mme Georgieva au nom de la Commission**
*(9 novembre 2012)*

La proposition relative aux volontaires humanitaires de l'UE répond à la difficulté de faire face à une augmentation du nombre de catastrophes naturelles et à leur ampleur, ainsi qu'à la nécessité d'améliorer les compétences des volontaires engagés dans l'aide humanitaire. Les enseignements tirés de la situation en Haïti confirment que la formation et la préparation sont la condition sine qua non de l'efficacité du déploiement. La présente initiative est susceptible d'avoir un impact positif sur la capacité d'insertion professionnelle de jeunes Européens en leur donnant la possibilité d'acquérir d'importantes compétences. Les volontaires humanitaires de l'UE ne remplacent pas les professionnels ni ne réduisent la nécessité de recourir à des professionnels, mais leur contribution est de nature à renforcer les capacités des organisations humanitaires.

Le traité de Lisbonne a maintenu, dans son article 214, paragraphe 5, le lancement d'une telle initiative, ce qui confère à la Commission le mandat d'agir. Depuis 2006, la Commission a mené de vastes consultations, en particulier avec le Parlement européen, mais également avec des experts et des parties intéressées dans ce domaine. Plus de 100 organisations ont été auditionnées; une consultation publique en ligne a été réalisée; un deuxième examen a été publié en 2011. Ces efforts ont contribué à développer la formule qui est fondée sur la conclusion que, s'il est bien organisé, le programme de volontariat humanitaire comble effectivement des lacunes et répond aux besoins formulés par le secteur.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm

Répondre aux besoins élémentaires de la population des régions concernées constitue, en effet, un objectif majeur de l'aide humanitaire de l'UE. Pour autant, il convient que l'intervention de l'UE dans les pays fragiles ou frappés par une crise développe la résilience des communautés; les volontaires de l'UE pourraient jouer un rôle dans ce contexte.

Le budget proposé pour les volontaires humanitaires de l'UE n'empiète pas sur la contribution importante apportée par l'UE aux actions humanitaires, étant donné qu'il prévoit une ligne budgétaire spécifique.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008331/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Controversial creation of the European voluntary corps

The Commission, which is responsible for humanitarian action (Echo ([1])), revealed the outline of the 'European voluntary humanitarian aid corps' ([2]) on Wednesday, 19 September. It involves training and deploying 10 000 Europeans of over 18 years of age to countries affected by humanitarian crises. The corps is mainly aimed at young people seeking experience in this area but also at those who have retired from humanitarian action.

Volunteers will follow a training programme for several weeks before carrying out missions of one month to one year with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) recognised by Echo. The cost of the project is estimated at EUR 239.1 million, of which 58 million will be used for training and 137 million to send volunteers to the field, while the rest will be used for programmes. This budget has yet to be approved by the European Parliament.

*'EU Aid Volunteers will demonstrate our European solidarity by helping those most in need'*, according to Kristalina Georgieva ([3]), the Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response.

1. This decision is surprising when we recall that the creation of a voluntary humanitarian aid corps was not considered *'feasible or desirable'* in a Commission study published in 2006. The report talked about a project that was *'not needs-based but rather supply-driven'* and was concerned about the *'low cost-effectiveness ratio'*. How does the Commission explain this sudden about-face since the Treaty of Lisbon?

2. Do disaster regions rather need highly qualified personnel, such as those working for the Red Cross, Unicef and others?

3. How would the Commission respond to the project's detractors who believe that the money spent on one volunteer could be used instead to provide drinking water to 10 000 people?

**Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

The EU Aid Volunteers proposal respond to the challenge to cope with an increased number and magnitude of disasters and the need to improve the competences of volunteers involved in humanitarian aid. The lessons learnt from Haiti confirm that training and preparation are a condition sine qua non-for effective deployment. This initiative has the potential to have a positive impact on the employability of young Europeans giving them the opportunity to acquire important competences. The EU Aid Volunteers do not replace or reduce the need for professionals, but their contribution would reinforce the capacity of humanitarian organisations.

The Lisbon Treaty has maintained in its Article 214.5 the creation of such an initiative which leads to a mandate for the Commission to act. The Commission has engaged since 2006 in extensive consultations, notably with Parliament but also with experts and stakeholders in the field. Over 100 organisations have been heard; a public online consultation has been undertaken; a second review has been published in 2011. These efforts have contributed to developing the concept based on the conclusion that, if organised in the right way, a humanitarian volunteer programme does fill gaps and responds to needs formulated by the sector.

Meeting the basic needs of the population from the affected areas constitutes, indeed, a major objective of EU humanitarian aid. Yet, it is important that the EU's intervention in fragile or crisis-affected countries builds resilience of communities and the EU Aid Volunteers would play a role in this context.

The proposed budget for the EU Aid Volunteers does not encroach on the significant contribution of the EU to humanitarian operations as it foresees a dedicated budget line.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/980&format=HTML&
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/index_en.htm

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008332/12**
**à la Commission**
**Franck Proust (PPE)**
*(21 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Souscrire une assurance automobile dans un autre État membre

Le poste de dépenses que représente l'assurance automobile peut parfois s'avérer très lourd pour les ménages. La concurrence se développe de plus en plus, c'est un fait. Il y a de très nombreux moyens de comparer les offres et il est très aisé de faire son choix. Le marché unique, dont nous fêtons les 20 ans cette année, devrait permettre à chaque consommateur de comparer les offres dans d'autres pays de l'Union.

Il est clair qu'une offre d'assurance à l'étranger, même moins chère, n'est pas forcément la mieux adaptée aux réalités du pays de circulation du véhicule. Mais la directive de 1992 (directive 92/49/CEE) sur la libre prestation dans le marché des assurances au sein de l'Union, pose le cadre réglementaire et autorise, en théorie, le consommateur à souscrire une assurance auprès d'un agent installé et régi par la législation d'un autre État membre que le pays d'immatriculation de son propre véhicule.

1. La Commission peut-elle le confirmer?

2. Dans l'affirmative (question 1), quelles sont les conditions pour y souscrire?

3. Dans l'affirmative (question 1), la Commission a-t-elle constaté que certains dispositifs nationaux (notamment l'obligation pour le futur assureur d'un véhicule d'être certifié et autorisé à exercer par l'État membre d'immatriculation du véhicule, alors même que cet assureur est par ailleurs basé dans un autre État membre et en règle dans son propre pays) pouvaient entraver la libre prestation?

4. En pratique, comment un consommateur peut-il s'informer sur les agents fournissant ce genre de service transfrontalier?

**Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission**
*(13 novembre 2012)*

1-2. La Commission confirme qu'un citoyen de l'UE peut en effet contracter une police d'assurance pour un véhicule automobile soit auprès d'un assureur établi dans l'État membre où ce véhicule est immatriculé, soit auprès d'un assureur établi dans un autre État membre que celui où se trouve le véhicule. La législation européenne n'impose pas de conditions supplémentaires aux consommateurs en ce qui concerne la souscription d'une police d'assurance automobile obligatoire dans un contexte transfrontalier.

3. Un assureur automobile est surveillé et agréé par une seule autorité de supervision, celle de son pays d'enregistrement. Par conséquent, un assureur n'a besoin que d'un seul agrément pour pouvoir exercer ses activités dans tous les États membres de l'UE. L'assureur en question doit néanmoins se conformer aux règles adoptées dans l'intérêt général par le pays d'accueil. Ces dernières doivent s'appliquer de façon non discriminatoire à toute entreprise exerçant ses activités dans cet État membre et être objectivement nécessaires et proportionnées à l'objectif poursuivi. Par conséquent, seules les dispositions nationales qui respectent cette stricte condition, évaluée en dernier ressort par la Cour de Justice de l'UE, peuvent restreindre la libre prestation de services d'assurance.

4. Les consommateurs peuvent s'informer sur les assureurs automobiles proposant des services dans les États membres à l'adresse https://eiopa.europa.eu/publications/register-of-insurance-undertakings/index.html, par l'intermédiaire des moteurs de recherche d'internet ou en contactant les autorités nationales de supervision de l'assurance.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008332/12**
**to the Commission**
**Franck Proust (PPE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Purchasing car insurance in another Member State

Car insurance can sometimes place a heavy burden on households as an expenditure. Competition is constantly developing. There are many ways to compare prices and it very easy to choose. The single market, whose 20th anniversary we are celebrating this year, should allow every consumer to compare prices in other EU countries.

Clearly a foreign insurance policy, even if it is cheaper, is not necessarily best adapted to the realities of the country in which the vehicle is used. However, the 1992 Directive (Directive 92/49/EEC) on the freedom to provide services in the insurance market within the EU establishes the regulatory framework and, in theory, authorises consumers to purchase insurance from an agent established and regulated by the legislation of a Member State other than the country in which the vehicle is registered

1. Can the Commission confirm this?

2. If so, what are the conditions governing such a purchase?

3. If so (question 1), is the Commission aware that certain national provisions (particularly the obligation for the future insurer of a vehicle to be certified and authorised by the vehicle registration's Member State, even though this insurer is based in another Member State and is regulated in his or her own country) could hamper the freedom to provide services?

4. In practice, how can a consumer find out about agents providing this kind of cross-border service?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 November 2012)*

1-2. The Commission can indeed confirm that a citizen in the EU can buy an insurance policy for a motor vehicle with an insurer established in the Member State of registration of the vehicle or with an insurer established in any other Member State different from the Member State where the vehicle is. EC law does not impose any additional conditions upon consumers as regards the purchase of a compulsory motor insurance policy in a cross-border context.

3. A motor insurer is supervised and authorised by one single supervisor, namely that of its country of registration. It follows that the insurer can operate under a single licence in all Member States of the EU. Nevertheless, the insurer concerned must comply with host country rules adopted in the general interest. Such provisions must be applied without discrimination to all undertakings operating in that Member State and be objectively necessary and in proportion to the objective pursued. Thus, only those national provisions which respect this strict test, ultimately assessed by the Court of Justice of the EU, may hinder the free provision of insurance services.

4. Consumers can find out about motor insurers offering their services in the Member States on https://eiopa.europa.eu/publications/register-of-insurance-undertakings/index.html, through Internet search machines or by contacting national insurance supervisors.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008333/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)**
*(21 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Misura d'emergenza giusta della BCE

La decisione della BCE, che l'interrogante ritiene giusta e positiva, di comprare «senza limiti» titoli europei del debito pubblico, ha scatenato polemiche e discussioni sulla funzione della banca in questione e sulle eventuali conseguenze della misura presa, che è una misura d'emergenza, dovuta al fatto che le vere cause della crisi non sono state ancora rimosse e che le necessarie regole per controllare i flussi di capitale a breve e per limitare le operazioni finanziarie speculative non sono state ancora decise, né a livello europeo, né tanto meno a livello di G20. In questo contesto è doveroso porre la massima attenzione ai possibili effetti futuri dell'acquisto dei titoli di Stato da parte della BCE. Lo farà creando nuova liquidità, cioè stampando nuova moneta con il rischio di una inflazione più forte. La Bundesbank pone questo problema, ma «lo fa — afferma "Italia Oggi" del 12 settembre scorso in un articolo firmato da Lettieri e Raimondi — in modo e con argomenti sbagliati. Preme sui controlli di bilancio, sui tagli delle spese, sugli interventi automatici in caso di mancato mantenimento degli impegni presi dai governi, prima di concedere qualsiasi aiuto». Tanto la BCE, quanto la Bundesbank concordano, tuttavia, nel dare al Fondo Monetario Internazionale un potere di controllo e un ruolo diretto nella gestione dell'economia dei paesi beneficiari.

Assegnando al FMI il ruolo di grande controllore, può la Commissione rispondere a quanto segue:

1. Non considera che la BCE e l'UE ammettono ancora una volta di essere da esso dipendenti e quindi secondi anche in casa propria?

2. Non ritiene che la vera questione sia quella di rimettere in moto l'economia reale da parte dei governi con il sostegno dell'Unione?

3. Non le sembra inconcepibile che si possa accettare di intervenire con migliaia di miliardi di euro per i bailout di banche decotte o per la stessa stabilità finanziaria dei singoli paesi o dell'intero sistema e che si neghi allo stesso tempo l'immediata creazione di un fondo europeo di sviluppo di alcune centinaia di miliardi per finanziare le infrastrutture, la ricerca, le nuove tecnologie e l'occupazione?

**Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione**
*(31 ottobre 2012)*

1. L'accordo sul coinvolgimento, laddove possibile, del Fondo monetario internazionale (FMI) nell'elaborazione e nel monitoraggio dei programmi di aggiustamento macroeconomico nel quadro dell'assistenza finanziaria agli Stati membri dell'area dell'euro è stato raggiunto a livello di capi di Stato e di Governo dell'area dell'euro e inserito nel trattato che istituisce il Meccanismo europeo di stabilità. Le tre istituzioni, ossia la Commissione, la Banca centrale europea (BCE) e l'FMI, collaborano strettamente nel monitoraggio e nell'attuazione dei programmi di aggiustamento macroeconomico. Per quanto concerne la posizione della BCE, invitiamo l'onorevole parlamentare a prendere visione dei commenti del presidente Draghi sulle pagine *web* della Banca ([1]).

2. Per superare la crisi di fiducia nell'area dell'euro è necessario adottare un approccio globale che verte su diversi elementi, tra cui le politiche di rafforzamento della crescita stabilite nel patto per la crescita approvato in sede di Consiglio europeo, ma anche il completamento della riforma della *governance* economica e gli interventi volti a creare un assetto istituzionale per l'Unione economica e monetaria che consenta un buon funzionamento e solidi risultati dell'area dell'euro. Tali interventi mirano, tra l'altro, a una maggiore integrazione delle politiche finanziare, di bilancio ed economiche, come indicato nella relazione dei quattro presidenti del giugno 2012, cui seguirà una relazione intermedia in ottobre e una relazione finale in dicembre 2012.

3. La Commissione ha presentato una strategia globale per far fronte alla crisi. L'impiego di strumenti di protezione finanziaria efficaci e dalla portata sufficientemente ampia deve andare di pari passo con iniziative come il patto per la crescita che contribuiscono a migliorare la crescita potenziale.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/press/pressconf/2012/html/is120906.en.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008333/12**
**to the Commission**
**Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Correct emergency measure by the European Central Bank

The European Central Bank's (ECB) decision, with which I agree, to buy 'unlimited' European public debt securities has caused controversy and debate over the bank's function and the measure's possible consequences. This is an emergency measure, since the true causes of the crisis have not yet been eliminated and the rules necessary to control short-term capital flows and to restrict speculative financial transactions have not yet been decided on, either at the European level or within the G20. In this context, we must evaluate the possible future effects of the ECB acquiring State securities. It will buy them by creating new liquidity (printing new currency), thus risking higher inflation. The Bundesbank notes this problem, but according to Mario Lettieri and Paulo Raimondi's article in Italia Oggi, 12 September 2012, it is wrong. The article states that it prioritises budget controls, spending cuts and automatic interventions in the event of governments failing to keep to their commitments, before granting any aid. Both the ECB and the Bundesbank agree, however, on giving the International Monetary Fund (IMF) supervisory powers and a direct role in managing beneficiary countries' economies.

In assigning this supervisory role to the IMF, can the Commission say:

1. Are the ECB and EU admitting that they are dependent on the IMF and therefore rank in second place even on their own territory?

2. Does it believe that the true issue is for governments to get the real economy moving again, with the EU's support?

3. Does it believe that the following two ideas can exist simultaneously? Intervening with thousands of billions of euro to bail out unsound banks or to secure individual countries' financial stability or the system as a whole, and refusing to immediately create a hundred-billion euro, or more, European development fund to finance infrastructure, research, new technologies and employment?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

1. The agreement to involve, where possible, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the design and monitoring of macroeconomic adjustment programmes in the context of providing financial assistance to Euro Area Member States was reached among Euro Area Heads of State and Government. It has been enshrined in the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) Treaty. All three institutions, Commission, European Central Bank (ECB), and IMF work closely together in monitoring the implementation of macroeconomic adjustment programmes. As regards the position of the ECB, the Honourable Member may want to consult President's Draghi's comments in the ECB's webpage ([1]):

2. Overcoming the crisis of confidence in the Euro Area requires a comprehensive approach, which entails several elements. Growth-enhancing policies, as set in the Compact for Growth agreed by the European Council are one such element. Others concern the completion of economic governance reform and steps to move towards an institutional setup for Economic and monetary union that ensures a well-functioning and strongly performing Euro Area. Such steps include more integrated financial, budgetary, and economic policy frameworks as set out in the four presidents' report in June 2012, which will be followed up by an interim report in October and a final report in December 2012.

3. The Commission has outlined a comprehensive strategy to address the crisis. Sufficiently large and effective financial firewalls are as important as initiatives such as the Compact for Growth that help improve potential growth.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/press/pressconf/2012/html/is120906.en.html

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008335/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Lothar Bisky (GUE/NGL)**
*(21. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Europäisches Zentrum für Pressefreiheit

Ist der Kommission eine „Europäische Charta für Pressefreiheit" bekannt, die 2009 initiiert und bis zum Herbst 2011 von 47 Chefredakteuren und leitenden Journalisten aus 34 Staaten auch beschlossen und unterzeichnet wurde?

Ist der Kommission ein „Gründungsaufruf für ein Europäisches Zentrum für Pressefreiheit", das in Leipzig angesiedelt werden soll, bekannt?

Mit Mitteln in welcher Höhe beabsichtigt die Kommission ein „Europäisches Zentrum für Pressefreiheit" mit Sitz in Leipzig in den Jahren 2013 bis 2016 zu fördern?

**Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission**
*(31. Oktober 2012)*

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass 2009 eine Europäische Charta für Pressefreiheit initiiert und zunächst von 48 europäischen Journalisten unterzeichnet wurde. Genau genommen entstand die Idee zu dieser Charta bereits im Jahr 2007 bei einem hochrangigen Dialog mit Chefredakteuren europäischer Zeitungen, der von der Medien-Taskforce der damaligen Generaldirektion Informationsgesellschaft und Medien veranstaltet wurde. Bis heute haben fast 400 Journalisten diese Charta unterzeichnet, davon über 60 % aus Deutschland.

Die Kommission kennt ferner den Gründungsaufruf für ein Europäisches Zentrum für Pressefreiheit in Leipzig, der im Oktober 2011 von Journalisten und Google Deutschland unterzeichnet wurde.

Im Haushalt 2013 wurde ein Pilotprojekt für ein Europäisches Zentrum für Pressefreiheit mit einer vorläufigen Mittelausstattung von einer Million Euro vorgeschlagen. Dieser Vorschlag wurde von der Kommission günstig aufgenommen. Die Finanzierung könnte bei einer positiven Entscheidung der Haushaltsbehörde im nächsten Jahr um ein weiteres Jahr verlängert werden.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008335/12**
**to the Commission**
**Lothar Bisky (GUE/NGL)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* European Centre for Press Freedom

Is the Commission aware of a 'European Charter on Freedom of the Press' which was launched in 2009 and which was agreed and signed by 47 editors-in-chief and leading journalists from 34 countries by autumn 2011?

Is the Commission aware of a 'Founding Statement for a European Centre for Press Freedom' which is to be established in Leipzig?

What amount of resources does the Commission intend to spend between 2013 and 2016 on the promotion of a 'European Centre for Press Freedom' located in Leipzig?

**Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the existence of a European Charter on Freedom of the Press launched in 2009 and initially signed by 48 European journalists. As a matter of fact, the idea behind this Charter was born in 2007, during a high-level dialogue meeting with editors-in-chief of European newspapers organised by the Media Task Force of the formerly named Information Society and Media Directorate General. Today, nearly 400 journalists have signed the Charter, of which more than 60% from Germany.

The Commission is also aware of the Founding Statement for a European Centre for Press Freedom in Leipzig signed in October 2011 by Journalists and Google Germany.

A Pilot Project for a European Centre for Press Freedom with a tentative budget of one million euro has been proposed as an item on the 2013 budget. This proposal was well received by the Commission. Funding could be renewed for another year, subject to a favourable decision by the budgetary authority next year.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-008336/12**
**do Komisji**
**Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)**
*(21 września 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Stosowanie przemocy seksualnej wobec zatrzymanych na Białorusi

Białoruskie stowarzyszenie „Nasz Dom" poinformowało o przemocy seksualnej oraz groźbach jej stosowania wobec aresztowanych kobiet, które, przypomnę, często są działaczkami społecznymi i politycznymi i odsiadują wyroki za swoją aktywność przeciwko reżimowi Aleksandra Łukaszenki. W białoruskich aresztach nie ma też warunków utrzymania podstawowej higieny, milicjanci obrażają kobiety, biją i urągają ich godności. Działaczki „Naszego Domu" zebrały ponad sto relacji kobiet, które spotkały się podczas zatrzymań i w areszcie z przemocą oraz groźbami o charakterze seksualnym. Również przedstawicielce „Naszego Domu" grożono gwałtem.

Mając na uwadze zawieszenie relacji Unii Europejskiej z Białorusią, apeluję jednak o pomoc torturowanym kobietom. Podkreślając pilność sytuacji, pragnę zapytać, kiedy i jakie działania zostaną podjęte celem pomocy wykorzystywanym kobietom?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji**
*(12 października 2012 r.)*

Unii Europejskiej znane są doniesienia stowarzyszenia „Nasz Dom" dotyczące gróźb stosowania przemocy seksualnej wobec aresztowanych kobiet. Mimo że przypadki te miały miejsce w następstwie tłumienia demonstracji w 2010 r., stowarzyszenie „Nasz Dom" przekazało te informacje we wrześniu 2012 r.

Unia Europejska wyrażała wobec władz białoruskich wielokrotnie i na różnych szczeblach swoje głębokie zaniepokojenie traktowaniem więźniów politycznych i trwającą nadal praktyką zatrzymywania i więzienia osób z powodów politycznych. UE nałożyła sankcje na część personelu więziennego oraz na ministra spraw wewnętrznych Białorusi, sprawującego tę funkcję podczas tłumienia demonstracji w 2010 r. Szefowie misji UE w Mińsku regularnie spotykają się z uwolnionymi więźniami politycznymi oraz obrońcami praw człowieka w celu otrzymywania najświeższych informacji dotyczących warunków przetrzymywania więźniów.

UE przeznaczyła również środki finansowe na indywidualną pomoc ofiarom prześladowań na Białorusi.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008336/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Use of sexual violence against individuals arrested in Belarus

The Belarusian association 'Nash Dom' has revealed information about the threats and use of sexual violence against women arrested in Belarus who are often social and political activists and are imprisoned for their activities against the Lukashenka regime. Detention facilities in Belarus fail to meet the basic hygiene requirements; police officers insult and beat women and abuse their dignity. Female activists from the 'Nash Dom' association have collected over a hundred of accounts from women who have suffered from threats and the use of sexual violence during their arrest and detention. A representative of 'Nash Dom' was threatened with rape.

Even though EU-Belarus relations have been suspended, I still call on the EU to help the abused women. I would stress the urgency of the situation and ask when and what action will be taken to help them?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 October 2012)*

The EU is aware about the information by 'Nash Dom', of cases of threats of sexual violence against women while in official custody. While the cases in question occurred in the aftermath of the 2010 crackdown, 'Nash Dom' revealed them in September 2012.

The EU has on numerous occasions and at different levels expressed concern over the treatment and presence of political prisoners and persons detained because of their political activities to the Belarusian authorities. The EU has imposed sanctions on a number of prison staff and also on the Belorusian Minister of the Interior who was in office when the 2010 crackdown happened. EU Heads of Missions in Minsk regularly meet with released political prisoners and human rights defenders in order to receive updates on the prisoners' conditions.

The EU has also dedicated funds to individually assist victims of repression in Belarus.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008337/12**
**do Komisji**
**Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)**
*(21 września 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Raport w sprawie gazu łupkowego

W dniu dzisiejszym Komisja opublikowała raport dotyczący negatywnego wpływu wydobycia gazu łupkowego na środowisko oraz zdrowie ludzi. Autorzy wskazują, że w procesie szczelinowania nie tylko zużywa się znacznie większe ilości wody niż przy wydobyciu gazu łupkowego, lecz istnieje również ryzyko wprowadzenia do wód gruntowych chemikaliów. Negatywny raport może blokować gaz łupkowy, który już od dawna jest przedstawiany jako remedium na problemy energetyczne Unii Europejskiej.

Niepokój wzbudza nie tylko treść raportu, co również wybór firmy zobowiązanej przez Komisję Europejską do jego sporządzenia. Główną firmą odpowiedzialną za powstanie raportu była spółka AEA Technology, wcześniej związana miedzy innymi ze spółką córką Gazpromu operującej na Sachalinie II. Spółka ta mimo wielu raportów negatywnie oceniających wpływ wydobycia gazu ze złóż Sahalin na środowisko, wsparła wysiłki rosyjskiego giganta i sporządziła raport środowiskowy przychylny inwestycji. Pozwoliło to rosyjskiej firmie na rozpoczęcie wydobycia.

1. Jakimi kryteriami kierowała się Komisja wybierając spółkę AEA Technology jako głównego autora raportu dotyczącego wpływu wydobycia gazu łupkowego na środowisko, mając na uwadze, że biznesowe powiązania tej spółki z Gazpromem podważają obiektywizm przedstawionych w raporcie wniosków?

2. Czy według Komisji przygotowany raport nie jest podporządkowany interesom Gazpromu byłego zleceniodawcy spółki AEA, które od dawna kolidują z rozwojem bezpieczeństwa energetycznego Europy opartej między innymi na wydobyciu gazu łupkowego?

3. Jak Komisja ocenia inne raporty mówiące o niewielkiej szkodliwości wydobycia gazu łupkowego na środowisko, np. raport przygotowany przez polskie Ministerstwo Gospodarki? Czy zostaną one wykorzystane przy tworzeniu oficjalnego stanowiska Komisji wobec wydobycia gazu łupkowego?

4. Czy metody badań wykorzystanych przy tworzeniu opublikowanego raportu były zbieżne z metodami wykorzystywanymi przez specjalistów amerykańskich?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji**

*(7 listopada 2012 r.)*

1. Kryteria wyboru zastosowane przez Komisję przy wyborze firmy AEA Technology zostały opublikowane w Dzienniku Urzędowym ([1]) w następstwie otwartej procedury przetargowej dotyczącej umowy ramowej ENV.F.1/FRA/2010/0044 o przeprowadzenie analizy ekonomicznej kierunków polityki w dziedzinie środowiska oraz zrównoważonego rozwoju.

2. Komisja nie znalazła w raporcie żadnych dowodów domniemanej stronniczości ani konfliktu interesów, o których mowa w zapytaniu Szanownego Pana Posła. Wnioski przedstawione w tym raporcie są rzeczowe i obiektywne. Komisja nie ma więc podstaw, aby kwestionować bezstronność i niezależność firmy AEA Technology.

3. Celem badania przeprowadzonego przez AEA Technology było zidentyfikowanie i scharakteryzowanie potencjalnych technicznych i regulacyjnych zagrożeń dla Europy, związanych z tym przemysłem w ujęciu ogólnym. Przeprowadzona przez Polski Instytut Geologiczny ocena szczelinowania hydraulicznego w Łebieniu stanowi pożyteczny wkład w poszerzenie wiedzy na temat potencjalnych zagrożeń związanych z wydobyciem gazu łupkowego, lecz nie może zostać wykorzystana do formułowania ogólnych, dotyczących całej UE wniosków, ponieważ odnosi się do konkretnego przypadku pojedynczego odwiertu (LE-2H).

4. Metody badań zostały określone w raporcie AEA Technology. Priorytetowo potraktowano w szczególności materiały zweryfikowane w ramach wzajemnej oceny, a w celu krzyżowej weryfikacji wyników wykorzystano rozmowy z przedstawicielami służb geologicznych, środowisk akademickich i właściwych organów w Europie i w USA.

([1]) Dz.U. 2010/S 147-226426 (31.07.2010), http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:226426-2010:TEXT:PL:HTML&tabId=0

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008337/12**
**to the Commission**
**Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Report on shale gas

The Commission has published a report today on the negative effects of shale gas extraction on the environment and human health. The authors state that hydraulic fracturing not only consumes a significantly greater quantity of water than conventional gas development, but that there is also a risk of chemicals entering the groundwater. This negative report may stand in the way of attempts to exploit shale gas, which for many years has been put forward as the answer to the European Union's energy problems.

Not only is the content of the report alarming, but so is the company selected by the Commission to draft it. Responsibility for the report lies mainly with AEA Technology, a company previously linked to a Gazprom subsidiary working on Sakhalin II. In spite of the many reports that have outlined the adverse environmental effects of extracting gas from the Sakhalin deposits, AEA Technology supported the efforts of this Russian giant and drafted an environmental report in favour of the investments, thus allowing the Russian company to start extraction.

1. Which criteria did the Commission use to select AEA Technology as the main author of the report on the environmental impact of shale gas extraction, given that this company's business links to Gazprom compromise the objectivity of the conclusions presented in the report?

2. Does the Commission not believe that the report that has been drafted is in thrall to the interests of Gazprom, a former client of AEA which for many years has tried to prevent the European Union from enhancing its energy security, *inter alia* on the basis of shale gas extraction?

3. What is the Commission's view of other reports which refer to the absence of any adverse environmental effects caused by shale gas extraction, for example the report drawn up by the Polish Ministry of the Economy? Will these reports be used when the Commission prepares its official position on shale gas extraction?

4. Were the research methods used when drafting the published report the same as the methods used by American specialists?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

1. The selection criteria used by the Commission to select AEA Technology were published in the Official Journal ([1]), following an Open Call related to the framework contract ENV.F.1/FRA/2010/0044 for economic analysis of environmental policies and of sustainable development.

2. The Commission has found no evidence in the report of the alleged bias and conflict of interest raised in his question by the Honourable Member. The conclusions of the report are factual and objective. The Commission has therefore no reason to question the impartiality and independence of AEA Technology.

3. The objective of the study conducted by AEA Technology was to identify and to characterise potential technical and regulatory risks for Europe arising from the industry as a whole. The assessment conducted by the Polish Geological Institute for the hydraulic fracturing operation in Lebien, Poland, makes a useful contribution to improving the knowledge about potential risks of shale gas practices, but cannot be used to draw generalised, EU-wide conclusions since it refers to the specific case of a single well (LE-2H well).

4. The study methods are set out in the report conducted by AEA Technology. The study has prioritised in particular peer reviewed materials and has made use of interviews with geological surveys, academia and competent authorities in Europe and in the USA to cross-check its findings.

([1]) OJ 2010/S 147-226426 (31/07/2010), http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:226426-2010:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008338/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Mario Mauro (PPE)**
*(21 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Sud Africa — minatori in sciopero

Il 16 agosto 2012 un gruppo di minatori in sciopero sono stati uccisi dagli spari della polizia durante gli scontri nella miniera di platino di Marikana, vicino a Rustenburg, North West Province, Sud Africa. L'incidente si segnala come il più sanguinoso scontro tra polizia e manifestanti nel Sud Africa del post apartheid.

Quel giorno, secondo la stampa locale, sono morti 34 minatori, uccisi dalla polizia a colpi d'arma da fuoco. La polizia ha aperto il fuoco con armi automatiche contro un gruppo di minatori in sciopero, alcuni dei quali armati di machete e bastoni, provocando un massacro, senza precedenti negli ultimi anni. Nei giorni in cui è maturata la sparatoria, 10 persone erano state uccise in una prima serie di scontri mortali innescati dapprima dai sostenitori di due sindacati rivali, il sindacato nazionale dei minatori e il sindacato dell'Associazione dei minatori e dei lavoratori delle costruzioni. Tra i morti c'erano anche due agenti di polizia, e quando le forze di sicurezza hanno aperto il fuoco hanno ucciso tre minatori. Le violenze hanno preso l'avvio da un conflitto salariale. Come riferito dalla stampa locale, erano molti anni che non si verificavano tensioni così forti in Sud Africa, infatti il paese ha vissuto anni di relativa stabilità dopo le prime elezioni multirazziali del 1994.

Sull'episodio è stata presentata una risoluzione del Parlamento europeo che invita le autorità sudafricane a fare tutto il possibile per riportare la situazione sotto controllo ed assicurare alla giustizia quanti hanno perpetrato le violenze e si compiace in tale contesto dell'istituzione di una commissione d'inchiesta giudiziaria per indagare i fatti. Chiede inoltre una revisione completa delle regole di ingaggio della polizia nel servizio di contenimento delle manifestazioni violente, tra cui in particolare l'uso di munizioni non letali, (anti sommossa) in modo da porre termine all'evidente incompetenza.

Si interroga la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sui seguenti quesiti:

1. È la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza dei suddetti scontri violenti e morti?

2. Cosa si può fare e si fa attualmente in Sud Africa per far fronte a siffatte violazioni della libertà?

3. Cosa può fare l'UE per contribuire a garantire i diritti umani fondamentali dei minatori in sciopero?

**Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(25 gennaio 2013)*

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente si è recata in visita in Sud Africa alcuni giorni dopo la tragedia della miniera di Marikana, di cui ha discusso approfonditamente con le personalità incontrate, fra cui il Ministro degli affari esteri Nkoana-Mashabane e l'allora Ministro dell'interno Dlamini-Zuma. Della tragedia si è altresì discusso nel quinto vertice UE-Sud Africa tenutosi a Bruxelles il 18 settembre.

In tali occasioni l'Ue ha espresso apprezzamento per il fatto che il Presidente Zuma avesse nominato una commissione giudiziaria d'inchiesta incaricata di fare piena luce sull'incidente e una commissione interministeriale incaricata di assistere e sostenere i familiari delle vittime adoperandosi, nel contempo, per risolvere il problema dell'instabilità nell'industria mineraria.

La commissione giudiziaria d'inchiesta, presieduta da Ian Farlam, giudice a riposo della Corte suprema, ha inaugurato ufficialmente i lavori il 1° ottobre. In base al mandato conferitole, la commissione Farlam dispone di un termine di quattro mesi per presentare la relazione finale al Presidente.

L'UE segue con grande interesse e attenzione i lavori di tale commissione, di cui attende con altrettanto interesse i risultati.

Il governo sudafricano è pienamente impegnato al rispetto dello Stato di diritto, della giustizia sociale e dei diritti umani e condivide totalmente i principi e diritti sanciti dall'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro, L'UE ha ottenuto da esso rassicurazioni circa il rispetto totale di tali principi e diritti nelle attuali circostanze.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008338/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Mario Mauro (PPE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — South Africa — striking miners

On 16 August 2012 a group of striking miners were shot dead during clashes with the police at the Marikana platinum mine, near Rustenburg, North West Province, South Africa. This incident marked the bloodiest clash between police and protesters in post-apartheid South Africa.

On that day, according to the local press, 34 miners were killed by gunshot blasts from police. The police opened fire with automatic weapons against a group of miners on strike, some of them armed with machetes and sticks, causing a massacre unprecedented in recent years. In the days leading up to the shooting, 10 people were killed in an initial fatal series of clashes initially triggered by supporters of two rival unions, the National Union of Mineworkers and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union. The dead included two police officers, and when the security forces opened fire they killed three miners. The violence began with a dispute linked to salaries. As reported by the local press, it has been many years since there were such tensions in South Africa, as the country has experienced years of relative stability after the first multi-racial elections in 1994.

A motion for a resolution of the European Parliament was tabled on this episode, which: calls on the South African authorities to do everything possible to bring the situation under control and to bring the perpetrators of the violence to book; welcomes in this context the establishment of a judicial commission of inquiry to investigate the facts; and calls for a comprehensive review of the police service rules of engagement in containing violent demonstrations, including in particular the use of live ammunition, in order to close the apparent lack of competences.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative please answer the following questions:

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the abovementioned violent clashes and deaths?

2. What can be done/is currently being done in South Africa to address these violations of freedom?

3. What can the EU do to help guarantee basic human rights for striking miners?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(25 January 2013)*

The HR/VP visited South Africa a few days after the tragedy at the Marikana mine. She discussed the circumstances in depth with those she met, including with Foreign Minister Nkoana-Mashabane and Dr Dlamini-Zuma, at the time South African Minister of Home Affairs. The matter has been also discussed during the fifth EU-South Africa Summit in Brussels on 18 September.

In these occasions the EU welcomed the appointment by President Zuma of the full judicial Commission of inquiry into the incident and of the Inter-Ministerial Committee tasked with providing assistance and support to the families of the deceased while seeking to find solutions to the instability in the mining industry.

The Judicial Commission of inquiry chaired by Ian Farlam- a retired judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal- has officially begun its work on 1 October. According to its terms of reference the Farlam Commission has four months to present its final report to the President.

The EU is following with keen interest and attention its proceedings and is looking forward to its findings.

The South African Government is fully committed to the rule of law, social justice and human rights principles and adheres entirely to the International Labour Organisation principles and rights. It has provided reassurances to the EU that they are fully respected under the current circumstances.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008339/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Aldo Patriciello (PPE)**
*(21 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Differenza salariale tra uomini e donne

L'uguaglianza tra uomini e donne è uno dei principi fondamentali sanciti dal diritto comunitario; lo scopo dell'UE è assicurare le pari opportunità e l'uguaglianza tra donne e uomini, nonché lottare contro ogni forma di discriminazione basata sul sesso.

Ciononostante, nell'ambito dell'occupazione, nell'Unione europea le donne guadagnano circa il 17,1 % in meno rispetto agli uomini, sebbene il divario delle retribuzioni tra uomini e donne oscilli negli Stati membri tra il 3,2 % e il 30,9 %. La differenza salariale è in parte spiegata dal fatto che le donne non occupano i medesimi impieghi degli uomini a causa del persistere della ripartizione del lavoro in base al genere, della segregazione verticale collegata al cosiddetto soffitto di cristallo e della maggior incidenza dell'occupazione a tempo parziale.

Nonostante le numerose iniziative giuridiche con cui si richiede l'uguaglianza salariale, tra cui la strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015, volta a migliorare la posizione delle donne nel mercato del lavoro e nella società, e le proposte approvate dal Parlamento europeo riguardanti tale ambito, suddetto divario persiste e i progressi sono estremamente lenti.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali iniziative la Commissione intende sostenere per mantenere e sviluppare la coerenza necessaria con la strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015?

2. Considerando la lentezza dei progressi e la persistenza di tale divario, la Commissione intende intraprendere azioni concrete che stimolino e vincolino gli Stati membri al raggiungimento di certi obiettivi in materia di differenza salariale?

**Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione**
*(29 ottobre 2012)*

Eliminare la disparità retributiva tra i sessi è una delle priorità della Strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015. Il principio della parità di retribuzione, sancito dal trattato, trova attuazione con la direttiva 2006/54/CE ([1]) e la Commissione verifica regolarmente la corretta applicazione delle norme vigenti in materia da parte degli Stati membri. La Commissione prevede di pubblicare nel 2013 una relazione sull'attuazione della direttiva 2006/54/CE e delle disposizioni sulla parità di retribuzione.

Nel 2009 la Commissione ha lanciato, in tutta l'Unione, una campagna di sensibilizzazione contro le disparità salariali uomo-donna e il 2 marzo 2012 si è celebrata la seconda Giornata europea per la parità retributiva. Il sito web della campagna ([2]) offre diversi esempi di azioni promosse negli Stati membri per affrontare il problema.

Di recente la Commissione ha lanciato l'iniziativa *Equality Pays Off* mirata a sensibilizzare le imprese sul divario retributivo uomo-donna con attività di formazione e elaborando strumenti che mettano in risalto i benefici per le imprese. La Commissione prevede inoltre di organizzare a Bruxelles, più o meno in concomitanza con la Giornata europea per la parità retributiva del 2013, un forum che funga da piattaforma per lo scambio di conoscenze tra imprese. Approfondimenti su queste azioni sono disponibili online ([3]).

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([1]) Direttiva 2006/54/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 luglio 2006, riguardante l'attuazione del principio delle pari opportunità e della parità di trattamento fra uomini e donne in materia di occupazione e impiego (rifusione).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_it.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/equality-pays-off/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008339/12**
**to the Commission**
**Aldo Patriciello (PPE)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Gender gap in pay

Equality between men and women is one of the fundamental principles enshrined in EC law; the EU's aim is to guarantee equal opportunities and equality, and to combat all forms of gender discrimination.

Despite this, in the EU employment sphere, women earn approximately 17.1 % less than men, although the pay gap varies among Member States (between 3.2 % and 30.9 %). The pay gap is partly because women do not occupy the same roles as men because of gender-based work distribution, vertical segregation linked to the 'glass ceiling' and the greater frequency of part-time working among women persist.

Despite the many legal initiatives requiring equal salaries, including the strategy for equality between women and men 2010-15, designed to improve women's position in the labour market and society, and the European Parliament's proposals in this sphere, the salary gap persists and progress is extremely slow.

In view of the above, can the Commission reply to the following questions:

1. What initiatives will the Commission support to maintain and develop the required compliance with the strategy for equality between women and men 2010-15?

2. Will the Commission take specific actions to stimulate and impose obligations on Member States to achieve set targets relating to the pay gap?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 October 2012)*

Tackling the gender pay gap is one of the Commission's priorities in its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015. The principle of equal pay is enshrined in the Treaty and in Directive 2006/54/E ([1]). The Commission is constantly monitoring whether the existing legal framework on equal pay is correctly applied in practice at national level. A report on the implementation of the directive 2006/54/EC, including application of the provisions on equal pay, is envisaged for 2013.

The Commission launched in 2009 an EU-wide awareness-raising campaign on the gender pay gap. On 2 March 2012 the Commission held the second European Equal Pay Day. The campaign website ([2]) provides numerous examples of actions at national level to tackle the gender pay gap.

The Commission has recently started an initiative which will help to raise awareness in companies about the gender pay gap, 'Equality Pays Off'. It will do so through the organisation of training activities and preparation of tools for companies to raise awareness on the 'business case'. Moreover, a business forum, a platform of knowledge exchange for companies, will be organised in Brussels around the European Equal Pay Day in 2013. More information about these actions is available online ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/equality-pays-off/index_en.htm

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008340/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(21. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Effekte des Freihandelsabkommens mit Japan auf andere Handelsströme

Die Kommission ersuchte die Mitgliedstaaten im Juli 2012 um Zustimmung für die Aufnahme von Verhandlungen über ein Freihandelsabkommen mit Japan.

1. Falls ein solches Abkommen in Kraft tritt, welche Effekte erwartet die Kommission für den EU-Waren- und Dienstleistungsverkehr mit anderen Ex- und Importländern im ostasiatischen Raum, insbesondere mit a) China, b) Südkorea, c) Thailand, d) Taiwan und e) den Philippinen?

2. Erwartet die Kommission, dass eines der genannten Länder eine Gleichstellung mit Japan oder eine Neuverhandlung bestehender Handelsabkommen verlangen wird?

**Antwort von Herr De Gucht im Namen der Kommission**
*(31. Oktober 2012)*

1. Die Folgenabschätzung über die Handelsbeziehungen EU-Japan ([1]) (vgl. Tabelle 1) zeigt, dass die gesamten Ein- bzw. Ausfuhren der EU aus bzw. in die Länder der übrigen Welt durch ein Freihandelshandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Japan deutlicher steigen würden als der bilaterale Außenhandel mit Japan. Dies deutet darauf hin, dass neben Japan weitere Drittländer durch eine Ausweitung ihres Handels mit der EU von dem Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Japan profitieren würden. Eine genauere Analyse der möglichen Auswirkungen des Abkommens auf die Handelsströme bestimmter Drittländer liegt nicht vor und war auch nicht Gegenstand der von der Kommission durchgeführten oder in Auftrag gegebenen Studien.

2. Nach Erfahrung der Kommission zieht der Abschluss eines Freihandelsabkommens mit einem Land nicht automatisch Forderungen der benachbarten Länder nach Gleichstellung oder Neuverhandlung bestehender Abkommen oder Vereinbarungen nach sich. Dies dürfte sich auch im Fall Asiens bewahrheiten, zumal die EU in jüngerer Vergangenheit bereits mit einer Reihe von Ländern in der Region Freihandelsabkommen abgeschlossen bzw. diesbezügliche Verhandlungen aufgenommen hat.

([1]) Abrufbar unter: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/juli/tradoc_149809.pdf

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008340/12**
**to the Commission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* The effects of the free trade agreement with Japan on other patterns of trade

In July 2012, the Commission sought the approval of the Member States to start negotiations with Japan on a free trade agreement.

1. If such an agreement comes into force, what impact does the Commission expect for the movement of EU goods and services in relation to other exporting and importing countries in the East Asia region, in particular (a) China, (b) South Korea, (c) Thailand, (d) Taiwan and (e) the Philippines?

2. Does the Commission expect that one of the countries mentioned will demand equal treatment with Japan or a renegotiation of existing trade agreements?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

1. The Impact Assessment Report on EU-Japan Trade Relations ([1]) (see Table 1) shows that following an EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the EU's total imports and exports with the rest of the world will increase to a greater extent than the EU's bilateral exports and imports with Japan. This indicates that third countries other than Japan will also benefit from the EU-Japan FTA through an increase in trade with the EU. More detailed analysis of the potential impact on trade flows for specific third countries is not available and has not been undertaken in the studies conducted or commissioned by the Commission.

2. In the experience of the Commission, the conclusion of an FTA with one country does not automatically prompt neighbouring countries to ask for equal treatment or a renegotiation of existing agreements or arrangements. The situation in Asia should not be any different, particularly as the EU has recently concluded or is already in the process of negotiating FTAs with a number of countries in the region.

([1]) Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/july/tradoc_149809.pdf

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008341/12**
**à la Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Suspension d'autorisation de culture d'OGM/Étude Séralini

Je viens d'obtenir une étude réalisée par l'équipe de Gilles-Éric Séralini, professeur de biologie moléculaire à l'université de Caen.

Les conclusions sont pour le moins stupéfiantes. En effet, elle démontre que des rats nourris avec du maïs génétiquement modifié ont été frappés par des pathologies lourdes, notamment des tumeurs, au bout de 13 mois.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Une telle étude va-t-elle geler les demandes de renouvellement d'autorisation de culture OGM (y compris celles accordées à Monsanto)?

3. Jusqu'à présent, les études pour démontrer l'innocuité d'un OGM pour la santé étaient menées sur 90 jours au maximum. Or la durée de cette étude est exceptionnelle et démontrerait des effets lourds de conséquences pour les cobayes. Est-il donc envisageable que des tests de courte durée soient dorénavant assortis de tests de plus longue durée avant d'accepter un OGM sur le marché?

4. Quelle est la règle en matière d'acceptation d'OGM sur le marché?

5. Combien de demandes d'exploitation d'OGM l'EFSA a-t-elle reçu depuis sa création, et ce par année?

6. Combien de demandes d'exploitation ont-elles reçu un avis positif de l'EFSA depuis sa création, et ce par année?

**Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission**
*(9 novembre 2012)*

1-4. La Commission invite l'auteur de la question à se reporter à ses réponses aux questions écrites P-008278/2012, P-008302/2012 et P-008334/2012 ([1]), qui prennent en compte les conclusions de l'étude publiée par Seralini *et al.* et qui décrivent les procédures d'autorisation de mise sur le marché d'OGM.

5-6. En ce qui concerne le nombre de demandes d'autorisation d'OGM et d'avis scientifiques positifs rendus par l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA), la Commission invite l'auteur de la question à consulter le site web de l'EFSA ([2]), où les questions sont regroupées dans un registre accessible au public.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionsListLoader?unit=GMO

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008341/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(21 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Suspension of GMO cultivation approval/Séralini Study

I have just obtained a study carried out by the team led by Gilles-Éric Séralini, professor of molecular biology at Caen University.

The conclusions are astounding to say the least. The study shows that rats fed with genetically modified maize were struck by serious diseases, especially tumours, after 13 months.

1. What is the Commission's reaction?

2. Will such a study halt the calls for the renewal of GMO cultivation approval (including those of Monsanto)?

3. Until now, studies to show that GMO pose no risk to health were carried out over a maximum of 90 days. The length of this study is exceptional, however, and shows effects with serious consequences for the guinea pigs. Is it therefore possible from now on for short tests to be accompanied with longer tests before accepting a GMO on the market?

4. What is the rule with regard to accepting GMO on the market?

5. How many applications for GMO exploitation has the EFSA received each year since it was established?

6. How many applications for exploitation have received a positive opinion from the EFSA each year since it was established?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

1-4. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions P-008278/2012, P-008302/2012 and P-008334/2012 ([1]), which address the findings of the study published by Seralini et al. and describe the authorisation procedures for placing on the market of GMOs.

5-6. As regards the number of applications for GMO authorisations and of positive scientific opinions delivered by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the Commission would invite the Honourable Member to consult the register of questions on EFSA's website ([2]), where this information is publicly available.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionsListLoader?unit=GMO.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008342/12**
**to the Commission**
**Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* EU research funding for Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories — third follow-up question

With regard to the answer to Parliamentary Question P-005085/2012 given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission (4 July 2012), I thank the Commission for the factual information it has provided in paragraphs 1 to 3.

With regard to paragraph 4, concerning the eligibility of Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories (ADSL) for participation in and funding under FP7 and Horizon 2020 projects, the Commission states that 'there is flexibility within the Commission Proposal for the Rules for Participation with respect to specifying certain eligibility conditions in view of the place of establishment of participants in future work programmes or work plans'.

This paragraph raises a number of questions:

1. Where in the Horizon 2020 literature can information be found concerning these flexible powers to exclude applicants?

2. How is 'place of establishment' defined? Does it, as I believe it should, cover the site at which the work on the project is actually carried out, or does it refer only to the official address of the organisation or company (this being at the root of the problem with ADSL)?

3. How are the eligibility conditions for participation defined?

4. What specific evidence would be required to justify disqualifying an applicant or participant that is an entity created under Israeli national law?

5. Who has the authority to block participation on eligibility grounds?

6. Would manufacturing or research activity carried out in the Occupied Palestinian Territories by an Israeli company or institution constitute a sufficient reason to trigger automatic disqualification?

With regard to paragraph 5 of the Commission's answer, surely the reason for removing ADSL from the 'find a partner' facility on CORDIS is that ADSL is breaking international law ([1]). Hence, if the application goes ahead it will be disqualified at a later stage.

**Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

1. There is not yet any literature (interpretation/guide) on the Horizon 2020 rules for participation, The Commission proposal for rules for participation provides for different possibilities to restrict participation under Articles 6(2) and (3) and Article 12(3).

2. There is no legal definition in the proposal for the term 'place of establishment'. It relates to the official address of the respective legal entity and does not necessarily relate to the place(s) where the activities are effectively carried out.

3. Article 6(1) of the proposed rules opens the possibility for participation to any legal entity regardless of its place of establishment which satisfies the conditions laid down in the rules, relevant work programme or work plan.

4. Article 6(2) offers an important possibility to restrict participation in the relevant work programme or work plan when conditions for participation of the respective legal entity are detrimental to the Union's interests. Article 6(3) provides for the possibility of excluding entities on security reasons in the work programmes or work plans. Furthermore, on the basis of Article 12(3), proposals which contravene ethical principles or any applicable legislation may be excluded.

([1]) For more information on the contravention of international humanitarian law by ASDL, see: http://www.whoprofits.org/content/ahava-tracking-trade-trail-settlement-products.

5. The Commission may exclude participation of entities in the work programmes. Furthermore, the Commission or the relevant Horizon 2020 funding body may exclude proposals on the basis of Article 12(3).

6. There is no legal basis to trigger such automatic disqualification.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008343/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Turkish-Cypriot athletes at the Olympic games

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games aimed to support sporting excellence and cross-cultural understanding. However, Turkish-Cypriot athletes have been unable to take part in the Olympic games.

Due to the sporting embargoes and non-recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), Turkish-Cypriot sporting federations are prevented from joining their equivalent world federations and are therefore unable to participate as they are not represented on the International Olympic Committee.

However, the Olympic Charter recognises that the 'practice of sport is a human right' and that 'every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which recognises mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play'. The Charter further states: 'Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement'.

What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that Turkish-Cypriot athletes are able to compete at the highest level, and thereby support the development of sport in the TRNC?

Furthermore, will the Commission be taking any steps to allow athletes from the TRNC to compete in the Olympic games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

Decisions related to the organisation of sport competitions, such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games, including the definition of the conditions for participating in these events, are the responsibility of sport event organisers; the Commission fully respects the principle of autonomy of sport organisations. Regarding EU Member States, decisions on which athletes represent them in Olympic events remain within the scope of exclusive Member States' competences.

The EU competence in the field of sport (Art. 165 TFEU) provides no possibility for the EU to take steps to influence national representation in the Olympics.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008344/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Lucas Hartong (NI)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Fraude met EU-fondsen veel groter dan gedacht

Vandaag werd bekend ([1]) dat de fraude met EU-fondsen in de lidstaten veel groter is dan gedacht. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. De fraude is groter dan de 600 miljoen uit 2010. Hoeveel bedraagt het geconstateerde fraudebedrag precies?

2. Kunt de Commissie de fraude uitsplitsen per lidstaat?

3. Slechte nationale justitiële systemen zouden resulteren in het gegeven dat veel te weinig fraudegelden kunnen worden teruggeclaimd door de EU. Betekent dit dus dat de EU jaarlijks onnodig geld verliest dat in de praktijk bovendien niet terug te vorderen valt?

4. De Commissie geeft aan dat fraudeurs naar lidstaten gaan waar de vervolging van fraude met EU-gelden op een zeer laag niveau staat of gewoonweg niet aanwezig is. Kan zij precies aangeven welke lidstaten het hier betreft (top vijf)?

5. De Commissie is voornemens een Europese openbare aanklager aan te gaan stellen om fraude op te sporen. Zou het niet veel eenvoudiger zijn om die lidstaten te korten op EU-gelden die niet of nauwelijks meewerken aan het opsporen en berechten van fraudeurs? Op die manier blijft namelijk ook aanmerkelijk meer geld in kas en wordt fraude op de meest directe wijze bestraft.

**Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie**
*(4 december 2012)*

De cijfers in het artikel 325-verslag van de Commissie betreffen de onregelmatigheden die een lidstaat in een gegeven jaar heeft vastgesteld en gemeld. Het bedrag van 600 miljoen EUR in het verslag over 2010 staat voor het totale bedrag dat gemoeid is met alle (vermoede of bewezen) fraude die de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaten hebben gemeld.

Omdat het verslag berust op gegevens van de lidstaten, kan niet met zekerheid worden gesteld dat het de omvang van fraude in de Europese Unie exact weerspiegelt. Om de administratie voor de nationale autoriteiten te beperken, is in de onderliggende sectorale wetgeving bovendien vastgesteld dat de lidstaten niet alle onregelmatigheden hoeven te melden. Niettemin streeft de Commissie er voortdurend naar de rapportage van de lidstaten nog te verbeteren.

In bijlage 2 van het verslag vindt het geachte Parlementslid een uitsplitsing van de cijfers per lidstaat. Die bijlage bevat tevens aanbevelingen hoe de bevoegde autoriteiten fraude, corruptie en andere onregelmatigheden ten nadele van de EU-begroting nog beter kunnen melden en bestrijden.

Lage gemelde fraudepercentages betekenen niet automatisch dat middelen verloren zijn en niet kunnen worden teruggevorderd. Ook wanneer geen fraude wordt vastgesteld en het geval als niet-frauduleuze onregelmatigheid wordt behandeld, kunnen betalingen worden teruggevorderd van begunstigden. Uit het verslag over 2011 blijkt dat op het vlak van terugvorderingen vooruitgang is geboekt. Niettemin zal de Commissie blijven samenwerken met de lidstaten om hun fraudeopsporing en -bestrijding onder meer via opleidingen, ondersteuning en bijstand te verbeteren.

De Commissie is ervan overtuigd dat de oprichting van een Europees openbaar ministerie de meest geschikte manier is om de strijd tegen fraude in alle lidstaten te versterken.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/justice/117618.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008344/12**
**to the Commission**
**Lucas Hartong (NI)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Theft of EU funds greater than reported

It has been reported ([1]) that fraud relating to EU funds in the Member States is much greater than has been thought. The following questions relate to this.

1. The fraud is higher than the EUR 600 million reported in 2010. What is the exact amount of fraud that has been noted?

2. Can the Commission give a breakdown of fraud per Member State?

3. Because of poor national judicial systems, it appears that the EU can recover far too little of the funds that have been lost to fraud. Does this mean that the EU is annually losing unnecessary amounts of money that moreover cannot be recovered?

4. The Commission admits that fraudsters go to Member States where prosecution of fraud involving EU funds is very low or non-existent. Can it say precisely which Member States are concerned (top five)?

5. The Commission is planning to appoint a European public prosecutor to track down fraud. Would it not be much simpler to cut back on EU funds for the Member States that never or rarely cooperate in tracking down fraudsters and bringing them to justice? In this way considerably more money would be kept in hand and fraud would be punished in the most direct way.

**Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission**
*(4 December 2012)*

The figures contained in the Commission's Article 325 Report refer to the irregularities that have been detected and reported by a Member State in a given year. The figure of EUR 600 million in the 2010 Report represents the total impact of the (suspected or confirmed) fraud as reported by the Member States' competent authorities.

Because of this reliance on information provided by the Member States, it cannot be claimed that the report reflects precisely the true level of fraud in the EU. Also, in order to reduce the administrative burden on Member States' authorities the underlying sectorial legislation provides that Member States do not have to report all irregularities. However, the Commission is continuously striving to improve the reporting discipline of Member States further.

In Annex A to the report, the Honourable Member will find the breakdown per Member State. It also contains some recommendations as to how the competent authorities can improve their reporting and fight against fraud, corruption and any other irregularity detrimental to the EU Budget.

A low level of reported fraud does not automatically mean that funds are lost and cannot be recovered. Also where fraud is not established and the case is treated as a non-fraudulent irregularity, money can be recovered from the beneficiaries. The progress made in the area of recoveries is evidenced by the 2011 Report. The Commission will nevertheless continue to work with the Member States to improve their ability to detect and fight fraud, *inter alia* by providing training, support and assistance.

The Commission is convinced that the establishment of a European Public Prosecutor Office is the most appropriate way to strengthen the fight against fraud in all Member States.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/justice/117618.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008346/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Access to documents in EU-Cypriot case concerning immovable property in Cyprus

Person X applied to the Secretary-General of the Commission on 16 July 2012 for access to certain documents related to the correspondence that has taken place between the Commission and the Cypriot authorities since 2011 concerning immovable property in Cyprus.

He had previously requested these documents from Vice-President Reding, but had been informed that her DG could not supply these documents because pre-infringement proceedings had been initiated against Cyprus: however, Person X could apply to the Secretary-General of the Commission for them.

However, in response to his application to the Secretary-General, Person X has now received a letter refusing his application and stating that disclosure of the documents could jeopardise the ongoing search for an amicable solution to the dispute.

Can the Commission provide fuller information as to why Person X is unable to access the requested documents?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 November 2012)*

Regulation No 1049/2001 ([1]) lays down the rules for granting (public) access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents.

Article 4 of the regulation states the grounds for refusing to grant access to these documents. In particular, Article 4(2) clarifies that the access can be refused where such disclosure would undermine the protection of the purpose of inspections, investigations and audits, unless there is an overriding public interest in disclosure.

Considering that the disclosure, even partial, of the documents mentioned by the Honourable Member, which have been sent in the context of an ongoing pre-infringement procedure, might jeopardise an amicable solution of the dispute and thus the whole process of investigation and inspection, the European Commission has decided to refuse access to the documents related to the EU-Cypriot case concerning immovable property in Cyprus.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, OJ L 145 of 31.5.2001 p. 43.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008347/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(24 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Prevención de discriminación entre los productores entre los productores fotovoltaicos de los diferentes Estados miembros

El Reino de España, auspiciado por la Directiva Comunitaria Directiva 2001/77/CE, desarrolló durante el año 2007 (RD 661/2007) medidas de incentivación de la inversión en tecnología solar fotovoltaica. A partir de ese momento, como sabe esta Comisión, se invirtieron en España decenas de miles de millones de euros, bajo la seguridad que daban los principios de legalidad y de confianza legítima de los ciudadanos ante su Gobierno, ambos defendidos igualmente por constante doctrina del Tribunal de Justicia de la Comunidad Europea. Sin embargo, el anterior Gobierno de España, mediante los RD 1565/2010 y RDL 14/2010 aplicaron de forma retroactiva normas que no sólo vulneraban aquellos principios, sino que ponían en grave riesgo de default las inversiones de los ciudadanos del país y de los inversores del resto de la Unión (reducen hasta un 30 % las primas concedidas por Ley a los inversores en esta tecnología).

Esta situación es sobradamente conocida por la Comisión Europea que en diferentes actuaciones (fundamentalmente del Comisario Europeo de la Energía) se ha quejado amargamente de dicha evidencia. Asimismo, comparativamente, otros Estados de la Unión, como el Reino Unido, han prohibido taxativamente la implementación de este tipo de normativas retroactivas que vulneran los principios recogidos por el Derecho comunitario (Royal Courts of Justice Case No: C1/2012). Sin embargo, dicha defensa, no se ha producido con el mismo rigor por los Tribunales de Justicia de España, que acogen la posibilidad que el cambio de situación económica permita la alteración por el Estado de los derechos que le reconocen a sus ciudadanos las normas de aplicación nacional de las Directivas Europeas, lo cual va claramente en contra del artículo 1 de la Directiva 2009/208/CE que establece la necesidad de un marco común para el fomento de la energía procedente de fuentes renovables en toda la Comunidad.

En los últimos días, el Gobierno de España ha iniciado los trámites parlamentarios para la implementación de un impuesto que grave la generación de la electricidad, con un tipo marginal del 6 %, lo que supone un descenso de los ingresos de las instalaciones fotovoltaicas del 36 %.

¿Qué medidas tiene previstas la Comisión para exigir al Reino de España que respete los principios de legalidad y confianza legítima de los inversores de tecnología solar fotovoltaica, amparados por el Derecho comunitario?

**Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión**
*(15 de noviembre de 2012)*

Remitimos a Su Señoría a la respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-1178/2011, del Sr. Romeva i Rueda, E-1865/2011, del Sr. Junqueras Vies, y E-2730/2011, del Sr. Melo ([1]). Por otra parte, la Comisión está realizando un continuo seguimiento de la evolución de la política energética en España con vistas a considerar nuevas acciones a nivel de la UE en caso necesario. Partiendo de la información de que dispone actualmente, la Comisión no ve indicios de infracción de la Directiva relativa a las energías renovables (2009/28/CE).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008347/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Preventing discrimination between photovoltaic producers in different Member States

Under Directive 2001/77/EC, the Kingdom of Spain adopted measures to encourage investment in solar photovoltaic technology in 2007 (RD 661/2007). From this time onwards, as the Commission knows, billions of euros were invested in Spain with the security provided by the principles of legality and legitimate public confidence in government, principles that are also upheld by the settled case law of the European Court of Justice. Nevertheless, the former Spanish Government, through RD 1565/2010 and RLD 14/2010, retroactively applied rules that do not only breach those principles but that also give rise to a serious risk of default on investment affecting both Spanish citizens and investors in other Member States (cut of up to 30% in the premiums granted to investors in this technology).

The Commission is well aware of this situation and has complained about it on various occasions (chiefly through the Energy Commissioner). Other Member States such as the United Kingdom have prohibited the implementation of this type of retroactive regulation in breach of the principles underlying Community law (Royal Courts of Justice Case No: C1/2012). Nevertheless, this principle has not been upheld to the same extent by the Spanish courts, which leave open the possibility that a change in the economic situation might allow the State to alter the rights accorded to its citizens under national legislation applying European directives. This is in clear breach of Article 1 of Directive 2009/208/EC, which refers to the need for a common framework to promote renewable energy across the Community.

The Spanish Government has recently launched the parliamentary procedures for the implementation of a tax on electricity generation with a marginal rate of 6%, which represents a 36% cut in income for photovoltaic installations.

What steps will the Commission take with a view to calling on the Kingdom of Spain to respect the principles of legality and legitimate confidence, that are upheld by Community law, with regard to investors in solar photovoltaic technology?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 November 2012)*

We would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply to written questions E-1178/2011 by Mr Romeva i Rueda, E-1865/2011 by Mr Junqueras Vies and E-2730/2011 by Mr Melo ([1]). Furthermore, the Commission is continuously monitoring energy policy developments in Spain with a view to consider further action at EU level if necessary. On the basis of the information available at the moment, it does not see an indication of a violation of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008348/12**

**an die Kommission**

**Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) und Birgit Sippel (S&D)**

*(24. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Datenschutz und Regelungen zum Schutz der Privatsphäre in Freihandelsabkommen

Die Europäische Union tritt zunehmend als globaler Handelspartner auf. Im internationalen Handel tätige Unternehmen sind bisweilen mit Regeln und Praktiken auf dem Gebiet des Schutzes der Privatsphäre und des Datenschutzes konfrontiert, die im Widerspruch zu EU-Recht stehen. Dies führt zu Rechtsunsicherheit sowohl für die Unternehmen als auch für die Bürger der EU und stellt ein potenzielles Hindernis für den freien Handel dar.

1. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass angemessene Regeln zum Schutz der Privatsphäre und zum Datenschutz von grundlegender Bedeutung für den Schutz der Grundrechte unserer Bürger und für die Erleichterung des freien Handels sind?

2. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass Freihandelsabkommen mit Drittländern effektive Mechanismen zum Schutz der Privatsphäre und zum Datenschutz enthalten sollten?

3. Welche anderen Instrumente setzt die Kommission ein, um den Schutz der Privatsphäre und den Datenschutz im internationalen Handel zu sichern?

4. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass intensivere Handelsbeziehungen mit Schwellenländern vor dem Hintergrund eines rasanten Wachstums der Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologien Anlass zur Sorge geben, was den Schutz der Privatsphäre und den Schutz personenbezogener Daten von EU-Bürgern betrifft?

5. Wie will die Kommission nachprüfen, dass in Drittländern tätige europäische Unternehmen die europäischen Normen zum Schutz der Privatsphäre und zum Datenschutz uneingeschränkt einhalten?

6. Wie will die Kommission Unternehmen Hilfestellung leisten, denen aufgrund einander widersprechender Rechtsordnungen die Orientierung fehlt?

**Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission**

*(16. November 2012)*

Der Kommission ist bewusst, dass den Bürgern ein hohes Maß an Schutz garantiert werden muss, das zugleich den Handel erleichtert. Daher wird den in Freihandelsabkommen enthaltenen Datenschutzbestimmungen große Bedeutung beigemessen.

In allen Freihandelsabkommen der EU wird auf Artikel XIV GATS verwiesen, der die Annahme oder die Durchsetzung von Gesetzen oder Vorschriften über u. a. den Schutz der Daten von Einzelpersonen legitimiert, sofern deren Durchsetzung nicht in einer Weise angewendet wird, die ein Mittel zu willkürlicher oder unberechtigter Diskriminierung unter Ländern oder eine verdeckte Beschränkung für den Handel mit Dienstleistungen darstellen würde. Diese allgemeine Ausnahmeregelung hat der EU den notwendigen politischen Spielraum gelassen, um ihren eigenen Regelungsrahmen zu entwickeln und anzuwenden.

Ganz allgemein enthalten von der EU geschlossene Handelsabkommen Bestimmungen, in denen die Parteien vereinbaren, für ein hohes Maß an Datenschutz zu sorgen und zu diesem Zweck zusammenzuarbeiten. Parallel dazu hat die EU die Entwicklung hoher technischer Datenschutzstandards in Drittländern und auf internationaler Ebene unterstützt ([1]).

([1]) Siehe z. B. die typischen in Freihandelsabkommen enthaltenen Bestimmungen über den elektronischen Geschäftsverkehr, in denen die Parteien normalerweise darin übereinstimmen, „dass die Entwicklung des elektronischen Geschäftsverkehrs in jeder Hinsicht mit den internationalen Datenschutznormen vereinbar sein muss, damit gewährleistet ist, dass die Nutzer Vertrauen in den elektronischen Geschäftsverkehr haben".

Mit dem Vorschlag für eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ([2]) werden die Regeln für die internationale Datenübermittlung in Länder, für die kein Angemessenheitsbeschluss gilt, gestrafft und vereinfacht; dies geschieht vor allem durch Modernisierung und häufigere Verwendung von Instrumenten wie verbindlichen unternehmensinternen Datenschutzregeln ([3]). Dieses Instrument kann genutzt werden, um durch die Einbeziehung der Datenverarbeiter durchgehenden Schutz zu gewährleisten; es spiegelt auch die steigende Zahl der Unternehmen wider, die mit Datenverarbeitung befasst sind.

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([2]) Vorschlag für Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr (Datenschutz-Grundverordnung), KOM(2012)11 endg.

([3]) Verbindliche unternehmensinterne Datenschutzregelungen (BCR — Binding Corporate Rules) sind von mindestens einer Datenschutzbehörde gebilligte Verhaltenskodizes auf der Grundlage europäischer Datenschutzstandards, die von Unternehmen aufgestellt und freiwillig befolgt werden, um angemessene Garantien für die Übermittlung personenbezogener Daten zwischen Unternehmen eines Konzerns zu geben, die konzerninterne Regeln zu befolgen haben.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008348/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) en Birgit Sippel (S&D)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Voorwaarden inzake gegevensbescherming en bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer in vrijhandelsovereenkomsten

De Europese Unie is steeds meer een mondiale handelspartner. Bedrijven die actief zijn in de internationale handel kunnen te maken krijgen met voorschriften en praktijken inzake bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer en gegevensbescherming die strijdig zijn met het EU-recht. Dit leidt tot rechtsonzekerheid voor zowel bedrijven als EU-burgers en is een mogelijke belemmering voor vrijhandel.

1. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat adequate regels inzake gegevensbescherming en bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer essentieel zijn voor de bescherming van de grondrechten van onze burgers en voor de bevordering van vrijhandel?

2. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat vrijhandelsovereenkomsten met derde landen doeltreffende garanties voor de bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer en gegevensbescherming moeten bevatten?

3. Welke andere instrumenten gebruikt de Commissie om in de internationale handel de bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer en gegevensbescherming te garanderen?

4. Is de Commissie van mening dat nauwere handelsbetrekkingen met opkomende economische mogendheden, tegen een achtergrond van snelle groei in de informatie- en communicatietechnologie, aanleiding geven tot bezorgdheid over de bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer en de gegevens van EU-burgers?

5. Hoe is de Commissie van plan te controleren of Europese bedrijven die in derde landen actief zijn, de Europese normen inzake de bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer en gegevensbescherming volledig in acht nemen?

6. Hoe is de Commissie van plan bedrijven te helpen die klem komen te zitten tussen tegenstrijdige rechtsstelsels?

**Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie**

*(16 november 2012)*

De Commissie houdt rekening met de behoefte om een bescherming van hoog niveau tot stand te brengen, die ook bevorderlijk is voor de vrijhandel. Daarom wordt er veel belang gehecht aan de gegevensbescherming in het kader van vrijhandelsovereenkomsten.

Elke EU-vrijhandelsovereenkomst verwijst naar artikel XIV van de GATS, waarmee de aanneming of handhaving van de wetten of voorschriften wordt gevolgd inzake — onder andere — de gegevensbescherming van het individu, zolang hun handhaving niet dusdanig wordt toegepast dat het een willekeurige of onverdedigbare discriminatie vormt tussen landen of een vermomde beperking op handel in diensten. Deze algemene uitzondering heeft de nodige ruimte gelaten in het beleid, zodat de EU haar eigen regelgevend kader kan ontwikkelen en toepassen.

Meer algemeen bevatten door de EU gesloten handelsovereenkomsten ook bepalingen waarin wordt gesteld dat de partijen ermee akkoord gaan een hoog niveau van gegevensbescherming te bevorderen en met het oog hierop zullen samenwerken. De EU heeft ook de ontwikkeling gestimuleerd van normen van hoog technisch niveau van gegevensbescherming in derde landen en op internationaal niveau ([1]).

Het voorstel voor een algemene verordening gegevensbescherming ([2]) versterkt en vereenvoudigt regels inzake internationale overdrachten naar landen die niet door de gelijkwaardigheidsbeschikking worden gedekt, in het bijzonder door het gebruik van instrumenten zoals bindende bedrijfsvoorschriften ([3]) te stroomlijnen en uit te breiden, zodat deze ook kunnen worden toegepast door gegevensverwerkers en binnen bedrijfsconcerns, gezien het toenemende aantal bedrijven dat aan gegevensverwerking doet.

([1]) Zie bv. voorwaarden typerend voor vrijhandelsovereenkomsten inzake het elektronische handelshoofdstuk, waar de partijen normaal gezien ermee instemmen dat de ontwikkeling van elektronische handel volledig compatibel moet zijn met de internationale normen voor gegevensbescherming zodat het vertrouwen van elektronische handelsgebruikers wordt beschermd.

([2]) Voorstel voor een verordening van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende de bescherming van natuurlijke personen in verband met de verwerking van persoonsgegevens en betreffende het vrije verkeer van die gegevens (algemene verordening gegevensbescherming) [COM(2012) 11 final].

([3]) Bindende bedrijfsvoorschriften zijn gedragscodes die zijn gebaseerd op Europese normen voor gegevensbescherming, die zijn goedgekeurd door minstens een gegevensbeschermingsautoriteit en die vrijwillig worden opgesteld door organisaties en worden gevolgd om een gepaste bescherming te garanderen voor categorieën van overdrachten van persoonsgegevens tussen bedrijven die deel uitmaken van dezelfde bedrijfsgroep en die verbonden zijn door dezelfde regels.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008348/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) and Birgit Sippel (S&D)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Data protection and privacy conditionalities in free trade agreements

The European Union is increasingly a global trading partner. Companies involved in international trade may find themselves confronted with rules and practices regarding privacy and data protection which are in conflict with EC law. This leads to legal uncertainty for both companies and EU citizens and is a potential obstacle to free trade.

1. Does the Commission share the view that adequate privacy and data protection rules are essential for the protection of the fundamental rights of our citizens and for facilitating free trade?

2. Does the Commission share the view that free trade agreements with third countries should contain effective privacy and data protection safeguards?

3. What other instruments does the Commission use to safeguard privacy and secure data protection in international trade?

4. Does the Commission consider that intensified trade relations with emerging economic powers, against a backdrop of rapid growth in information and communication technologies, are a cause for concern about the protection of privacy and personal data of EU citizens?

5. How will the Commission verify that European companies operating in third countries are fully compliant with European privacy and data protection standards?

6. How will the Commission assist companies that find themselves caught between conflicting jurisdictions?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 November 2012)*

The Commission is sensitive to the need to ensure a high level of protection for individuals that will also help facilitate free trade. Therefore, great importance is attached to data protection included in free trade agreements.

Every EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) refers to GATS Article XIV, which legitimises the adoption or enforcement of laws or regulations relating to — *inter alia* — the individuals' data protection as long as their enforcement is not applied in a manner that would constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination between countries, or a disguised restriction on trade in services. This general exception has provided for the necessary policy space allowing the EU to develop and apply its own regulatory framework.

More generally, trade agreements concluded by the EU include provisions through which the Parties agree to promote a high level of data protection as well as to cooperate to that end. In parallel, the EU has promoted the development of high level technical standards of data protection in third countries and at international level ([1]).

The proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([2]) reinforces and simplifies rules on international transfers to countries not covered by adequacy decision, in particular by streamlining and extending the use of tools such as the Binding Corporate Rules ([3]). This tool can be used to ensure continuity of protection by covering data processors and within groups of companies, thus better reflecting the increasing number of companies involved in data processing activities.

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([1]) See e.g. typical FTAs provisions on the electronic commerce chapter, where the parties usually 'agree that the development of electronic commerce must be fully compatible with the international standards of data protection, in order to ensure the confidence of users of e-commerce'.

([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation) [COM(2012) 11 final].

([3]) Binding Corporate Rules (BCRs) are codes of practices based on European data protection standards, approved by at least one DPA, which organisations draw up voluntarily and follow to ensure adequate safeguards for categories of transfers of personal data between companies that are part of the same corporate group and that are bound by those rules.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008349/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)**
*(24. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Glyphosat und Gensoja

Glyphosat

1. Welche Belastungspfade für Lebens- und Futtermittel und Körperbelastung von Menschen sind bekannt? Welche Daten gibt es hinsichtlich Körperbelastung von Verbrauchern? Wenn ja, was wurde genau untersucht (Urin, Blut, anderes)?

2. Wie kommen die extrem unterschiedlichen Grenzwerte zustande? Welche Daten gibt es hinsichtlich Körperbelastung von landwirtschaftlichen Nutztieren bzw. deren Innereien?

3. Gibt es eine Top Ten der am stärksten belasteten Nahrungsmittel? Wie verhält sich die Belastung zu den Grenzwerten? Werden Grenzwerte überschritten? Wird auch auf Tallowamine untersucht?

4. Wie viele Proben auf Glyphosat- oder Tallowamin-Rückstände wurden in welchen Mitgliedstaaten in welchen Jahren auf welchen Lebensmitteln und Futtermitteln gezogen?

5. Was ist über Tee, Kaffee, Pilze, Oliven, Getreide, Stroh bekannt?

6. Wie ist der aktuelle Stand zur Neubewertung und -zulassung von Glyphosat?

Gensoja

7. Wie viele Proben werden auf Glyphosatrückstände gezogen? Welche Einheiten werden beprobt und nach welchen Kriterien (Charge, Zeiteinheit, Herkunft oder andere)? Wo wird beprobt (Hafen, Futtermittelwerk oder andere Station)? Wird auch auf Tallowamine geprüft? Wird gezielt überprüft, ob in bestimmten Regionen die Höchstmengen überschritten werden?

8. Welche Ergebnisse (Belastungsmenge je Einheit) haben die jeweiligen Untersuchungen von 1996 bis heute ergeben?

9. Wie verknüpft die Kommission die Fragen der Zulassung von Gensoja als Lebens- und Futtermittel mit denen der Rückstände?

10. Ist eine Zulassung von Gensoja vertretbar, wenn keine Daten über Rückstandsmengen von Glyphosat etc. vorhanden sind?

**Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission**
*(27. November 2012)*

1) Bezüglich der Informationen zur ernährungsbedingten Belastung durch Glyphosat möchte die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf Abschnitt 4 des EFSA-Journals 2012 ([1]) verweisen. Es wurden keine langfristig bedenklichen Aspekte hinsichtlich der Aufnahme durch die Verbraucher festgestellt. Aufgrund der geringen akuten Toxizität wurde keine Bewertung der akuten Exposition durchgeführt.

2) Rückstandshöchstgehalte (RHG) werden auf der Grundlage einer „einschlägigen guten landwirtschaftlichen Praxis" festgelegt, die je nach Agrarerzeugnis verschieden ist; dies führt zu unterschiedlichen RHG. Bezüglich der Daten zur ernährungsbedingten Belastung von Nutzvieh durch bestimmte Agrarerzeugnisse möchte die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf Abschnitt 3.2 des EFSA-Journals 2009 ([2]) verweisen.

3) Linsen sind das einzige Agrarerzeugnis, für das über das Schnellwarnsystem für Lebens- und Futtermittel (RASFF) Überschreitungen des RHG gemeldet wurden. Für Talgamine sind keine RHG festgelegt, da die Bestandteile von Pflanzenschutzmitteln, die keine Wirkstoffe sind, auf nationaler Ebene geregelt werden.

([1]) Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit, „Modification of the existing MRL for glyphosate in lentils", EFSA Journal 2012;10(1):2550 [25 S.]. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2012.2550. Online abrufbar unter http://www.efsa.europa.eu/de/efsajournal/doc/2550.pdf

([2]) Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit, „Modification of the residue definition of glyphosate in genetically modified maize grain and soybeans, and in products of animal origin", Gutachten erstellt auf Ersuchen der Europäischen Kommission. EFSA Journal 2009; 7(9):2009 [42 S.]. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2009.1310. Online abrufbar unter http://www.efsa.europa.eu/de/efsajournal/doc/1310.pdf

4,7,8) Glyphosat ist seit 2010 systematisch Bestandteil des EU-weit koordinierten Kontrollprogramms für Tests an konventionellem oder genetisch verändertem Getreide, Soja ausgenommen. Die Mindestzahl der Proben insgesamt (642) und eine Aufschlüsselung nach Mitgliedstaaten sind in den Durchführungsrechtsakten ([3]) festgelegt.

5) Der Kommission sind keine Bedenken zu diesen Erzeugnissen bekannt.

6) Im Mai 2012 wurde die Verlängerung der Zulassung von Glyphosat beantragt. Das Dossier wird derzeit überprüft. Das gesamte Verfahren wird voraussichtlich 2014 abgeschlossen sein.

7,9,10) Die Rechtsvorschriften für die Zulassung gentechnisch veränderter Organismen (GVO) und für die Festlegung der RHG für Herbizide sind voneinander unabhängig. Glyphosat-Rückstände werden in den Rechtsvorschriften für Pestizide behandelt, darunter insbesondere die Vorschriften zur Festlegung von RHG für landwirtschaftliche Erzeugnisse (konventioneller Art und GVO). Dies bedeutet, dass herbizidresistente GVO die Anforderungen beider Rechtsvorschriften erfüllen müssen.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_protection_products/max_residue_levels/eu_multi-annual_control_programme_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008349/12**
**to the Commission**
**Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Glyphosate and genetically modified soya

Glyphosate

1. By what known exposure routes do food, feed, and the human body become contaminated? What data are available on the body burden of consumers? If such data exist, on what specific tests are they based (urine, blood, or other tests)?

2. What are the reasons for the wide variations in limit values? What data are available on the body burden of farm animals or contamination of their entrails?

3. Is there a 'top ten' for the most severely contaminated foodstuffs? In what relation does contamination stand to the limit values? Are limit values being exceeded? Are tests likewise carried out to detect the presence of tallow amines?

4. How many tests for glyphosate or tallow amine residues have been carried out, and in which Member States? In what years were they carried out, and which food— and feed-stuffs were involved?

5. What facts are known as far as tea, coffee, mushrooms, olives, cereals, and straw are concerned?

6. What is the current state of play regarding the review of, and the new authorisation procedure for, glyphosate?

Genetically modified soya

7. How many tests are carried out to detect the presence of glyphosate residues? Which units are tested, and according to what criteria (charge, time unit, origin, or other criteria)? Where are tests conducted (at ports, feed factories, or other stations)? Are samples also tested for tallow amines? Are tests carried out specifically with a view to determining whether maximum quantities are being exceeded in given regions?

8. What have been the findings (contamination level per unit) of the tests carried out since 1996?

9. In what way is the Commission linking the authorisation of genetically modified soya as a food— and feed-stuff to the question of residues?

10. Would it be acceptable to authorise genetically modified soya if there were no data on residue levels of glyphosate and other substances?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 November 2012)*

1) For data on dietary exposure to glyphosate, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to Section 4 of EFSA 2012 ([1]). No long-term consumer intake concerns were identified. No acute exposure assessment was undertaken due to low acute toxicity.

2) Maximum residue levels (MRLs) are based on a 'critical good agricultural practice', which varies among crops, resulting in different MRLs. For data on dietary burden of livestock from specific crops, the Honourable Member is referred to Section 3.2 of EFSA 2009 ([2]).

3) The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) portal shows lentils are the only crop for which exceedances of the MRL were notified. No MRLs are set for tallow amines because components of a plant protection product other than the active substance are regulated at national level.

([1]) European Food Safety Authority; Modification of the existing MRL for glyphosate in lentils. *EFSA Journal* 2012;10(1):2550. [25 pp.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2012.2550. Available online: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/de/efsajournal/doc/2550.pdf

([2]) European Food Safety Authority; Modification of the residue definition of glyphosate in genetically modified maize grain and soybeans, and in products of animal origin on request from the European Commission. *EFSA Journal* 2009; 7(9):2009. [42 pp.]. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2009.1310. Available online: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/de/efsajournal/doc/1310.pdf

4/7/8) Glyphosate has been systematically included in the annual EU-coordinated monitoring programme since 2010 for testing on cereals, but not soya, whether conventional or genetically modified (GM). The total minimum number of samples (642) and a breakdown per Member State are set out in the implementing acts ([3]).

5) The Commission is not aware of any concern on these commodities.

6) In May 2012, an application has been submitted to renew the approval of glyphosate. The review of the dossier is currently ongoing. The entire process is expected to be finalised by 2014.

7/9/10) The legislative tracks to authorise Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and to set MRLs of herbicides are independent from each other. Glyphosate residues are covered by the pesticide legislation, in particular the legislation setting MRLs for agricultural commodities, whether GMOs or not. This implies that GMOs tolerant to herbicides must meet the requirements of both legislations.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_protection_products/max_residue_levels/eu_multi-annual_control_programme_en.htm

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008350/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto rappresentante)**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(24 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Il regime siriano prende in considerazione di dare armi chimiche ad Hezbollah

Il 19 settembre 2012 il quotidiano britannico *Times* ha riportato la notizia secondo cui l'ex capo dell'arsenale chimico siriano, il generale maggiore Adnan Sillu, che aveva disertato tre mesi fa, avrebbe affermato di essere stato presente a discussioni in merito allo spiegamento di armi chimiche sia contro i combattenti ribelli che contro la popolazione civile nella città di Aleppo.

Durante la sua prima intervista dopo la defezione il generale ha rilevato: «Abbiamo discusso seriamente in merito all'uso delle armi chimiche nonché al modo in cui le utilizzeremo e in quali luoghi. Ne abbiamo parlato come di una soluzione estrema — ad esempio nel caso in cui il regime perdesse il controllo di una zona importante come Aleppo». Uno dei motivi della defezione di Adnan Sillu sarebbe stata la sua convinzione che il regime avrebbe finito con l'utilizzare le armi contro i civili.

Inoltre, il generale Sillu ha ammesso che il regime ha anche preso in considerazione la possibilità di dare armi alla milizia Hezbollah basata in Libano: «Volevano sistemare testate dotate di armi chimiche su missili per trasferirle in tal modo ad Hezbollah. Si trattava certo di usarle contro Israele». Sillu ha poi affermato che, non avendo il regime di Assad nulla da perdere, «perché non dovrebbe ricorrere a tali armi? Se inizia una guerra tra Hezbollah e Israele sarebbe solo positivo per la Siria».

Il giornale cita anche il fatto che i servizi di intelligence ritengono che negli ultimi sei mesi la Siria abbia disseminato le sue riserve di armi chimiche in circa due dozzine di siti. Gran parte di esse sono state poste nei pressi delle regioni curde della Siria e nelle vicinanze del suo confine con il Libano. Ufficiali israeliani hanno riferito che un nascondiglio segreto è stato sistemato a trenta minuti di viaggio dalla frontiera libanese. «Stanno collocando le armi chimiche in posizioni in cui possono rappresentare una minaccia tattica. È un messaggio al mondo perché stia attento — i siriani fanno sul serio» ha detto un alto funzionario israeliano della difesa al giornale.

1. È consapevole il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante delle informazioni pervenute dai servizi di intelligence e dal generale maggiore Adnan Sillu in merito all'intenzione del regime di Assad di procedere al dispiegamento di armi chimiche?

2. Secondo la valutazione dei funzionari UE presenti nel Levante mediterraneo, quanto grave è la minaccia che Hezbollah lanci attacchi chimici contro Israele in un prossimo futuro?

3. Quali sono le azioni che l'UE può avviare insieme ad altri partner internazionali per prevenire lo spiegamento di armi chimiche in Siria e oltre le sue frontiere?

**Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(12 dicembre 2012)*

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue con la massima attenzione gli sviluppi in Siria, soprattutto per quanto riguarda le informazioni sulle armi chimiche. Il 25 luglio scorso Jihad Maqdisi, portavoce del ministero degli Affari esteri siriano, ha escluso che la Siria faccia uso di armi chimiche nella crisi interna e ha aggiunto che le armi chimiche sarebbero servite solo in caso di aggressioni esterne. L'Unione non è a conoscenza di informazioni indicanti l'eventuale invio di armi chimiche siriane fuori dal paese.

L'Unione rivolge da sempre appelli alla Siria perché aderisca alla convenzione sulle armi chimiche e ha richiamato di recente il paese a un comportamento responsabile che ricusi a tutti i costi il ricorso alle armi chimiche di cui dispone e garantisca che siano custodite in tutta sicurezza. Ricordando che l'uso di armi chimiche è vietato in generale dal diritto e delle convenzioni internazionali, tra cui il protocollo di Ginevra del 1925, l'Unione ha fatto presente alla Siria che il ricorso alle armi chimiche è un crimine.

L'UE ha adottato programmi di cooperazione e misure di sostegno per la gestione delle frontiere nei paesi confinanti con la Siria, soprattutto il Libano. Queste attività, che dovrebbero proseguire nei prossimi anni, potranno influire positivamente anche sulla lotta contro il traffico illecito, compreso quello di armi.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008350/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Syrian regime considers giving chemical weapons to Hezbollah

On September 19 2012, the UK's Times newspaper reported the former head of Syria's chemical arsenal, Major-General Adnan Sillu, who defected three months ago, as saying that he had been present at discussions about the deployment of chemical weapons against both rebel fighters and civilians in the city of Aleppo.

During his first interview after his defection, the General noted: 'We were in a serious discussion about the use of chemical weapons, including how we would use them and in what areas. We discussed this as a last resort — such as if the regime lost control of an important area such as Aleppo'. One of the reasons for Sillu's defection was due to his conviction that the regime would eventually use these weapons against the civilian population.

Furthermore, General Sillu admitted that the regime had also considered giving weapons to the Lebanon-based militia Hezbollah: 'They wanted to place warheads with the chemical weapons on missiles — to transfer them this way to Hezbollah. It was for use against Israel, of course'. Sillu warned that if the Assad regime has nothing to lose, 'why not use these weapons? If a war starts between Hezbollah and Israel it will be only good for Syria'.

The newspaper also cites intelligence services as believing that Syria has spread its chemical weapons stockpiles around nearly two dozen locations over the past six months. Many of these weapons have been placed near Syria's Kurdish regions and near its border with Lebanon. Israeli officials have reported that a cache was even placed within a thirty-minute drive of the Lebanese border. 'They are placing them in positions where they can pose a tactical threat. It is a broadcast to the world to watch out — the Syrians are serious,' a senior Israeli defence official told the newspaper.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of reports from intelligence services and from Major-General Adnan Sillu about the intention of the Assad regime to deploy chemical weapons?

2. How seriously do EU officials in the Levant rate the threat of Hezbollah launching chemical attacks against Israel in the near future?

3. What measures can the EU take with other international partners in preventing the deployment of chemical weapons within Syria and across its borders?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 December 2012)*

The HR/VP has been following developments in Syria with the closest attention possible, including information related to Syria's chemical weapons. Jihad Maqdisi, spokesman of the Syrian Foreign Ministry, ruled out on 25 July that Syria would use chemical weapons in the course of its internal crisis and added that such weapons are meant only for cases of external aggression.

The EU is not aware of any information suggesting a possible transfer of Syria's chemical weapons outside the country.

The EU has consistently called upon Syria to join the Chemical Weapons Convention. The EU has recently urged Syria to act responsibly in relation to its chemical weapons, not to use them under any circumstances, and to keep them secure. Recalling that the use of chemical weapons is prohibited by general international law and conventions, including the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the EU has stressed that the use of chemical weapons by Syria would be unlawful.

The EU is engaged in cooperation programmes and support measures in the field of border management in countries neighbouring Syria, and particularly Lebanon. These activities are foreseen to continue in the years to come and are expected to have positive impacts also with regard to fighting illegal trafficking, including in arms.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008351/12**
**à la Commission**
**Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)**
*(24 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Extraction en zone Natura 2000

La possibilité d'extraction en zone Natura 2000 me semble contredire directement les objectifs de conservation fixés par la législation à cet égard. Dans le guide qu'elle a publié en juillet 2010 au sujet des zones Natura 2000 et de l'industrie extractive, la Commission identifie les conséquences de l'extraction sur la biodiversité: «Le défrichement et la disparition des éléments de surface lors de la phase d'extraction des minéraux ou de construction des infrastructures associées telles que les routes d'accès, les aires de dépôt des déchets et les bassins de résidus représentent la première incidence de ces activités sur la biodiversité. Au cours de ce processus, les habitats existants sont susceptibles d'être modifiés, endommagés, fragmentés ou de disparaître localement».

Je regrette d'ailleurs que ce guide soit partial quant aux éléments de la réglementation européenne mis en avant. Il y est écrit: «Les lignes directrices […] montrent comment certains projets d'extraction peuvent se révéler finalement bénéfiques pour la biodiversité en offrant des niches écologiques de grande qualité».

De même, le guide rappelle la possibilité de mesures compensatoires en cas de projet relevant de l'intérêt général (la perte de biodiversité est-elle compensable?) mais omet tout simplement de préciser que, d'après l'article 6 de la directive «Habitats», lorsque «le site concerné est un site abritant un type d'habitat naturel et/ou une espèce prioritaires, seules peuvent être évoquées des considérations liées à la santé de l'homme et à la sécurité publique ou à des conséquences bénéfiques primordiales pour l'environnement», et non pas de nature «sociale» ou «économique».

Cette question me semble d'autant plus importante que la Commission indique, dans sa communication du 2 février 2011 venant renforcer l'initiative «matières premières» de 2008, que le deuxième pilier stratégique est l'exploitation du potentiel d'extraction de l'Union européenne. Alors que les mines risquent de se multiplier en Europe, il est plus que jamais urgent de renforcer la protection de ces zones fragiles.

1. La Commission pourrait-elle communiquer les exemples de projets miniers s'étant finalement révélés «bénéfiques pour la biodiversité»?

2. Que compte faire la Commission pour protéger les zones Natura 2000 menacées par l'extraction minière?

**Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission**
*(7 novembre 2012)*

L'objectif premier du document d'orientation sur l'extraction des minéraux à des fins non énergétiques et Natura 2000 ([1]) est de garantir que les activités d'extraction sont menées dans le respect des dispositions des directives «Oiseaux» ([2]) et «Habitats» ([3]) et sans compromettre les objectifs de conservation et l'intégrité des sites Natura 2000. À cet égard, le document contient des exemples utiles de bonnes pratiques. Ceux-ci figurent à l'annexe 2 du document et incluent des cas de réhabilitation qui ont été signalés comme bénéfiques pour la biodiversité.

Il incombe aux autorités compétentes des États membres de protéger les sites Natura 2000 des activités d'extraction susceptibles d'avoir une incidence négative, conformément aux dispositions applicables prévues par les directives «Oiseaux» et «Habitats». La Commission peut intervenir si des preuves d'une violation de ces dispositions lui sont fournies.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/neei_n2000_guidance.pdf
([2]) Directive 2009/147/CE (version codifiée remplaçant la directive 79/409/CEE), JO L 20 du 26.1.2010.
([3]) Directive 92/43/CEE du Conseil du 21 mai 1992 concernant la conservation des habitats naturels ainsi que de la faune et de la flore sauvages (JO L 206 du 22.7.1992).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008351/12**
**to the Commission**
**Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Extraction of minerals on Natura 2000 sites

The possibility of extracting minerals from Natura 2000 sites, to my mind, runs counter to the conservation aims laid down in the relevant legislation. In its July 2010 guidance document on Natura 2000 sites and extractive industry, the Commission spells out how biodiversity can be affected by extraction: 'The NEEI [non-energy extractive industry] sector's primary impact on biodiversity is often through land clearance and the removal of surface features during the extraction of minerals or the building of associated infrastructures such as access roads, dumping sites and tailings ponds. Through this process, existing habitats may be altered, damaged, fragmented or locally removed.'

One cause for regret is that the guidance document misrepresents the position under European regulations. The document states that: 'The guidelines … show how some extraction projects can ultimately be beneficial to biodiversity by providing highly *(sic)* quality ecological niches'.

It also refers to compensatory measures, which may be taken when a project is considered to be of overriding public interest (is it possible to compensate for biodiversity loss?), but completely fails to mention the stipulation laid down in Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive, namely that 'Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety … [or] to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment'; such considerations do not, however, extend to 'interests of a social or economic nature'.

This point is especially crucial, bearing in mind that, as announced by the Commission in its follow-up communication of 2 February 2011, the second of the three strategic pillars forming the basis of the 2008 Raw Materials Initiative is concerned with exploiting the EU's own extraction potential. Given the risk, therefore, that more and more mines will be opened up in Europe, it is imperative to strengthen the protection afforded to the fragile Natura 2000 sites.

1. Can the Commission give examples of mining projects that have proved ultimately to be 'beneficial to biodiversity'?

2. What will it do to protect Natura 2000 sites facing the threat of mineral extraction?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

The primary aim of the guidance document on Non-Energy Mineral Extraction and Natura 2000 ([1]) is to ensure that extractive activities are undertaken in a way that complies with the provisions of the Birds ([2]) and Habitats ([3]) directives and does not compromise the conservation objectives and integrity of Natura 2000 sites. In that regard the document contains relevant examples of good practice. These examples are presented in Annex A to the document and include rehabilitation cases that have been reported as beneficial to biodiversity.

It is the responsibility of Member State competent authorities to ensure the protection of Natura 2000 sites from potentially damaging extractive activities, in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Birds and Habitats Directives. The Commission can intervene if it is provided with evidence of a breach of those provisions.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/neei_n2000_guidance.pdf
([2]) Directive 2009/147/EC (codified version replacing Directive 79/409/EEC), OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([3]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008352/12**
**an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)**
**Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**
**und Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (ALDE)**
*(24. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* VP/HR — Festnahme der Delegation der Internationalen Föderation der Liberalen Jugend (IFLRY) am 18. September 2012 in Belarus

Am 18. September 2012 wurde eine Gruppe von acht Mitgliedern der Internationalen Föderation der Liberalen Jugend (IFLRY) festgenommen, als sie an einer von örtlichen Jugendvereinigungen organisierten Bildungsveranstaltung in Mahiljov bzw. Mogiljow (Belarus) teilnahmen. Der Gruppe gehörten Mitglieder aus Deutschland, den Niederlanden, Russland, Armenien, den USA und Österreich an. Gegen 18.00 Uhr stürmten Beamte der Einwanderungsbehörde, der Polizei und anderer Sicherheitsorgane den Saal. Alle Mitglieder der Delegation wurden zur Einwanderungsbehörde gebracht und dort rund drei Stunden lang verhört. Am 19. September wurde ihnen mitgeteilt, dass sie das Land bis Mitternacht des nächsten Tages verlassen müssten, was sie auch taten. Die Behörden warfen der Gruppe vor, gegen die Visabestimmungen verstoßen zu haben, und erklärten, es sei nicht vorgesehen, dass man im Rahmen einer Touristen- bzw. einer Studienreise an öffentlichen Veranstaltungen teilnehme.

1. Wurde die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin von diesem Vorfall in Kenntnis gesetzt?

2. Wie sieht die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin die Rolle der EU hinsichtlich der Erleichterung des Dialogs zwischen jungen Menschen, Vertretern der Zivilgesellschaft und der demokratischen Kräfte in Belarus und den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

3. Wie können diese wichtigen zwischenmenschlichen Kontakte intensiviert und noch wirkungsvoller gestaltet werden?

4. Wird die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin offiziell protestieren, um so den Druck auf die Behörden von Belarus aufrechtzuerhalten?

**Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission**
*(14. November 2012)*

Die EU bedauert selbstverständlich jede Handlung der belarussischen Behörden, die direkte zwischenmenschliche Kontakte verhindert. Sie ist von der Wichtigkeit solcher Kontakte fest überzeugt und stärkt den demokratischen Kräften in Belarus den Rücken. Die EU fördert Aktivitäten dieser Art im Rahmen verschiedener Initiativen. Seit dem gewaltsamen Vorgehen im Anschluss an die Präsidentschaftswahlen 2010 hat sie ihre Unterstützung für die Zivilgesellschaft verfünffacht. Zu den entsprechenden Maßnahmen zählen u. a. die Einführung eines Stipendienprogramms, die Förderung von Sprachkursen für junge Menschen und die Unterstützung der Europäischen Humanistischen Universität.

Da Belarus bislang nicht auf die im Juni 2011 von der Kommission ausgesprochene Einladung zur Aufnahme von Verhandlungen über ein Visaerleichterungsabkommen reagiert hat, machen die EU-Mitgliedstaaten den bestmöglichen Gebrauch von der im Visakodex vorgesehenen Flexibilität, insbesondere von der Möglichkeit, für bestimmte Kategorien belarussischer Bürger oder für Einzelpersonen die Visagebühren zu senken oder ganz darauf zu verzichten.

Außerdem hat der EU-Kommissar für Erweiterung und Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik im März 2012 den „Europäischen Dialog über Modernisierung“ mit der belarussischen Gesellschaft eingeleitet. Im Mittelpunkt der Diskussionen stehen die zur Modernisierung und Demokratisierung von Belarus notwendigen Reformen und — im Zusammenhang damit — die Möglichkeiten zum Ausbau der Beziehungen zur EU.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008352/12**
**aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)**
**Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**
**en Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (ALDE)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* VP/HR — Delegatie van de Internationale Federatie van Liberale Jongeren op 18 september 2012 in Wit-Rusland opgepakt

Op 18 september 2012 is een groep van acht leden van de Internationale Federatie van Liberale Jongeren (IFLRY) opgepakt tijdens een door plaatselijke jeugdorganisaties georganiseerde scholingsbijeenkomst in het Wit-Russische Mogilev. De acht kwamen uit Duitsland, Nederland, Rusland, Armenië, de VS en Oostenrijk. Tegen 6 uur 's middags zijn Wit-Russische immigratiebeambten, politieagenten en functionarissen van andere veiligheidsorganen de vergaderzaal binnengevallen. Alle leden van de delegatie zijn meegenomen naar het immigratiekantoor en zo'n drie uur lang verhoord. Op 19 september werd hun te verstaan gegeven dat zij het land uiterlijk om middernacht de volgende dag moesten verlaten, wat zij ook hebben gedaan. De beschuldiging die door de autoriteiten is geuit, luidde dat de groep visumvoorschriften had overtreden en dat tijdens een toeristisch of studiebezoek geen openbare bijeenkomsten mogen worden bezocht.

1. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger op de hoogte gesteld van dit ongelukkige incident?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger de rol van de EU bij het stimuleren van de dialoog tussen jongeren, maatschappelijke organisaties en democratische krachten in Wit-Rusland en de lidstaten van de EU?

3. Wat kan er worden ondernomen om deze belangrijke intermenselijke contacten uit te breiden en effectiever te maken?

4. Zal de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger een officieel protest indienen om de druk op de Wit-Russische autoriteiten te handhaven?

**Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie**
*(14 november 2012)*

De EU betreurt uiteraard elke actie van de Belarussische autoriteiten die het contact tussen de burgers ontwricht: de EU gelooft sterk in het belang van de bevordering van dergelijke contacten en moedigt de democratische krachten in Belarus aan. De EU heeft door haar verschillende initiatieven deze activiteiten aanzienlijk bevorderd. Sinds het harde optreden na de presidentsverkiezingen van 2010 heeft de EU de hoeveelheid steun voor het maatschappelijk middenveld vervijfvoudigd. Dit omvat ook de opstart van een beurzenprogramma, de bevordering van taallessen voor jongeren en steun aan de Europese universiteit voor menswetenschappen.

Bij gebrek aan een antwoord van Belarus op de uitnodiging van de Commissie van juni 2011 om de onderhandelingen over de visumversoepelingsovereenkomst op te starten, hebben de EU-lidstaten optimaal gebruik gemaakt van de flexibiliteit van de visumcode, in het bijzonder de mogelijkheid om voor bepaalde categorieën Belarussische burgers of in individuele gevallen af te zien van visumkosten of deze te verminderen.

Bovendien bracht de Commissaris voor Uitbreiding en het Europees nabuurschapsbeleid in maart 2012 de Europese dialoog over modernisering met de Belarussische samenleving op gang. De dialoog is toegespitst op de noodzakelijke hervormingen voor de modernisering en democratisering van Belarus en de hieraan gerelateerde mogelijke ontwikkeling van betrekkingen met de EU.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008352/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**
**and Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Detention of the delegation of the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) in Belarus on 18 September 2012

On 18 September 2012, a group of eight members of the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) were detained while participating in an educational event in Mogilev (Belarus) hosted by local youth organisations. This group included individuals from Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, Armenia, the USA and Austria. Around 6 p.m., Belarusian immigration officers, police and officials from other security institutions raided the event. All the members of the delegation were taken to the immigration office and questioned for about three hours. On 19 September, they were informed that they would have to leave the country by midnight of the next day, which they did. The accusation put forward by the authorities was that the group was violating visa regulations and that a tourist or study visit cannot include visiting public events.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative been informed about this unfortunate incident?

2. How does the Vice-President/High Representative assess the EU's role in facilitating dialogue between young people, civil society and democratic forces in Belarus and EU Member States?

3. What can be done to increase these important people-to-people contacts and make them more effective?

4. Will the Vice-President/High Representative make an official protest in order to maintain pressure on the Belarus authorities?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 November 2012)*

The EU naturally regrets any actions by the Belarusian authorities which disrupt people-to-people contacts: the EU firmly believes in the importance of promoting such contacts and encourages democratic forces in Belarus. It has substantially fostered these activities through its different initiatives. Since the crackdown following the 2010 presidential elections the EU has quintupled the amount of its assistance dedicated to civil society. This includes the launch of a scholarship programme, the promotion of language classes for youth and support to the European Humanities University.

In the absence of a response by Belarus to the Commission's June 2011 invitation to start negotiations on a visa facilitation agreement, EU Member States have been making optimal use of flexibilities offered by the Visa Code, in particular the possibilities to waive and reduce visa fees for certain categories of Belarusian citizens or in individual cases.

In addition, the Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy launched in March 2012 the European Dialogue on Modernisation with Belarus Society. Discussions are focused on defining the necessary reforms for the modernisation and democratization of Belarus and on the related potential development of relations with the EU.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008353/12**
**to the Commission**
**Claude Moraes (S&D)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Free and fair democracy in Bangladesh

According to the Commission's own figures, the EU has provided over EUR 300 million since 2000 to electoral assistance missions. Although observation missions have no direct power over the election, they provide a powerful tool in improving the quality of information from the election and make an indirect improvement to the electoral process. The EU has also signed a formal agreement with the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Through their recommendations and assessment they have improved the electoral process in 40 countries.

Bangladesh is expected to hold elections in 2013 and has a history of electoral violence.

1. What action will the EU take to help Bangladesh promote and protect its citizens' rights to free and fair elections?

2. What specific measures will be taken to prevent and investigate forced disappearances, which are often used to intimidate those involved in the election process?

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

Human rights and democracy are among the main priorities of the EU external policy and an essential element of the EC-Bangladesh Cooperation Agreement signed in May 2000. They are also an important focus of the EU and its Member States' development programmes, as reflected in the recent document Bangladesh-Europe 2012, published on the EEAS ([1]) website.

Human rights issues are regularly raised in the formal dialogue that takes place in the Joint Commission (established by the cooperation agreement), as well as in other meetings with the Bangladeshi authorities, including at the highest level. The EU, as well as Member States, has urged the Bangladeshi authorities to investigate thoroughly incidents of forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, and to bring those responsible to justice.

The HR/VP is closely monitoring the growing confrontation between the Bangladeshi Government and the opposition, following the constitutional reform in 2011 which led to the abolition of the caretaker government mechanism. In its contacts with all political forces and in its public statements, the HR/VP has stressed the need to avoid a confrontational approach to politics and engage in constructive dialogue inside and outside the parliament, with a view to ensuring the inclusiveness of the next elections.

As part of its commitment to continue its electoral support to Bangladesh, in 2011, the EU adopted a EUR 10 million programme to enhance the capacity of the Election Commission. The EU stands ready to continue its support to the electoral process and to deploy an Electoral Observer Mission for the next election should it be invited to do so, provided that the right conditions for credible elections are met.

([1]) EEAS = European External Action Service.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008355/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)**
*(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Ανάληψη δράσης για τη νόσο Alzheimer

Πάνω από 9,9 εκ. άνθρωποι στην Ευρώπη και 35,6 εκ. σε όλο τον κόσμο πάσχουν από κάποιας μορφής άνοια, με την συντριπτική πλειοψηφία να υποφέρει από τη νόσο Alzheimer. Εάν συνεχιστεί η παρούσα δυναμική ανάπτυξης και επαληθευτούν οι εκτιμήσεις, σύμφωνα με τις οποίες ο αριθμός αυτός αναμένεται να τριπλασιαστεί μέχρι το 2050, θα επιβεβαιωθεί η ανησυχία ότι η νόσος Alzheimer προσλαμβάνει διαστάσεις πραγματικής μάστιγας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Έτους 2012 για την ενεργό γήρανση και την αλληλεγγύη μεταξύ των γενεών, προτίθεται να προωθήσει πρωτοβουλίες για την έγκαιρη πρόληψη της νόσου Alzheimer, και για την ευαισθητοποίηση, έγκαιρη ενημέρωση και κατάλληλη εκπαίδευση του οικογενειακού περιβάλλοντος.

2. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το μέγεθος των ιατρικών δαπανών που συνεπάγεται η νόσος Alzheimer, με ποιο τρόπο διασφαλίζει την ίση πρόσβαση των ασθενών σε φαρμακευτική και μη αγωγή.

3. Προτίθεται να προωθήσει στενότερη διακρατική συνεργασία στον τομέα της έρευνας σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο σχετικά με τα αίτια, την πρόληψη και τη θεραπεία της νόσου Alzheimer.

**Απάντηση του κ. Šefčovič εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(6 Νοεμβρίου 2012)*

Η ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με μια ευρωπαϊκή πρωτοβουλία για τη νόσο του Αλτσχάιμερ και άλλες μορφές άνοιας ([1]) καθορίζει την προσέγγιση της Επιτροπής στα εν λόγω ζητήματα.

Σε σχέση με το θέμα αυτό, η Επιτροπή συγχρηματοδοτεί την κοινή δράση «ALzheimer COoperative Valuation in Europe (ALCOVE)» ([2]) στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος «Υγεία», το οποίο στοχεύει να βελτιώσει τη γνώση σχετικά με την άνοια και να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών όσον αφορά τους τρόπους για τη διατήρηση της υγείας, της ποιότητας ζωής, της αυτονομίας και αξιοπρέπειας των ατόμων που πάσχουν από άνοια, καθώς και των ατόμων που τους φροντίζουν. Η κοινή δράση θα παρουσιάσει τα συμπεράσματα και τα σημεία αναφοράς της το 2013.

Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή έχει επενδύσει πάνω από 200 εκατομμύρια ευρώ στην έρευνα για το Αλτσχάιμερ μέσω του Εβδόμου Προγράμματος Πλαισίου Έρευνας και Τεχνολογικής Ανάπτυξης (ΠΠ7). Σημαντικό μέρος αυτής της υποστήριξης έχει δοθεί σε σχέδια συνεργασίας ανάμεσα σε πανεπιστήμια, ερευνητικά ιδρύματα και ΜΜΕ διαφόρων ευρωπαϊκών χωρών. Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει επίσης την εφαρμογή της πρωτοβουλίας κοινού προγραμματισμού για τις νευροεκφυλιστικές νόσους και, ιδιαίτερα, για τη νόσο του Αλτσχάιμερ, πρωτοβουλία που τελεί υπό την ευθύνη των κρατών μελών και στοχεύει στην αύξηση της επίδρασης της ευρωπαϊκής έρευνας σε αυτόν τον τομέα, συντονίζοντας τις προσπάθειες μεταξύ των χωρών ([3]).

Η Επιτροπή έχει θέσει, επίσης, σε εφαρμογή την ευρωπαϊκή σύμπραξη καινοτομίας με θέμα την ενεργό και υγιή γήρανση. Σύμφωνα με τη σύμπραξη αυτή, ένα ευρύ φάσμα ενδιαφερομένων έχει δεσμευτεί να εφαρμόσει συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες. Η πρόληψη της λειτουργικής και γνωστικής εξασθένησης συνιστά ένα από τα θέματα στα οποία αναφέρονται οι εν λόγω δεσμεύσεις.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_information/dissemination/documents/com2009_380_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008355/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Action regarding Alzheimer's disease

Over 9.9 million people throughout Europe and 35.6 million worldwide suffer from some form of dementia, Alzheimer's disease in the overwhelming majority of cases. If the rapid spread of this disease continues and if, as expected, the number of cases triples by 2050, fears of Alzheimer's disease becoming a veritable scourge will be fulfilled.

In view of this:

1. Will the Commission, in the context of European Year 2012 for Active Ageing and Iinter-generational Solidarity, take prompt action to contain Alzheimer's disease, heighten awareness and provide suitable information and guidance for families affected?

2. In view of the high medical costs of Alzheimer's disease, what action is it taking to ensure equal access for sufferers to medication and treatment?

3. Will it encourage closer cross-border cooperation at European level in researching the causes of Alzheimer's disease and its prevention and treatment?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 November 2012)*

The Commission Communication on a European initiative on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias ([1]) established the Commission's approach to these issues.

In this context, the Commission is co-financing the Joint Action 'ALzheimer COoperative Valuation in Europe (ALCOVE)' ([2]) under the Health Programme, which aims to improve knowledge on dementia, and to promote the exchange of information on ways to preserve health, quality of life, autonomy and dignity of people living with dementia and their carers.. The Joint Action will present its conclusions and benchmarks in 2013.

In addition, the Commission has invested over EUR 200 million in research on Alzheimer's in the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7). A substantial part of this support was dedicated to collaborative projects between universities, research institutions, SMEs of various European countries. The Commission also supports the implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases, in particular Alzheimer's, a Member States-led initiative, aiming at increasing impact of European research in this area by coordinating efforts across countries ([3]).

In addition, the Commission has launched the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing. Under the Partnership, a broad range of stakeholders have committed to concrete actions. The prevention of functional and cognitive decline is one of the themes for which commitments have been invited.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_information/dissemination/documents/com2009_380_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/.
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008356/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Compatibiliteit Nederlandse kolenbelasting met EU-wetgeving

1. Is het de Commissie bekend dat Nederland de vrijstelling van de belasting op kolen die worden gebruikt als brandstof voor elektriciteitscentrales per 1 januari 2013 schrapt?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de Nederlandse regering met uitspraken dat „de maatregel primair is gericht op het creëren van budgettaire opbrengsten" ([1]) en „het primaire doel van de maatregel is het genereren van opbrengsten" ([2]) duidelijk maakt dat het genereren van overheidsinkomsten het hoofdargument is voor de invoering van een kolenbelasting?

3. Heeft de Commissie grondig geanalyseerd of de kolenbelasting in strijd is met Richtlijn 2003/96/EG ([3]), die de lidstaten verplicht vrijstelling te verlenen van belasting voor energieproducten die worden gebruikt voor de productie van elektriciteit, tenzij de belasting wordt geheven op grond van milieubeleidsoverwegingen?

4. Heeft de Commissie grondig geanalyseerd of de kolenbelasting in strijd is met het verbod op fiscale discriminatie, nu het gebruik van geïmporteerde kolen voor de elektriciteitsproductie wel wordt belast, terwijl het gebruik van een Nederlands substituut voor kolen (gas) voor de elektriciteitsproductie niet wordt belast?

5. Is de Commissie, indien dit nog niet gedaan is, bereid om te analyseren of de kolenbelasting in strijd is met de genoemde en andere Europeesrechtelijke bepalingen, zodat de ontstane rechtsonzekerheid weggenomen wordt?

**Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie**
*(5 november 2012)*

Het is de Commissie ter kennis gebracht dat Nederland voornemens is de vrijstelling van de accijns op kolen die worden gebruikt als brandstof in elektriciteitscentrales, af te schaffen. Overeenkomstig artikel 14, lid 1, onder a), van Richtlijn 2003/96/EG kunnen de lidstaten energieproducten (bv. kolen) uit milieubeleidsoverwegingen aan belasting onderwerpen. Ofschoon de afschaffing van deze vrijstelling dus uit milieuoverwegingen gebeurt, is het gevolg vaak een stijging van de belastingopbrengsten. Het is de Commissie evenwel niet bekend dat het genereren van hogere belastinginkomsten de reden voor de afschaffing is, aangezien in documenten bij de ontwerpwet milieuargumenten worden aangevoerd om kolen die worden gebruikt voor het opwekken van elektriciteit, te belasten; de milieudruk hierbij zou namelijk zwaarder zijn dan bij elektriciteitsopwekking met behulp van andere vaak gebruikte energieproducten zoals aardgas.

De Commissie heeft ook onderzocht of er sprake is van discriminatie tussen het ingevoerde product (kolen) en concurrerende binnenlandse producten (gas). In de zaak-Outokumpu, C-213/96 van 2 april 1998, heeft het Hof van Justitie geoordeeld dat het EU-recht de lidstaten niet verbiedt om aan de hand van objectieve criteria, zoals de aard van de gebruikte grondstoffen of de toegepaste productieprocédés, voor bepaalde producten, zelfs indien deze gelijksoortig zijn in de zin van artikel 110 VWEU, een stelsel van gedifferentieerde belastingheffing in te voeren, wanneer dit gericht is op de verwezenlijking van doelstellingen die eveneens met de vereisten van het Verdrag en van het afgeleide recht verenigbaar zijn. Volgens vaste rechtspraak van het Hof is de bescherming van het milieu een van de wezenlijke doelstellingen van de EU.

Op basis van de gegevens waarover de Commissie beschikt, lijkt de afschaffing van de vrijstelling van de accijns op kolen die worden gebruikt voor het opwekken van elektriciteit, niet in strijd te zijn met het EU-recht.

([1]) Advies Raad van State en nader rapport, TK 2011-2012, 33287, nr. 4.
([2]) EK 2011-2012, D, memorie van antwoord.
([3]) Artikel 14, lid 1.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008356/12**
**to the Commission**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Compatibility of the Dutch coal tax with EU legislation

1. Is the Commission aware that the Netherlands is scrapping the tax exemption on coal used as fuel for power stations as from 1 January 2013?

2. Does the Commission share the view clearly held by the Dutch Government, with comments such as 'the measure is primarily aimed at creating budget income' ([1]) and 'the main aim of the measure is to generate income' ([2]), that the generation of government income is the main argument in favour of the introduction of a coal tax?

3. Has the Commission carried out a detailed analysis of whether the coal tax conflicts with Directive 2003/96/EC ([3]), which obliges the Member States to grant a tax exemption for energy products used to produce electricity, unless the tax is levied for reasons of environmental policy?

4. Has the Commission carried out a detailed analysis of whether the coal tax conflicts with the prohibition of fiscal discrimination now the use of imported coal for electricity production is taxed while the use of a Dutch substitute for coal (gas) for electricity production is not taxed?

5. Is the Commission willing to analyse, if this has not yet been done, whether the coal tax conflicts with the provisions mentioned and other European legal provisions, to remove the resultant legal uncertainty?

**Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 November 2012)*

The Commission was informed that Netherlands intends to cancel the exemption from excise duty on coal used as fuel for power plants. According to Article 14(1)(a) of Directive 2003/96/EC Member States may, for reasons of environmental policy, subject energy products (e.g. coal) to taxation. Although this is done for environmental reasons, such an exemption cancellation regularly leads to an increase of tax earnings. The Commission is, however, not aware of the fact that an increase of tax revenue was the reason for introduction, as it follows from documents accompanying the draft law that there are environmental arguments to tax coal used for production of electricity, as it pollutes the environment more than other commonly used energy products such as natural gas.

The Commission also examined whether there is any discrimination between the imported product (coal) and competing domestic products (gas). The Court laid down in the Case Outokumpu C-213/96 of 2 April 1998 that the EC law does not restrict the freedom of each Member State to establish a tax system which differentiates between certain products, even products which are similar within the meaning of the Art. 110 TFEU, on the basis of objective criteria, such as the nature of the raw materials used or the production processes employed, if it pursues objectives which are themselves compatible with the requirements of the Treaty and its secondary legislation. The Court consistently recognised that protection of the environment is one of the essential objectives of the EU.

Based on the information available to the Commission, it seems that the cancellation of the exemption from excise duty on coal used for the production of electricity does not violate the EC law.

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([1]) Opinion of the Council of State and more detailed report, TK 2011-2012, 33287, No 4.
([2]) EK 2011-2012, D, reply.
([3]) Article 14(1).

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008357/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sonia Alfano (ALDE)**
*(24 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Grandi opere e procedure di smaltimento delle «terre e rocce da scavo»: richiesta immediata di valutazione del regolamento ministeriale italiano

Richiamando:

— le circostanziate osservazioni dell'Associazione Idra Onlus, inviate lo scorso 16 luglio, al Commissario Potočnik;

— la corrispondenza successiva tra la Direzione Generale e la stessa Associazione;

— l'interrogazione dalla sottoscritta depositata (riferimento P-007683/2012) e che ancora non ha ricevuto risposta;

— la lettera del Commissario Potočnik del 5.9.2012 (Ref. Ares (2012) 1032015).

Si richiede alla Commissione una immediata valutazione, prima della sua entrata in vigore, del decreto del Ministero dell'ambiente e della tutela del territorio e del mare, del 10 agosto 2012, n. 161 «Regolamento recante la disciplina dell'utilizzazione delle terre e rocce da scavo» (pubblicato sulla G.U. n. 221 del 21.9.2012). Come già osservato, si ritiene infatti che il decreto possa configurare una violazione della legislazione europea.

**Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(5 novembre 2012)*

La Commissione ha risposto alla precedente interrogazione presentata dall'onorevole parlamentare (P-007683/2012), la quale attestava che i servizi della Commissione stavano valutando se il progetto di decreto italiano sull'uso dei suoli escavati e rocce fosse compatibile con la normativa UE, in particolare con l'articolo 5 della direttiva 2008/98/CE sui rifiuti che definisce le condizioni ai sensi delle quali una sostanza o un oggetto può essere considerato sottoprodotto e dunque non rifiuto.

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che nel frattempo il progetto di decreto è stato definitivamente adottato e pubblicato come «decreto 10 agosto 2012, n. 161, regolamento recante la disciplina dell'utilizzazione delle terre e rocce da scavo» sulla Gazzetta ufficiale della Repubblica italiana il 21 settembre 2012.

Dopo un'attenta valutazione del decreto summenzionato la Commissione ritiene che esso sia in linea con la direttiva 2008/98/CE.

La Commissione ha scritto ai denunzianti (inclusa l'associazione Idra menzionata dall'onorevole parlamentare) per informarli delle conclusioni di cui sopra.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008357/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sonia Alfano (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Major work and disposal procedures for 'excavated earth and rocks': request for an immediate assessment of Italian ministerial regulations

Recalling:

— the detailed observations by the non-profit association Idra, sent to Commissioner Potočnik on 16 July 2012;

— the subsequent correspondence between the Directorate-General and the Idra Association;

— the question tabled by myself (No P-007683/2012) which has still not been answered;

— Commissioner Potočnik's letter of 5 September 2012 (Ref. Ares (2012) 1032015).

The Commission is asked to carry out an immediate assessment, before it comes into force, of Decree No 161 of the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea of 10 August 2012, entitled 'Regolamento recante la disciplina dell'utilizzazione delle terre e rocce da scavo' [Regulation on rules on the use of excavated land and rocks] which was published in Italian Official Journal No 221 of 21.9.2012. As has already been said, the decree may be in breach of EU legislation.

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 November 2012)*

The Commission replied to the previous question tabled by the Honourable Member (P-007683/2012 ([1])) stating that the Commission services were assessing whether the Italian draft decree on the use of excavated soils and rocks was compatible with EC law, and in particular with Article 5 of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([2]), which sets out the conditions under which a substance or object may be regarded as not being waste but as being a by-product.

The Commission is aware that in the meantime the draft decree has been finally adopted and published as 'Decree 161/2012 regulating the use of excavated soils and rocks' in the Italian Official Journal on 21 September 2012.

After having assessed the above Decree, the Commission has reached the conclusion that it is in line with Directive 2008/98/EC.

The Commission has written to the complainants (including the association Idra mentioned by the Honourable Member) informing them of the above conclusion.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Directive 2008/98/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008358/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(24 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Precio de la leche

Desde hace meses se constata en los supermercados catalanes de una empresa de gran distribución francesa, en este caso, Carrefour, un precio en la leche de su marca de distribución muy diferente del de la misma leche vendida en sus supermercados franceses. De hecho, en un supermercado de dicha cadena de distribución en Cataluña, de media, el litro de la leche entera es de 0,56 €/l y, en el otro lado de la frontera política de la misma cadena de distribución es de 0,91 €/l. Lo mismo pasa con la leche semidesnatada con un precio 0,56 €/l a 0,74 €/l y la desnatada 0,56 €/l a 1,68 €/l, respectivamente. Dada la diferencia de precios de la leche de marca blanca existentes entre los supermercados catalanes de una misma cadena de distribución de Cataluña y Francia y teniendo en cuenta la homogeneidad del producto mencionado,

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que estos precios tan distintos entre un lado y otro de una frontera política tienen únicamente una razón económica?

2. ¿Puede informar la Comisión de si el mercado de la leche cumple la legislación en materia de competencia y de mercado único?

3. ¿Puede la Comisión informar de a qué se debe dicha diferencia de precios de la leche de marca blanca?

4. ¿Puede la Comisión informar de si la venta de un mismo producto a diferentes Estados miembros con diferenciales de precios superiores al 40 % y al 150 % puede constituir una violación del Tratado de Lisboa?

**Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión**
*(16 de noviembre de 2012)*

La Comisión no emite evaluaciones sobre la política de precios de las empresas privadas, siempre y cuando no infrinjan la legislación europea.

La Comisión estudia atentamente la situación del mercado de los productos lácteos en colaboración con las autoridades nacionales de competencia, tal como demuestra el Informe REC ([1]), recientemente publicado. Las autoridades nacionales españolas de competencia están investigando actualmente las posibles prácticas contrarias a la competencia del sector lácteo en el mercado de suministro de leche cruda, consistentes en intercambios de información o en acuerdos de reparto del mercado, así como en la imposición de condiciones comerciales en el mercado de suministro de leche cruda de vaca. Se han efectuado inspecciones en varias asociaciones y empresas lácteas, especialmente en Cataluña ([2]).

Como se ha mencionado anteriormente, la Comisión no tiene la obligación de interpretar la política de precios de una empresa privada.

Como se ha explicado, las diferencias de precios no constituyen por sí mismas una infracción del Derecho de la UE. Si un producto se vende por debajo de los costes en un Estado miembro, esto puede constituir una violación del artículo 102 del TFUE en la medida en que dicha conducta puede considerarse una exclusión abusiva que lleva a una exclusión de los competidores contraria a la competencia.

([1]) «Actividades REC en el sector alimentario — Informe sobre la aplicación de la normativa de competencia y las actividades de supervisión del mercado por las autoridades europeas de competencia en el sector alimentario». http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/documents.html#reports

([2]) Puede consultarse el comunicado de prensa en la siguiente dirección: http://www.cncompetencia.es/Inicio/Noticias/TabId/105/Default.aspx?contentid=515776

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008358/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Milk price

For some months now a large French distribution chain, Carrefour, has been selling its own-brand milk in Catalan supermarkets at significantly lower prices compared to the same milk sold in its French supermarkets. The average price for a litre of whole milk in one of this chain's supermarkets in Catalonia stands at EUR 0.56/l, against EUR 0.91/l on the other side of the political border. The same is true of semi-skimmed milk, with a price ranging from EUR 0.56/l to EUR 0.74/l, while the price of skimmed milk ranges from EUR 0.56/l to EUR 1.68/l. Given the difference in prices for the same distribution chain's own-brand milk in Catalan and French supermarkets, and bearing in mind that this is a homogeneous product:

1. Does the Commission believe that the reason underlying such a wide price differential on either side of the political border is solely an economic one?

2. Can the Commission say whether the milk market complies with competition and single market legislation?

3. Can the Commission explain the reason for this price differential for own-brand milk?

4. Can the Commission say whether selling the same product with price differentials of more than 40% or even 150% in different Member States may constitute a breach of the Lisbon Treaty?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 November 2012)*

1. The Commission does not issue assessments of the price policies of private companies as long as they do not infringe European legislation.

2. The Commission considers carefully the situation on the milk market together with national competition authorities, as shown by the recently published ECN Report ([1]). The Spanish Competition Authority is currently investigating possible anti-competitive practices by the dairy industry in the market for the supply of raw milk, consisting in exchanging information and/or market-sharing agreements, as well as imposing commercial conditions in the market for the supply of raw cow's milk. Inspections have been carried out at several dairy associations and companies, notably in Catalonia ([2]).

3. As mentioned above, it is not the Commission's duty to interpret the price policy of a private company.

4. As mentioned above, price differences are not, per se, constitutive of a breach of the EC law. If in one Member State a product is sold below costs, this may constitute a violation of Article 102 TFEU in so far as this conduct can be configured as an exclusionary abuse, leading to anticompetitive foreclosure of competitors.

([1]) 'ECN Activities in the Food Sector — Report on competition law enforcement and market monitoring activities by European competition authorities in the food sector'. http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/documents.html#reports

([2]) Press release accessible at the following address: http://www.cncompetencia.es/Inicio/Noticias/TabId/105/Default.aspx?contentid=515776

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008359/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(24 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Participaciones industriales de Bankia

En su respuesta a la pregunta P-004666/2012, la Comisión aseveraba no conocer aún los detalles de la nacionalización de la entidad bancaria y por lo tanto no poder dar su opinión al respecto.

Por esta razón me gustaría volver a presentar las mismas inquietudes de nuevo a la Comisión ahora que ya han pasado varios meses desde la toma de la decisión.

Por otro lado, se mantiene la grave situación que atraviesan las finanzas públicas del Reino de España y se han aplicado nuevas medidas tanto a nivel de todo el Estado como de las comunidades autónomas, que como se sabe son las administraciones que tienen un impacto más directo sobre la vida de los ciudadanos al ser responsables del gasto en sanidad, educación y bienestar (entre otras materias).

Finalmente, a pesar que Bankia anunció ([1]) que se desharía de sus participaciones industriales, aún no lo ha hecho. Esta acción podría reducir sensiblemente el importe necesario a inyectar dentro de la entidad y por lo tanto ayudar ligeramente a las finanzas públicas.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Qué piensa la Comisión sobre los dividendos repartidos por Bankia en el año 2011 ([2]), justo antes de su nacionalización? ¿Piensa requerir su devolución a las arcas del Estado?

2. Si Bankia posee una amplia cartera de participaciones en sociedades (Iberdrola, Mapfre, IAG —antigua Iberia—, NH Hoteles, Indra, SOS…, ¿piensa la Comisión que, antes de usar dinero público en su rescate, Bankia debería liquidar todas las participaciones citadas?

**Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión**
*(12 de noviembre de 2012)*

La Comisión acoge con satisfacción los esfuerzos realizados por el Gobierno español para apoyar la reestructuración del sector bancario, que incluyen la Decisión del Fondo de Reestructuración Ordenada Bancaria del pasado mes de junio de asumir el control de Bankia, debido a su importancia sistémica en el sector bancario español y europeo. Cualquier acción emprendida por los accionistas y el consejo de administración de Bankia está sujeta al ordenamiento jurídico de España.

Además, el Gobierno español solicitó el 25 de junio de 2012 ayuda financiera exterior del FEEF para los bancos españoles. A raíz de esa petición, el Eurogrupo aprobó el MA([3]), que se firmó el 23 de julio de 2012 y establece las condiciones que deben cumplir las autoridades españolas.

El elemento fundamental de este programa es una reforma de los segmentos débiles del sector bancario e incluirá, en caso necesario, la inyección de capital público en los bancos viables tras la presentación de los planes de reestructuración pertinentes.

De conformidad con las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE, la Comisión está evaluando el plan de reestructuración de Bankia, evaluación que se espera esté concluida para noviembre de 2012. Ese plan debe contemplar las medidas necesarias para garantizar la solidez y la viabilidad del banco y, al mismo tiempo, reducir el coste que deberán soportar los contribuyentes. Aunque no es posible facilitar los elementos exactos del plan de reestructuración en esta fase, la Comisión adoptará su decisión sobre el mismo en consonancia con la Comunicación de reestructuración, la cual contempla todas las medidas necesarias para restablecer la viabilidad del banco y reducir la cantidad de ayuda estatal necesaria para la reestructuración, al tiempo que se reduce al mínimo la distorsión de la competencia causada por el rescate. Entre las posibles medidas, se estudiará con seguridad la de la venta de las participaciones industriales del banco.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120526/54300143248/bankia-cartera-industrial-sanearse.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/local/valencia/20120506/54290060288/bankia-propondra-a-la-junta-el-reparto-de-un-dividendo-de-152-millones-la-mitad-del-beneficio.html
([3]) Memorando de Acuerdo.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008359/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Bankia's industrial shares

In its answer to Question P-004666/2012, the Commission said that it did not yet know the details of the bank's nationalisation and consequently could not give its opinion on the matter.

I would therefore like to outline the same concerns again, now that several months have passed since the decision was taken.

Public finances in Spain are still in a serious situation, and fresh measures have been taken by both the central government and the autonomous communities, which are the authorities that have the most direct impact on citizens' lives, since they are responsible for spending on health, education and welfare (among other areas).

Even though Bankia has announced ([1]) that it would sell off its industrial shares, it has not yet done so. Such a step could significantly reduce the amount that needs to be injected into the bank, thereby slightly reducing the burden on public finances.

1. What is the Commission's view on the dividends paid out by Bankia in 2011 ([2]), shortly before it was nationalised? Will it call for them to be returned to the Treasury?

2. Bankia has a broad portfolio of company shareholdings (Iberdrola, Mapfre, IAG (formerly Iberia), NH Hotels, Indra, SOS etc.). Does the Commission believe that, before using public money for a bailout, Bankia should liquidate all these shares?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 November 2012)*

The Commission welcomes the efforts by the Spanish Government to support the restructuring of the banking sector, which include the decision by the Fondo de Reestructuración Ordenada Bancaria last June to take over the control of Bankia due to its systemic relevance in the Spanish and European banking sector. Any action taken by the shareholders and the Board of Directors of Bankia are subject to the legal framework in Spain.

In addition, on 25 June '12 the Spanish Government requested external financial assistance for Spanish banks by the EFSF'. Following that request, the MoU ([3]) was endorsed by the Eurogroup and signed on 23 July '12 establishing the conditionality to be fulfilled by the Spanish authorities'.

The key component of that programme is an overhaul of the weak segments of the banking sector and will include if needed the injection of public capital in viable banks after presenting the relevant restructuring plans.

In compliance with the EU State aid rules, the Commission is currently assessing the restructuring plan for Bankia, which is expected to be completed by November '12. That plan should provide for necessary measures in order to ensure the soundness and the viability of the bank, while minimising the cost to be paid by taxpayers'. While it is not possible to provide the exact elements of the restructuring plan at this stage, the Commission will take its decision on that plan in line with the Restructuring Communication which requires all actions that are necessary for the bank's return to viability, for reducing the amount of state aid necessary for the restructuring, while minimising the distortion of competition caused by the bailout. Among the possible actions, the sale of the bank's industrial participations will certainly be considered.

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([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120526/54300143248/bankia-cartera-industrial-sanearse.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/local/valencia/20120506/54290060288/bankia-propondra-a-la-junta-el-reparto-de-un-dividendo-de-152-millones-la-mitad-del-beneficio.html
([3]) Memorandum of Understanding.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008361/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(24. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Ein Jahr Freihandelsabkommen mit Südkorea

Am 1. Juli 2011 trat das Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der Republik Korea (Südkorea) und der Europäischen Union in Kraft.

Einer Pressemeldung der Kommission vom 27.6.2012 zufolge sparten EU-Unternehmen innerhalb von neun Monaten Importzölle von circa 350 Mio. EUR.

1. Um welchen Betrag reduzierten sich für den gleichen Zeitraum die Einnahmen der EU-Staaten durch die Senkung oder Abschaffung von Importzöllen für südkoreanische Produkte? Verfügt die Kommission bereits über Zahlen für 12 Monate — sowohl für die Einsparungen für EU-Unternehmen als auch die Einnahmeausfälle der EU-Staaten?

2. In welchen Wirtschaftssektoren verfügen EU-Staaten noch über Handelsbarrieren gegenüber Südkorea und in welchen Sektoren verfügt Südkorea noch über Handelsbarrieren gegenüber den EU-Staaten?

3. Welcher Anteil der „gesparten" 350 Mio. EUR entfällt jeweils auf große, mittelgroße und kleine EU-Unternehmen?

**Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission**
*(7. Januar 2013)*

Tatsächlich zahlten die EU-Unternehmen Schätzungen zufolge dank des Freihandelsabkommens zwischen der EU und der Republik Korea (Südkorea) in den ersten neun Monaten (d. h. vom 1. Juli 2011 bis Ende März 2012) bereits 350 Mio. EUR weniger an Zöllen. In den ersten zwölf Monaten seit Inkrafttreten des Abkommens dürften die Zolleinsparungen für EU-Exporte nach Südkorea nach vorsichtiger Schätzung rund 600 Mio. EUR betragen haben.

Zölle auf Einfuhren von Waren aus Drittländern fließen als Einnahme in den EU-Haushalt. Die Mitgliedstaaten behalten 25 % der Zölle für Erhebungskosten ein. Die Einnahmeausfälle durch die Senkung oder Abschaffung der Einfuhrzölle wurden für die ersten neun Monate auf 340 Mio. EUR und für die ersten zwölf Monate auf 465 Mio. EUR geschätzt.

Zweck des Freihandelsabkommens zwischen der EU und der Republik Korea ist die Öffnung des Handels, nicht die Schaffung neuer Handelshemmnisse. Dies kommt in der Präambel des Abkommens deutlich zum Ausdruck, wo es unter anderem heißt, dass die Vertragsparteien anstreben, „die Beschränkungen der gegenseitigen Handels- und Investitionstätigkeit zu reduzieren oder aufzuheben" ([1]).

Jedoch kann die EU im Rahmen des Freihandelsabkommens bestimmte Maßnahmen treffen, um dessen ordnungsgemäße Durchführung zu gewährleisten, indem sie z. B. vorherige Überwachungsmaßnahmen ergreift oder eine Untersuchung über die Umsetzung einer Schutzklausel in einem Wirtschaftszweig, unter anderem auf Antrag eines Mitgliedstaats, einleitet, sofern genügend Anscheinsbeweise vorliegen, die dies rechtfertigen würden ([2]).

Da bedauerlicherweise keine statistischen Daten darüber vorliegen, welcher Anteil der EU-Exporte nach Südkorea auf kleine, mittlere und große Unternehmen entfällt, ist es nicht möglich, die Zollersparnis nach Unternehmensgröße aufzuschlüsseln.

([1]) Siehe Seite 7 des Abkommens, ABl. L 127 vom 14.5.2011.
([2]) Siehe Verordnung (EU) Nr. 511/2011 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, ABl. L 145 vom 31.5.2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008361/12**
**to the Commission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* First anniversary of the free trade agreement with South Korea

The free trade agreement between South Korea and the EU entered into force on 1 July 2011.

According to a Commission press release issued on 27 June 2012, the savings for EU firms after nine months, as far as import duties were concerned, amounted to an estimated EUR 350 million.

1. How much revenue did the Member States lose in the same period as a result of lower import duties on South Korean products or the abolition of duties? Does the Commission already have 12-month figures both for the savings made by EU firms and for the revenue losses incurred by Member States?

2. In which economic sectors are Member States still able to impose trade barriers on South Korea and vice versa?

3. What proportions of the EUR 350 million 'saved' are accounted for by large, medium-sized, and small EU firms?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 January 2013)*

It is indeed estimated that over the first nine months of the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) (i.e. from 1 July 2011 until the end of March 2012), EU firms already saved EUR 350 million in duties. Over the first twelve months of the Agreement, under a conservative assumption, duties saved on EU's exports to South Korea amounted to around EUR 600 million.

Customs duties on imports from outside of the EU are a source of revenue for the EU budget.

Member States shall retain, by way of collection costs, 25 % of the amounts of customs duties. Elimination of customs duties, resulting from reduced or abolished import duties, are estimated to amount to EUR 340 million over the first nine months and EUR 465 million over the first 12 months.

The purpose of the EU-Korea FTA is to open up trade, not to create new barriers. This is highlighted in the preamble of the FTA where it is stated, *inter alia*, that the Parties of the Agreement are seeking to 'reduce or eliminate the barriers to mutual trade and investment' ([1]).

Nevertheless, the EU may take certain measures under the FTA to ensure its proper implementation, for instance, introduce prior surveillance measures or initiate a safeguard investigation in any sector upon the request of, *inter alia*, a Member State, when there is sufficient prima facie evidence to justify such initiation ([2]).

Unfortunately there are no statistics available which would show the share of EU exports to South Korea by small, medium or large companies. Therefore it is not possible to give a breakdown by company size of the duty savings.

([1]) See page 7 of the Agreement, L 127, 14.5.2011.
([2]) See Regulation (EU) No 511/2011 of Parliament and of the Council, L 145, 31.5.2011.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008362/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(24. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Auflistung der Steuergelder für Bankenrettung

In einem Gastbeitrag in der deutschen Tageszeitung „Handelsblatt“ vom 5.9.2012 äußert sich Kommissionspräsident Barroso wie folgt:

„Wir müssen den Teufelskreis durchbrechen, in dem die Nutzung von Steuergeldern zur Bankenrettung — bislang über 4,5 Billionen EUR — die Staatshaushalte belastet, während zunehmend risikoscheue Banken Firmen, die Geld brauchen, keine Kredite gewähren.“

1. Wie wurde die zitierte Summe berechnet?

2. Welcher Betrag davon entfällt jeweils anteilig auf die einzelnen Mitgliedsländer?

3. Kann die Kommission aufführen, aus welchen Posten sich die von Kommissionspräsident Barroso genannten insgesamt 4,5 Billionen EUR zur Bankenrettung ergeben?

**Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission**
*(28. November 2012)*

Die Kommission veröffentlicht im Anzeiger für staatliche Beihilfen regelmäßig Angaben zu staatlichen Beihilfen für den Finanzsektor. Neueste Detailinformationen, eine Aufschlüsselung nach Mitgliedstaaten und ergänzende Indikatoren können der Anlage des aktuellen Anzeigers für staatliche Beihilfen entnommen werden (S. 32 ff.): http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/2011_autumn_working_paper_en.pdf (auf EN).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008362/12**
**to the Commission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Details of taxpayers' money for bank bailouts

In an article published in the German *Handelsblatt* newspaper on 5 September 2012 the Commission President, José Manuel Barroso, maintained that:

We have to break the vicious circle in which state budgets are being sapped because taxpayers' money — more than EUR 4.5 billion to date — is being used to bail out banks, which, because they are becoming increasingly risk-averse, are refusing to lend to firms needing cash.

1. How was the above sum calculated?

2. How does that sum break down among the individual Member States?

3. Can the Commission say which budget items have been used to provide the total of EUR 4.5 billion which, to quote the figure specified by Mr Barroso, has been spent on bank bailouts?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

Information about state aid to the financial sector is published regularly by the Commission in State Aid Scoreboard. Latest information on the exact compilation, the breakdown among Member States and additional indicators can be found in the annex to latest State-Aid Scoreboard (page 32 and beyond):
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/2011_autumn_working_paper_en.pdf.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008363/12**
**to the Commission**
**Diane Dodds (NI)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Segways and self-balancing scooters

In the UK, Segways or self-balancing scooters are subject to road traffic law if used on a public road but must be registered and licensed before being used on the public road.

In order to be registered such vehicles need to comply with basic safety standards in accordance with Directive 2002/24/EC on the type-approval of two or three-wheel motor vehicles or with ECWVTA (European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval).

1. Which Segways or self-balancing scooters, if any, are compliant with ECWVTA?

2. What impediments does the Commission foresee for Segways in obtaining approval?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 October 2012)*

Self balancing vehicles do not fall in the scope of the framework Directive 2002/24/EC ([1]) on the approval of L-category vehicles nor in the scope of the Commission proposal ([2]) regarding the approval and market surveillance of L-category vehicles. 'L-category' is the family name of light vehicles ([3]). The proposal is currently under scrutiny by the European Parliament and the Council. It aims at replacing the framework Directive on 1 January 2016. As these vehicles are not covered by the above legislation, they are therefore not required to comply with the ECWVTA ([4]).

Consequently, they do fall in the scope of the Machinery Directive ([5]) whose harmonised rules may be complemented with national requirements for the approval of such vehicles. The reason for excluding self balancing vehicles from the type-approval legislation is that they are equipped with an entirely different propulsion control than L-category vehicle types, which would require the development of dedicated and cost effective rules. Currently, there is only one vehicle manufacturer that offers a self balancing vehicle in some Member States ([6]). The Commission would like to prevent addressing only one product with approval legislation as it might hinder technical progress in the short to mid term and have a negative effect on competition.

The Commission may consider drafting a proposal if cost-effective measures applicable for a wide range of such vehicles can be identified and also if there is a need among Member States to harmonise approval requirements. Until then, the rules on the approval of these vehicles will continue to be established at national level. However, the Commission will continue monitoring these national rules and may issue a proposal, if deemed necessary and cost-effective.

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([1]) OJ L 124, 9.5.2002, p. 1.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010PC0542:EN:NOT.
([3]) such as powered cycles, mopeds, motorcycles, tricycles and quadricycles.
([4]) European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval.
([5]) 2006/42/EC — OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 24.
([6]) Segways.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008365/12**
**to the Commission**
**Roger Helmer (EFD)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Broadband system in Rutland (UK)

The Commission may be aware that there has recently been a bidding process for the broadband system for the county of Rutland, which is located in my UK constituency, the East Midlands.

Rutland County Council was one of the bodies involved in selecting the successful bidder, appearing to follow EU procurement legislation. However, it has transpired that the successful bidder was a consortium including the BT company and Rutland County Council itself.

1. Does the Commission believe that the role of Rutland County Council in this consortium is consistent with its role in adjudicating the bids?

Rutland Telecom, an unsuccessful bidder, offered a 'fibre to the home' (FTTH) service, whereas the winning consortium, Digital Rutland, proposes a service which only covers 'fibre to the cabinets' (FTTC). Local stakeholders believe not only that FTTH would offer higher speeds at a lower cost, but that the service would be available to companies, communities and, potentially, individuals on a fee basis. Rutland County Council would finance its service in part through an additional precept on Council Tax.

2. Does the Commission believe that by imposing a blanket solution and blanket charges, Rutland County Council is creating a barrier to entry for other players, including SMEs, while also holding back technical development and offering an inferior service?

3. Would the Commission agree that, given the background to my first question, this constitutes an abuse of powers by Rutland County Council?

**Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 November 2012)*

1. The Digital Rutland project was notified to the Commission in March 2012 but soon afterwards the notification was suspended as the United Kingdom authorities decided to include it under the BDUK Umbrella scheme. The reply to the Honourable Member's questions will therefore be given on the basis of information provided in March.

As for the role of Rutland City Council (RCC) in the bidding process, in their notification (subsequently suspended) the United Kingdom authorities indicated that a tender for deployment of next generation broadband was organised, and that it was open, transparent and ensured equal and non-discriminatory treatment of bidders. The contract was to be awarded to a company presenting the most economically advantageous offer. The pre-qualification stage led to the selection of four bidders but during the dialogue period three of them withdrew. BT was the only remaining bidder and in February 2012 it submitted a final tender, which was evaluated by a panel of representatives of the Digital Rutland Team and the RCC's legal, procurement and technical advisors.

2. and 3. The Commission has no reasons to believe that a blanket solution was imposed by RCC and is also not aware of any controversial role of RCC in the bidding process. In their notification (subsequently suspended) the British authorities indicated that the tender complied with applicable procedural rules and it respected the principle of technological neutrality so that companies proposing different technological solutions might submit an offer.

The Commission will, however, enquire with the United Kingdom authorities about the allegations made.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008366/12**
**à la Commission**
**Sylvie Goulard (ALDE)**
*(24 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Représentation externe de la zone euro

Lors de son discours sur l'état de l'Union, l'année dernière, le Président de la Commission avait évoqué la nécessité de disposer d'une représentation externe de la zone euro.

Il avait même expliqué que la Commission présenterait «des propositions à cet effet», «dans le respect du traité», tout en soulignant l'urgence de la situation et le besoin d'agir rapidement. Un an plus tard, qu'en est-il? Car, étrangement, ce point n'a pas été évoqué lors de son discours sur l'état de l'Union cette année.

**Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission**
*(26 novembre 2012)*

Depuis le traité de Lisbonne, l'article 17 du TUE et l'article 138 du TFUE offrent une nouvelle plate-forme pour la mise en œuvre de la représentation externe de l'UE, et de la zone euro en particulier.

D'importantes modifications sont actuellement apportées à la gouvernance économique interne de la zone euro et d'autres changements se profilent, sur la base du rapport «Vers une véritable Union économique et monétaire», présenté par le président du Conseil européen, en coopération avec les présidents de la Commission, de l'Eurogroupe et de la BCE. Ces transformations influenceront nettement, à l'avenir, le fonctionnement de la coordination fiscale, financière et économique. Il importe donc de connaître la teneur de ces modifications avant que la Commission ne puisse, éventuellement, formuler des propositions en matière de représentation externe.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008366/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sylvie Goulard (ALDE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* External representation of the euro area

In his State of the Union Address last year the Commission President maintained that the euro area needed to have external representation.

He even announced the Commission's intention of submitting proposals for that purpose — without overstepping the Treaty — adding that the urgency of the situation demanded swift action. One year on, what is happening on this point? (Strange to say, it was not mentioned in his 2012 State of the Union Address).

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

Following the Lisbon Treaty, Articles 17 TEU and 138 TFEU present a new platform for acting on the external representation of the EU, and of the euro area in particular.

At the moment important changes are underway on the internal economic governance of the Euro area and others should follow, based on the report 'Towards a Genuine Economic and Monetary Union' presented by the President of the European Council in cooperation with the Presidents of the Commission, Eurogroup and ECB. These changes will have an important bearing on how fiscal, financial and economic coordination will work in the future. It is important to see what these changes will be to set out a possible Commission proposal on external representation.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008367/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Implementatie Richtlijn 2011/7/EG bestrijding betalingsachterstand bij handelstransacties

Op 15 maart 2011 trad.d. Richtlijn 2011/7/EU betreffende bestrijding van betalingsachterstand bij handelstransacties in werking. De doelstellingen van deze richtlijn zijn duidelijk: bijdragen tot de goede werking van de interne markt en versterken van de concurrentiekracht van ondernemingen, in het bijzonder van kmo's.

Aangezien de huidige financieel-economische crisis ook enorme uitdagingen met zich meebrengt voor kmo's, lijkt de omzetting van deze richtlijn een cruciaal element voor het weer op gang brengen van de economie. De uiterste datum van omzetting door de lidstaten (16 maart 2013) komt dichterbij. We zien dat, in tegenstelling tot anderen, lidstaten als Frankrijk en Nederland al klaar zijn met hun huiswerk.

In die context graag volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Wat is de precieze stand van zaken voor de implementatie van deze richtlijn? Welke lidstaten hebben de richtlijn al omgezet?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de implementatie, in het bijzonder in Nederland en Frankrijk? Zijn er opmerkelijke verschillen tussen de lidstaten? Zo ja, welke?

3. Voorziet de Commissie problemen bij de omzetting in bepaalde lidstaten? Zo ja, bij welke en wat zijn hiervoor de redenen? Zo ja, welke stappen zal de Commissie terzake nemen en op welke termijn?

4. Heeft de Commissie zicht op de stand van zaken van de omzetting van de richtlijn in België? Hoe evalueert de Commissie de vooruitgang terzake?

**Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie**
*(22 november 2012)*

Uiterlijk op 16 maart 2013 moet Richtlijn 2011/7/EU omgezet zijn. Om hulp te bieden bij deze taak, heeft de Commissie de Werkgroep van deskundigen inzake betalingsachterstand opgericht. Het doel van de werkgroep bestaat erin de lidstaten te ondersteunen bij de voltooiing van de omzetting en uitvoering van de richtlijn; ze moet daarbij rekening houden met de recentste ontwikkelingen in elk land en biedt een forum voor gedachtewisseling. De Commissie heeft geregeld contact met de leden van de werkgroep van deskundigen en verschaft waar nodig technische en juridische ondersteuning. De eerste vergadering van de werkgroep vond plaats op 3 februari 2012 en de tweede op 23 oktober 2012.

Zoals op de tweede vergadering van de werkgroep van deskundigen is bevestigd, heeft de Commissie het genoegen het geachte Parlementslid mee te delen dat momenteel twee lidstaten het proces van omzetting in nationale wetgeving hebben voltooid, namelijk Cyprus en Malta. Nederland verwacht de omzetting vóór eind 2012 te voltooien. Zowel België als Frankrijk hebben verklaard dat ze de uiterste implementatiedatum, 16 maart 2013, zullen respecteren.

De Commissie moedigt een spoedige uitvoering van de richtlijn door de lidstaten aan en zal de omzetting en uitvoering van de richtlijn nauwlettend volgen. Bij niet-naleving na 16 maart 2013, de uiterste datum voor omzetting, kunnen inbreukprocedures overeenkomstig artikel 258 van het VWEU worden ingeleid, indien dit nodig wordt geacht.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008367/12**
**to the Commission**
**Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Implementation of Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions

On 15 March 2011, Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions entered into force. The aims of the directive are clear: to contribute to the effective functioning of the internal market and increase the competitiveness of businesses, particularly SMEs.

As the present financial and economic crisis also entails enormous challenges for SMEs, the transposition of this directive should make a crucial contribution to reviving the economy. The deadline for transposition (16 March 2013) is not far off. Unlike other Member States, such Member States as France and the Netherlands have already completed the necessary procedures.

1. What is the precise situation with regard to the implementation of this directive? Which Member States have already transposed it?

2. What view does the Commission take of its implementation, particularly in the Netherlands and France? Are there any substantial differences between Member States? If so, what?

3. Does the Commission foresee any transposition problems in certain Member States? If so, which Member States and why? If so, what steps will the Commission take in this respect, and within what time-frame?

4. Does the Commission know how far transposition of the directive has progressed in Belgium? What is the Commission's assessment of the progress that Belgium has made with it?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

The deadline for the transposition of Directive 2011/7/EU is set for 16 March 2013. To assist with this task, the Commission established the Expert Group on late payment whose aim is to further help Member States in their task of completing the transposition and implementation of the directive, taking into account the latest developments in each country and providing a forum for exchange of views. The Commission is in regular contact with the Members of the Expert Group and is providing technical and legal assistance when required. The first meeting of the Group took place on 3 February 2012, and the second meeting on 23 October 2012.

As confirmed at the occasion of the second meeting of the Expert Group, the Commission is pleased to inform the Honourable Member that currently two Member States have completed the process of transposition into national law, namely Cyprus and Malta. The Netherlands expects to complete transposition before the end of 2012. Both Belgium and France have stated that they will honour the deadline for implementation by 16 March 2013.

The Commission encourages an early implementation of the directive by Member States and will monitor the transposition and implementation of the directive. In case of non-compliance after the transposition deadline of 16 March 2013, infringement procedures may be launched according to Article 258 TFEU, when deemed appropriate.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008368/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Σύλληψη καταζητουμένου για φόνο στην Κιργιζία

Η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία έχει ειδοποιήσει την ΙΝΤΕΡΠΟΛ από το 1996 σχετικά με τους καταζητούμενους για την βάρβαρες δολοφονίες των Κυπρίων πολιτών Τάσου Ισαάκ και Σολωμού Σολωμού. Πριν 3 μέρες ένας εξ αυτών, ο ERHAN ARIKLI, συνελήφθη στην Κιργιζία αλλά αφέθηκε ελεύθερος, παρότι υπήρχε διεθνές ένταλμα της ΙΝΤΕΡΠΟΛ εναντίον του.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιές κυρώσεις προβλέπονται για χώρες που αγνοούν διεθνή εντάλματα συλλήψεως;

2. Σε ποιο σημείο βρίσκονται οι σχέσεις ΕΕ- Κιργιζίας και ποιες εκκρεμότητες υπάρχουν μεταξύ των δύο πλευρών, οι οποίες εξυπακούεται ότι θα πρέπει να μείνουν στο σημείο που βρίσκονται σήμερα αφού η χώρα αυτή δείχνει μια παράξενη (και αποκλίνουσα από τις αρχές της ΕΕ) συμπεριφορά καθώς δεν εξέδωσε αμέσως τον καταζητούμενο για φόνο ARIKLI;

**Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(21 Νοεμβρίου 2012)*

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι αρμόδια να επιβάλει κυρώσεις σε κράτη μέλη ή σε τρίτες χώρες για τη μη τήρηση των διεθνών ενταλμάτων σύλληψης. Στη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση, φαίνεται ότι δεν υφίσταται ζήτημα ενωσιακού δικαίου.

2. Οι σχέσεις μεταξύ της ΕΕ και της Δημοκρατίας της Κιργιζίας έχουν ενισχυθεί τα τελευταία χρόνια, όπως παρουσιάζεται στην έκθεση προόδου σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για την Κεντρική Ασία που ενέκρινε το Συμβούλιο τον Ιούνιο του 2012. Χάρη στις πολιτικές δεσμεύσεις της και τη χρηματοδοτική βοήθεια, η ΕΕ συνέβαλε στην αντιμετώπιση της κρίσης στη Δημοκρατία της Κιργιζίας, τον Ιούνιο του 2010, και υποστήριξε κάθε μεταβατικό στάδιο για την εγκαθίδρυση νόμιμων κρατικών αρχών με δημοκρατικές εκλογές. Η Κιργιζία διέρχεται μεταβατική περίοδο. Η ενίσχυση των δημοκρατικών θεσμών, η προστασία των ανθρώπινων δικαιωμάτων και η βελτίωση της λειτουργίας του κράτους δικαίου, παράλληλα με την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς, είναι σημαντικό να παραμείνουν μεταξύ των προτεραιοτήτων του νέου κυβερνητικού προγράμματος. Η ΕΕ έχει δεσμευθεί να στηρίξει τις κοινωνικοοικονομικές μεταρρυθμίσεις, καθώς και τις μεταρρυθμίσεις στον τομέα του κράτους δικαίου και του δικαστικού τομέα, οι οποίες πρέπει να συμβαδίζουν με τον απόλυτο σεβασμό των ανθρώπινων δικαιωμάτων. Δεν υπάρχουν σήμερα εκκρεμή πολιτικά ζητήματα στις σχέσεις μεταξύ της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και της Κιργιζίας που θα μπορούσαν πιθανώς να δικαιολογήσουν τη μη τήρηση από τις αρχές της Κιργιζίας εντάλματος εκδοθέντος από την ΙΝΤΕΡΠΟΛ.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008368/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Arrest in Kyrgyzstan of murder suspect

In 1996 the Cyprus Republic contacted Interpol concerning the hunt for those wanted in connection with the barbarous murder of Tassos Isaak and Solomos Solomou, citizens of Cyprus. Three days ago, one of those wanted in this connection, Erhan Arikli, was arrested in Kyrgyzstan but subsequently released, notwithstanding an international warrant issued by Interpol.

In view of this:

1. What sanctions will the Commission impose on countries disregarding international arrest warrants?

2. What is the current state of EU-Kyrgyzstan relations and what matters have remained unresolved between the two sides and will presumably continue to remain so, in view of the inexplicable actions of Kyrgyzstan (which run counter to EU principles) in failing to hand over immediately Erhan Arikli, who is wanted for murder?

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

1. The Commission does not have competence to impose sanctions on either Member States or Third Countries for the disregard of international arrest warrants. In this case, it appears that there is no issue of EC law at stake.

2. EU relations with the Kyrgyz Republic have strengthened over the past years, as reflected in the progress report on the Implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia, approved by the Council in June 2012. The EU contributed, through political engagement and financial assistance, to overcome the crisis in the Kyrgyz Republic in June 2010 and has been supporting every stage of transition to legitimate state authorities established through democratic elections. Kyrgyzstan is going through transition period. It is essential that strengthening democratic institutions, human rights protection, improvement of the functioning of the rule of law in alignment with fighting corruption remain at the top of the new Government's agenda. The EU is committed to support socioeconomic, rule of law and judiciary reforms which should go hand in hand with full respect for human rights. There are currently no unresolved political issues in the EU-Kyrgyzstan relations which could presumably motivate disregard by the Kyrgyz authorities of a warrant issued by Interpol.

*(Dansk udgave)*

**Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008369/12**
**til Kommissionen**
**Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL) og Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)**
*(24. september 2012)*

*Om:* Den ulovlige anholdelse og udlevering af Joaquin Pérez Becerra

Den 22. april, 2011 blev den svenske statsborger Joaquin Pérez Becerra, tidligere asylansøger fra Columbia og redaktør af det svenskbaseret nyhedssite »Anccol«, arresteret af myndighederne i Venezuela og den 25. april blev han udleveret til Colombia.

Joaquin Pérez Becerra er svensk statsborger, som ikke er mistænkt eller anklaget for forbrydelser i Sverige.

1. Fordømmer EU-kommissionen den ulovlige anholdelse og udlevering af Joaquin Pérez Becerra, en EU-borger, i henhold til international lov?

2. Hvad vil Kommissionen i givet fald foretage for at få de colombianske myndigheder til at frigive Joaquin Pérez Becerra og sikre beskyttelsen af hans rettigheder?

**Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af den højtstående repræsentant/næstformand Catherine Ashton**
*(15. november 2012)*

De ærede medlemmer henvises til svaret på skriftlig forespørgsel E-005212/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Svensk version)*

**Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-008369/12**
**till kommissionen**
**Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL) och Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Angående:* Det olagliga gripandet och utlämnandet av Joaquin Pérez Becerra

Den svenske medborgaren Joaquin Pérez Becerra, en f.d. asylsökande från Colombia och redaktör för den svenskbaserade nyhetssajten Anccol, greps av myndigheterna i Venezuela den 22 april 2011. Den 25 april utlämnades han till Colombia.

Joaquin Pérez Becerra är svensk medborgare och inte vare sig misstänkt eller anklagad för att ha begått något brott i Sverige.

1. Fördömer EU-kommissionen gripandet och utlämnandet av unionsmedborgaren Joaquin Pérez Becerra, vilket är olagligt enligt internationell rätt?

2. Vad kommer kommissionen att göra för att få de colombianska myndigheterna att släppa Joaquin Pérez Becerra på fri fot och se till att hans rättigheter skyddas?

**Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordförande Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar**
*(15 november 2012)*

Parlamentsledamöterna hänvisas till svaret på den skriftliga frågan E-005212/2012 ([1]).

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([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/sv/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008369/12**
**to the Commission**
**Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL) and Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* The illegal arrest and extradition of Joaquin Pérez Becerra

On 22 April 2011, the Swedish citizen Joaquin Pérez Becerra, a former asylum-seeker from Columbia and editor of the Swedish-based news site Anccol, was arrested by the authorities in Venezuela, and on 25 April he was extradited to Colombia.

Joaquin Pérez Becerra is a Swedish citizen, and is not suspected, or accused, of crimes in Sweden.

1. Does the Commission condemn the illegal arrest and extradition under international law of Joaquin Pérez Becerra, an EU citizen?

2. What will the Commission do to make the Colombian authorities release Joaquin Pérez Becerra and to ensure the protection of his rights?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 November 2012)*

The Honorable Members are referred to the reply given to Written Question E-005212/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008370/12**
**do Rady**
**Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)**
*(24 września 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Stan prac nad rozporządzeniem ograniczającym lub umożliwiającym wprowadzenie zakazu GMO

1. Jaki jest stan prac nad projektem rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady zmieniającego dyrektywę 2001/18/WE w zakresie umożliwienia państwom członkowskim ograniczenia lub zakazania uprawy organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie na swoim terytorium, który to projekt uzyskał pozytywną opinię w raporcie przyjętym przez Parlament Europejski w dniu 5 lipca 2011 r.

2. Które państwa członkowskie wspierają raport, a które są mu przeciwne?

**Odpowiedź**
*(19 listopada 2012 r.)*

Aktualizując informacje przekazane już w kwietniu 2012 r., ([1]) Rada informuje Pana Posła, że jeszcze nie zakończyła debaty nad tym dossier, a zatem nie przyjęła jeszcze swojego stanowiska w pierwszym czytaniu.

Po przyjęciu stanowiska Rady w pierwszym czytaniu uzasadnienie stanowiska Rady w sprawie przedmiotowej inicjatywy ustawodawczej zostanie przekazane Parlamentowi Europejskiemu zgodnie z art. 294 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej.

Jeżeli chodzi o drugie pytanie Pana Posła, Rada nie wypowiada się na temat stanowisk państw członkowskich.

([1]) Odpowiedź na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie E-003212/2012.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008370/12**
**to the Council**
**Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* State of play concerning regulation on restricting or banning cultivation of GMOs

1. What is the current state of play concerning the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2001/18/EC with regard to enabling Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of genetically modified organisms on their territory, which received a favourable opinion in the report adopted by Parliament on 5 July 2011?

2. Which Member States support the report and which are opposed to it?

**Reply**
*(19 November 2012)*

As an update to the information already provided in April 2012 ([1]), the Council informs the Honourable Member that it has not yet concluded its discussions on this file and, accordingly, has not yet adopted its position at first reading.

Upon adoption of its position at first reading, a set of reasons justifying the Council position on the legislative initiative will be communicated to the European Parliament, in accordance with Article 294 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

With regard to the second question put by the Honourable Member, it is not for the Council to comment on the positions of Member States.

([1]) Reply to Written Question E-003212/2012.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008371/12**
**do Komisji**
**Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)**
*(24 września 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Interwencja w stosunku do rządu Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej w związku z regulacjami dotyczącymi GMO

Czy Komisja podejmowała interwencję w stosunku do rządu Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej w związku z regulacjami dotyczącymi GMO?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Maroša Šefčoviča w imieniu Komisji**
*(27 listopada 2012 r.)*

O ile Pan Poseł nawiązuje do wniosku złożonego przez Polskę w dniu 10 lipca 2012 r. na podstawie art. 16 ust. 2 lit. c) dyrektywy Rady 2002/53/WE w sprawie Wspólnego katalogu odmian gatunków roślin rolniczych ([1]), dotyczącego wprowadzenia zakazu stosowania materiału siewnego 210 zmodyfikowanych genetycznie odmian kukurydzy MON 810 włączonej do wspomnianego wspólnego katalogu, Komisja może potwierdzić, że obecnie bada tenże wniosek.

([1]) Dz.U. L 193 z 20.7.2002.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008371/12**
**to the Commission**
**Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Representations to the Polish Government with regard to regulations on GMOs

Has the Commission made representations to the Polish Government with regard to its regulations on GMOs?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 November 2012)*

If the Honourable Member refers to the application lodged by Poland on 10 July 2012 under Article 16 (2) (c) of Council Directive 2002/53/EC ([1]) on the common catalogue of varieties of agricultural plant species, for the introduction of a ban on using the seed of 210 genetically modified varieties of MON 810 maize included in the said common catalogue, the Commission can confirm that it is currently examining it.

([1]) OJ L 193, 20.7.2002.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008372/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)**
*(24 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Educación de alumnos con altas capacidades

Considerando que los programas vigentes de soporte a la educación permanente y de calidad son el instrumento de referencia europeo en la lucha por la excelencia, hay que tener en cuenta que la educación especializada de estudiantes con altas capacidades alberga un potencial que, si no es encauzado debidamente, termina por perderse.

1. ¿Qué programas y qué actuaciones concretas se llevan a cabo a nivel europeo para fomentar y hacer efectiva la educación de alumnos con altas capacidades, para que puedan desarrollar su talento, su creatividad y puedan alcanzar la excelencia?

2. ¿Qué lugar han ocupado las «altas capacidades» en los trabajos preparatorios de su propuesta de «Erasmus para todos»?

**Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión**
*(9 de noviembre de 2012)*

Las actividades de la Comisión en el ámbito de la cooperación política escolar se centra en ayudar a los Estados miembros a mejorar sus sistemas de educación y formación en ámbitos clave como la docencia, el abandono escolar prematuro, la educación infantil y la atención a la infancia. Las cuestiones de la diferenciación y la individualización están presentes en la mayoría de dichas actividades, y la cuestión de cómo atender a los alumnos que tienen necesidades diferentes, tanto si tienen un alto rendimiento como si su rendimiento es insuficiente, se abordan de esa forma. La Comisión no tiene previsto poner en marcha una iniciativa específica centrada en los alumnos con altas capacidades.

El programa Erasmus para Todos está concebido para ser un instrumento flexible que responda a las necesidades de todas las partes interesadas que participan en la educación, la formación, la juventud y el deporte en toda la UE. Dentro de ese marco general, los participantes pueden proponer proyectos y actividades de movilidad que aborden necesidades particulares. *Este planteamiento debería ayudar a las escuelas a hacer frente a sus necesidades individuales, así como las de sus profesores y alumnos, incluidas las de los alumnos dotados de gran talento.*

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008372/12**
**to the Commission**
**Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Education for highly gifted pupils

The existing permanent and high-quality education support programmes are the outstanding European instrument in the search for excellence. Specialised education for highly gifted students offers a potential that could be lost if it is not properly channelled.

1. What programmes and specific actions are being carried out at European level to promote and implement education for highly gifted pupils, enabling them to develop their talent and creativity and achieve excellence?

2. In what way have highly gifted pupils been taken into account in preparatory work for the Commission's 'Erasmus for all' proposal?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

The Commission's activities in the field of school policy cooperation focus on helping Member States to improve their Education and Training systems in key areas such as the teaching professions, early school leaving, early childhood education and care. Issues of differentiation and individualisation run through most of these activities, and questions of how to cater for pupils with different needs, over as well as under-performers, are addressed in this way. The Commission has no plans to launch a specific initiative focusing on highly gifted students.

The Erasmus for All programme is designed to be a flexible instrument meeting the needs of all stakeholders involved in education, training, youth and sport across the EU. Within this broad framework, participants can propose projects and mobility activities addressing particular needs. This approach should help schools to tackle their individual needs, as well as those of their teachers and pupils, including the highly gifted ones.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008373/12**
**to the Commission**
**Roger Helmer (EFD)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Roadworthiness test for motor vehicles and their trailers

The Commission will be aware of the Roadworthiness Package proposal for a regulation on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers (2012/0184 (COD)).

The proposal would introduce a definition for a roadworthiness test to ensure that components of the vehicle comply with safety characteristics in force at the time of the vehicle's first registration, which would prevent most modifications to vehicles. The proposal would also change the definition of an historic vehicle that may be exempt from periodic testing; this may allow vehicles older than 30 years to be exempt from testing provided the vehicle has been maintained in its original condition, including its appearance.

This will mean that modified historic cars will no longer be exempt, thereby increasing the costs associated with them as the parts are now non-standard and expensive, while also making them potentially dangerous in a road system that is now both busier and faster than the one for which they were originally designed.

Custom car culture is a worldwide interest but in the UK particularly there are many businesses and jobs which would be threatened by this legislation. There are presently estimated to be in excess of two million modified cars in this country and around 28 000 people employed in this industry with a value of GBP 4.3 billion.

Will the Commission please comment on these negative effects that this legislation will have on the classic and modified car industries and provide assurances that the legislation will be modified accordingly?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the Commission proposed to exempt vehicles of historic interest older than 30 years from the scope of the periodic roadworthiness testing.The current Directive 2009/40/EC on roadworthiness tests ([1]) only provides for an exemption for vehicles of historic interest which were manufactured before 1 January 1960.

Vehicles with changes affecting their technical characteristics of its main components will not benefit from this exemption but will be subject as is the case today to periodic roadworthiness tests as any other old vehicle.

([1]) OJ L 141, 6.6.2009, p. 12.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008374/12**
**to the Commission**
**Roger Helmer (EFD)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Rail liberalisation

1. Is the Commission aware of media reports suggesting that railway operators across Europe are resisting rail liberalisation and seeking to maintain quasi-state monopolies?

2. Is the Commission concerned at the apparent silence of anti-trust and competition authorities in the face of the use of their financial power by railway operators such as SNCF, Deutsche Bahn, NS Cargo, Transfesa and others to buy out and engage in price-dumping against new entrants and potential competitors?

3. Would the Commission agree that resistance to rail liberalisation has a negative impact on economic recovery and growth in Europe, and is likely to exacerbate the debt problems of Member States?

4. What specific action is the Commission taking to address these problems and to promote competition and liberalisation in the sector?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the persistence of practices to hinder access of new entrants to rail markets which have been open to competition under EC law (rail freight and international passenger transport) despite the fact that national competition authorities and rail regulatory bodies are increasingly taking action against railway undertakings and infrastrcuture managers. The Commission is also aware of the opposition of some incumbent to further opening of the rail market, in particular for domestic passenger transport. The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that market opening and the removal of access barriers for new entrants can contribute to economic growth in Europe. The development of a real internal market of rail transport services and greater attractiveness of the rail market would significantly contribute to creating a competitive and resource-efficient transport system. In this context, the Commission intends to monitor closely the implementation of the recast of the 1st railway package which will enter into force by the end of 2012 and should improve the functioning of the rail market segments already open to competition. It will also propose by the end of 2012 a fourth railway package including new measures to open domestic passenger traffic to competition and to facilitate access to the infrastructure.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008375/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Controle op sociale fraude

De afgelopen week is er in België door verschillende instanties aan de alarmbel getrokken met betrekking tot sociale fraude en misbruiken van het sociaal- en arbeidsrecht. De meeste aandacht gaat hierbij uit naar wantoestanden waarbij EU-onderdanen in België komen werken. Hier zijn er meldingen en bewijzen van misbruiken en regelrechte fraude vastgesteld. Bijvoorbeeld van EU-onderdanen die zich in België inschrijven als zelfstandige en als zodanig bepaalde voordelen genieten, maar klaarblijkelijk helemaal geen zelfstandige activiteit uitvoeren. Voorts zijn er problemen met schijnzelfstandigheid, postbusbedrijven en allerlei andere constructies die tot doel hebben om deloyaal te concurreren met diensten/prestaties die geleverd worden door Belgische werknemers.

De inspectiediensten zijn hiervan vaak op de hoogte, maar kunnen vaak niet optreden. De hoofdreden hiervoor is het soms complete gebrek aan Europese coördinatie. Inspectiediensten hebben geen overzicht van bevoegde diensten in andere lidstaten en hun bevoegdheden, of botsen op gebrekkige samenwerking waarbij er geen of, erger nog, gebrekkig en laattijdig antwoord komt vanuit de bevoegde diensten van andere lidstaten. Het spreekt voor zich dat de Commissie hier de rol die haar is toegewezen onder artikel 153 VEU ten volle moet spelen. Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Hoe wordt het inspectiewerk om fraude en misbruiken op te sporen door de EU ondersteund?

2. Beschikt de Commissie over een lijst van inspectiediensten (sociale inspectie en arbeidsinspectie) van de lidstaten en hun bevoegdheden, zoals inspectiediensten van een lidstaat weten met wie ze contact op moeten nemen?

3. Is de Commissie de mening toegedaan dat een Europese inspectiedienst als centraal platform voor coördinatie en gegevensuitwisseling opportuun is?

4. Voorziet de Commissie andere voorstellen en/of acties om inspectiediensten bij te staan om gegevens van en in andere lidstaten te kunnen verifiëren?

**Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie**
*(19 november 2012)*

1. Wat de sociale zekerheid betreft, heeft de Commissie samen met de lidstaten gedetailleerde richtsnoeren ontwikkeld om te zorgen voor een correcte bepaling van de toepasselijke wetgeving en voor het vermijden van misbruik. Wat arbeidsrecht betreft, is het Comité van hoge functionarissen van de arbeidsinspectie het belangrijkste forum voor samenwerking op EU-niveau.

2. In het kader van het Comité van hoge functionarissen van de arbeidsinspectie kunnen contacten tussen arbeidsinspectiediensten worden gelegd. De rol van de Commissie is om op basis van de nauwe samenwerking tussen de leden en de Commissie toe te zien op de toepassing van het afgeleide Gemeenschapsrecht op het gebied van veiligheid en gezondheid op het werk en om de praktische vragen in verband met het toezicht op wetgeving op dit gebied te analyseren.

3. In haar mededeling „Naar een banenrijk herstel" ([1]), kondigde de Commissie aan dat zij de lidstaten en andere belanghebbenden tegen eind 2012 zou raadplegen over de oprichting van een platform op EU-niveau voor arbeidsinspecties en andere handhavingsorganen om de samenwerking inzake de bestrijding van zwartwerk te verbeteren.

4. Sinds mei 2011 loopt er een proefproject, een specifieke en afzonderlijke toepassing van het IMI ([2]) voor administratieve samenwerking tussen lidstaten ten aanzien van de detachering van werknemers. Dankzij het IMI kunnen bevoegde autoriteiten, waaronder arbeidsinspecties, op nationaal, regionaal en lokaal niveau snel en op een veilige en betrouwbare manier informatie uitwisselen. Verder is onder gezamenlijk beheer met de IAO ([3]) een project opgestart dat loopt in zeven lidstaten: „Arbeidsinspectiestrategieën ter bestrijding van zwartwerk in Europa". Richtsnoeren over arbeidsinspectie en zwartwerk zullen worden opgesteld tegen het derde kwartaal van 2013.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 definitief van 18 april 2012, op: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=nl nl& catId=101.
([2]) Informatiesysteem interne markt.
([3]) Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008375/12**
**to the Commission**
**Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Controlling social security fraud

During the past week, various official bodies in Belgium have sounded the alarm with regard to social security fraud and abuse of social security and labour law. The matter causing the most concern is abuses that occur when nationals of EU Member States come to work in Belgium. There are reports — and evidence — of abuses and outright fraud. For example, EU nationals register in Belgium as self-employed and enjoy certain advantages in that capacity, but clearly are not performing any work as self-employed persons. There are also problems with bogus self-employed status of people who are in fact employees, shell companies and all manner of other artificial arrangements which have the aim of competing unfairly with services rendered or work done by Belgian employees.

In many cases, inspectorates are aware of this, but cannot take action. The main reason lies in the sometimes complete absence of European coordination. Inspectorates have no overview of the competent services in other Member States and their powers, or are hampered by inadequate cooperation, as the competent services in other Member States either do not reply or, worse still, reply inadequately and too late. It goes without saying that, in these instances, the Commission ought to play in full the role assigned to it under Article 153 TEU.

1. How does the EU support inspections to detect fraud and abuses?

2. Does the Commission have a list of Member States' inspectorates (social security inspectorates and labour inspectorates) and their powers, so that a Member State's inspectorates know who to contact?

3. Does the Commission consider that it would be worth establishing a European inspectorate as a central platform for coordination and information exchange?

4. Does the Commission have any other proposals and/or planned measures to help inspectorates to check information from and in other Member States?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 November 2012)*

1. As regards social security, the Commission, together with the Member States, developed detailed guidance to ensure a correct determination of the applicable legislation and avoid abuses. As regards labour law, the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee is the main forum for cooperation at EU level.

2. In the framework of the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee, contacts between labour inspection services can be established. The role of the Committee is to monitor, on the basis of close cooperation between members and the Commission, the enforcement of secondary Community law on health and safety at work, and to analyse the practical questions involved in monitoring the enforcement of legislation in this field.

3. In its communication 'Towards a job-rich recovery' ([1]), the Commission announced that it would consult the Member States and other stakeholders by the end of 2012 on the setting-up of an EU-level platform for labour inspectorates and other enforcement bodies on combatting undeclared work to improve cooperation.

4. A pilot project, a specific and separate application of IMI ([2]) is used since May 2011 for administrative cooperation between Member States in the area of posting of workers. IMI enables competent authorities, including labour inspectorates, at national, regional and local level, to exchange information rapidly and in a secure and reliable way. In addition, a joint management project was started with the ILO ([3]) 'Labour Inspection strategies for combatting undeclared work in Europe' covering seven Member States. A set of guidelines on labour inspection and undeclared work will be prepared by the third quarter of 2013.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final of 18 April 2012, at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=101.
([2]) Internal Market Information System.
([3]) International Labour Organisation.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008376/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Franz Obermayr (NI)**
*(24. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Südkorea/CETA-Abkommen: Grundrechte und -freiheiten und Datenschutz

Die europäischen Bürger haben dieses Jahr eindrucksvoll ihre Ablehnung gegenüber ACTA deutlich gemacht. Unterdessen wurden Passagen des ACTA-Abkommens wortwörtlich in das CETA-Abkommen mit Kanada übernommen. Nachdem nun seitens der Kommission vermeldet wurde, dass diese Passagen gestrichen werden, finden sich noch schärfere Bestimmungen im Freihandelsabkommen mit Südkorea.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu den Vorwürfen, dass diese Passagen schwere Eingriffe in die Grundrechte der Unionsbürger nach sich ziehen könnten?

2. Obwohl die Bevölkerung ihren Unmut hinsichtlich des ACTA-Abkommens kundgemacht hat, finden sich im Freihandelsabkommen mit Südkorea teilweise noch schärfere Bestimmungen. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission demokratiepolitisch ein solches Vorgehen?

3. Gedenkt die Kommission, die strittigen Passagen des Südkorea-Abkommens zu überarbeiten? Wenn nein, warum nicht? Wenn ja, wie ist der aktuelle Stand der Dinge?

4. Warum wird den Mitgliedern des Europäischen Parlaments auch weiterhin die Einsicht in den Vertragstext des CETA-Abkommens vorenthalten?

**Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission**
*(5. November 2012)*

Die Kommission ist beim umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) wie bei allen sonstigen Verhandlungen über bilaterale Handelsabkommen sorgsam darauf bedacht, dass die Bestimmungen über Rechte des geistigen Eigentums (IPR) soweit wie möglich dem bestehenden EU-Recht entsprechen, ohne jedoch darüber hinauszugehen. Dies war auch beim Freihandelsabkommen (FHA) zwischen der EU und Korea der Fall, dem das Europäische Parlament vor kurzem zustimmte. Eine Überarbeitung dieses FHA, das jetzt in Kraft ist, ist nicht geplant.

Da die im Freihandelsabkommen EU-Korea oder im umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) EU-Kanada enthaltenen Bestimmungen über Rechte des geistigen Eigentums nicht über das bestehende EU-Recht hinausgehen, ist für die Kommission nicht nachvollziehbar, inwiefern diese Abkommen zu Eingriffen in die Grundrechte der EU-Bürger führen könnten.

Die Kommission respektiert uneingeschränkt das Ergebnis der Abstimmung über das ACTA-Abkommen im Europäischen Parlament. Sie gestaltet ihre Verhandlungspositionen so, dass sie — selbstverständlich auch in laufenden Verhandlungen — in vollem Einklang mit der EU-Politik stehen. Das IPR-Kapitel des CETA wird derzeit in diesem Sinne überarbeitet.

Im Einklang mit der Rahmenvereinbarung zwischen dem Europäischen Parlament und der Kommission werden die Texte von Handelsabkommen, die Gegenstand von Verhandlungen sind, dem Ausschuss für internationalen Handel (INTA) regelmäßig zu Informationszwecken übermittelt. Dies gilt auch für das CETA. Der INTA wird regelmäßig über den aktuellen Stand der CETA-Verhandlungen auf dem Laufenden gehalten.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008376/12**
**to the Commission**
**Franz Obermayr (NI)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* South Korea/CETA agreement: fundamental rights and freedoms and data protection

In the course of this year European citizens made their opposition to ACTA resoundingly clear. However, parts of the ACTA agreement were reproduced verbatim in the CETA agreement with Canada. The Commission has announced that the passages concerned will be deleted; be that as it may, there are provisions in the free trade agreement with South Korea which go even further.

1. How does the Commission respond to the accusations that the passages in question might lead to serious encroachments on the fundamental rights of Union citizens?

2. Although the people have vented their displeasure at the ACTA agreement, the free trade agreement with South Korea is in some respects still more extreme. Taking democracy into account, how can the Commission justify such an approach?

3. Will the Commission revise the controversial passages of the South Korea agreement? If not, why not? If it does intend to revise the text, how far has it progressed?

4. Why are Members of Parliament still being denied the right to inspect the text of the CETA agreement?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 November 2012)*

For the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), as with any other negotiation of a bilateral trade agreement, the Commission is carefully ensuring that the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) provisions correspond as much as possible to the existing EU legislation, but without going beyond it. This was also the case for the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA), to which the European Parliament recently gave its consent. There is no intention to revise this FTA which is now in force.

As their IPR provisions do not go beyond existing EU legislation, the Commission does not see how the EU-Korea FTA or the EU-Canada CETA should lead to any encroachments of fundamental rights of EU citizens.

The Commission fully respects the vote of the European Parliament on ACTA. The Commission develops its negotiating positions to ensure that they are fully coherent with the EU policy, of course also in ongoing negotiations. The IPR chapter of CETA is currently being reviewed in this perspective.

As agreed in the framework Agreement between the European Parliament and the Commission, trade agreement texts under negotiation are sent on a regular basis to the INTA Committee for information. This is also the case for the CETA. The INTA is also regularly kept up-to-date on the state-of-play of the CETA negotiations.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008378/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Επεξεργασία μητρώου τραπεζικών λογαριασμών

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα του Τύπου, ο επικεφαλής της Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα κ. Χόρστ Ράιχενμπαχ προωθεί τη δημιουργία μητρώου τραπεζικών λογαριασμών των καταθετών στις ελληνικές τράπεζες και σε δεύτερη φάση και των κινήσεων των λογαριασμών αυτών. Σύμφωνα με τις ίδιες πληροφορίες, η πρόταση εντάσσεται στο πρόγραμμα «Οδικός χάρτης για την τεχνική βοήθεια στο πεδίο του ξεπλύματος χρήματος και της φοροαποφυγής», και, όπως επισημαίνεται, θα προσφερθούν τεχνολογίες και «τεχνική βοήθεια» από τη Γερμανία ώστε τα στοιχεία του μητρώου να μπορούν να τύχουν και αντίστοιχης «επεξεργασίας». Όπως επισημαίνεται ασκούνται πιέσεις για να πειστούν οι εθνικές αρχές να συναινέσουν στην «αναγκαιότητα του μητρώου».

Δεδομένου, αφενός ότι τέτοιου είδους στοιχεία μπορεί να αφορούν ευαίσθητα θέματα προσωπικών δεδομένων αλλά και αφετέρου του κινδύνου διαρροής και αξιοποίησης για ιδιοτελείς σκοπούς πληροφοριών τεράστιας οικονομικής και εμπορικής σημασίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Τι γνωρίζει για το πρόγραμμα «Road Map for Technical Assistance in the Field of Anti-Money Laundering and Tax Evasion»;

Ποιά τα κύρια στοιχεία που περιέχει;

Πώς μπορώ να έχω πρόσβαση στο περιεχόμενο του;

Υπάρχει πράγματι η ιδέα επεξεργασίας τέτοιων στοιχείων από κοινού με αρχές ή υπηρεσίες που βρίσκονται εκτός Ελλάδος;

Ποιός θα έχει την αρμοδιότητα ελέγχου και διαχείρισης του μητρώου, προκειμένου να υπάρξει προστασία των προσωπικών δεδομένων;

**Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τον «Χάρτη πορείας για την τεχνική βοήθεια στο πεδίο της καταπολέμησης του ξεπλύματος χρήματος και της φοροδιαφυγής», ο οποίος εκπονήθηκε από τις ελληνικές αρχές (συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Υπουργείου Οικονομικών) με την υποστήριξη της Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα και θα δημοσιευτεί προσεχώς. Ο κύριος στόχος του χάρτη πορείας είναι να αξιοποιηθούν όλα τα υφιστάμενα εργαλεία κατά του ξεπλύματος χρήματος, συμπεριλαμβανομένων όλων των διαθέσιμων πληροφοριών από τρίτους, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστούν η φοροδιαφυγή και η διαφθορά.

Ένα από τα μέτρα που προβλέπονται στον χάρτη πορείας είναι «εξερεύνηση και συμβουλές σχετικά με τον καλύτερο τρόπο για να δημιουργηθεί ένα κεντρικό μητρώο τραπεζικών λογαριασμών, το οποίο είναι ιδιαίτερα ευεργετικό για την υποστήριξη της επιβολής του νόμου και δημιουργεί οφέλη για την αποτελεσματικότητα των χρηματοπιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων».

Ουδέποτε τέθηκε θέμα από κοινού επεξεργασίας των εν λόγω δεδομένων με αρχές και υπηρεσίες εκτός Ελλάδας. Τον Ιούνιο, γερμανοί εμπειρογνώμονες περιέγραψαν συνοπτικά ένα τέτοιο σύστημα που λειτουργεί επί του παρόντος στη Γερμανία, χώρα με αυστηρή νομοθεσία για την προστασία της ιδιωτικής ζωής.

Επί του παρόντος, οι ελληνικές αρχές συνεργάζονται με εκπροσώπους των ελληνικών χρηματοπιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων και της Ελληνικής Ένωσης Τραπεζών για να εκπονήσουν μια αρχική πρόταση για περαιτέρω συζήτηση. Δεν έχουν καταλήξει ακόμη σε συγκεκριμένη πρόταση.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008378/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Register of bank accounts

According to press reports, Mr Horst Reichenbach, who heads the Task Force for Greece, is proposing a register of Greek bank accounts to monitor deposits and, in a subsequent stage, account movements. It appears that the proposal is part of a 'Road Map for Technical Assistance in the Field of Anti-Money Laundering and Tax Evasion', the necessary technology and 'technical assistance' to be provided by Germany in order to 'process' the data gathered. It is also reported that pressure is being brought to bear on the Greek authorities to ensure their acquiescence regarding the need for such a register.

On the one hand, the information gathered could include sensitive personal data and on the other, there is a danger that information of immense economic and commercial significance might be leaked and exploited for personal gain. In view of this:

Is the Commission aware of the 'Road Map for Technical Assistance in the Field of Anti-Money Laundering and Tax Evasion'?

What are its principal objectives?

How can its contents be accessed?

Is the joint processing of such data together with authorities and services outside of Greece in fact being envisaged as a possibility?

Who will be responsible for monitoring and managing the register with a view to protecting personal data?

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

The Commission is aware of the Road Map for Technical Assistance in the field of Anti-Money Laundering and Tax Evasion, which was prepared by the Greek authorities (including the Ministry of Finance) with support from the Task Force for Greece, and will be published shortly. The principle objective of the Road Map is, in order to tackle tax evasion and corruption, to make full use of existing anti money laundering tools, including all available information from third parties.

The Road Map describes as one action to 'explore and advise on the best way to set up a central registry of bank accounts, which is highly beneficial to support law enforcement and creates efficiency benefits for the financial institutions.'

Joint processing of such data together with authorities and services outside of Greece has never been envisaged as a possibility. In June German experts gave an overview of such a system as currently operated in Germany, a country with strong privacy laws.

At the moment Greek authorities work with representatives from the Greek financial institutions and the Hellenic Banking Association to prepare a first proposal for further discussion. There is no concrete proposal yet.

*(Svensk version)*

**Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-008379/12**
**till kommissionen**
**Anna Hedh (S&D)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Angående:* SMS-lån och direktivet om konsumentkreditavtal

I maj 2013 ska kommissionen se över vissa delar av direktivet om konsumentkreditavtal. Förberedelserna inför detta är redan igång och kommissionen har beställt en studie om konsekvenserna av direktivet för den inre marknaden och konsumentskyddet. Ett växande problem i många medlemsstater är de så kallade SMS-lånen som man mycket enkelt och snabbt kan komma över. Många av företagen gör bristande kreditprövningar, har låga gränser för utlåning och håller lånen hemliga, vilket gör att en konsument kan låna från flera olika företag utan att de känner till de andra lånen. Dessutom är den information som många av företagen tillhandahåller om den effektiva räntenivån ytterst bristfällig och räntenivåerna är i många av fallen skyhöga (flera tusen procent).

I vilken mån kommer kommissionens studie att undersöka situationen och regelefterlevnaden vad gäller företag som erbjuder SMS- och snabblån? Avser kommissionen i sin översyn av direktivet föreslå skärpa regler för att stävja situationen vad gäller oseriösa företag som erbjuder SMS- och snabblån?

**Svar från Šefčovič på kommissionens vägnar**
*(19 oktober 2012)*

1. Direktiv 2008/48/EG om konsumentkreditavtal ([1]) är tillämpligt på lån på 200–75 000 euro. Krediter som ska betalas tillbaka inom tre månader och för vilka endast obetydliga avgifter ska betalas omfattas inte av direktivet. Om ett SMS-lån är lägre än 200 euro eller ska betalas tillbaka inom tre månader och avgifterna enligt medlemsstaternas bedömning är obetydliga, omfattas det således inte av direktivet.

Enligt skäl 10 i direktiv 2008/48/EG får medlemsstaterna tillämpa bestämmelserna i direktivet på områden som inte omfattas av dess tillämpningsområde. Därför har ett antal medlemsstater tillämpat några av bestämmelserna i direktivet på SMS-lån. Medlemsstaterna kan alltså kontrollera om långivarna följer de regler som de ålagt dem, eftersom de känner till marknaden. Kommissionen kontrollerar bara om SMS-lånen är förenliga med reglerna inom ramen för direktivets tillämpningsområde.

2. Eftersom bedömningen av direktivets genomförande inte är avslutad kan kommissionen för närvarande inte uttala sig om resultatet av denna bedömning.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:133:0066:0092:SV:PDF

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008379/12**
**to the Commission**
**Anna Hedh (S&D)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* 'SMS' loans and the directive on consumer credit agreements

In May 2013, the Commission will review certain parts of the directive on consumer credit agreements. The preparations for this are already under way, and the Commission has commissioned a study of the directive's impact on the internal market and consumer protection. A growing problem in many Member States is so-called 'SMS loans', which can be obtained very quickly and easily. Many of the undertakings which provide them make inadequate assessments of creditworthiness, have low limits for loans and keep the loans secret, with the result that a consumer can borrow from a number of different undertakings without each company's knowing about the loans extended by the others. Moreover, the information which many of the undertakings provide concerning the effective interest rate is extremely inadequate, and in many cases interest rates are sky-high (several thousand per cent).

To what extent will the Commission's study examine the situation and compliance with regulations in the case of undertakings which provide 'SMS' loans and quick loans? In its review of the directive, will the Commission propose stringent rules to bring the situation with regard to rogue operators offering 'SMS' and quick loans under control?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 October 2012)*

1. The scope of the directive 2008/48/EC on credit agreements for consumers (CCD) ([1]) covers loans from EUR 200 to EUR 75 000. Credits to be repaid within up to 3 months and with only insignificant charges are not within the scope of the CCD. Thus if an SMS loan is for less than EUR 200 or is extended for less than 3 months and the charges are, in the assessment of the Members State, insignificant, such credit is not within the scope of the directive.

According to Recital 10 of the CCD the Member States are free to apply the provisions of the directive to the areas that are not within its scope. Thus a number of Member States applied some provisions of CCD to SMS loans. On this ground the Member States may check the compliance of the providers with the rules they imposed on them, knowing the particulars of this market. The Commission will only examine compliance of SMS loans within the scope of the CCD.

2. Since the assessment of the implementation of the CCD is ongoing, the Commission is not in a position to anticipate the outcome of such assessment.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:133:0066:0092:EN:PDF

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008381/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(24 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* UNESCO bijdrage aan de universiteit van Gaza

Sinds 1996 neemt het aantal projecten van de UNESCO gestaag toe. Dit wordt onder andere mogelijk gemaakt door de financiële bijdrage van de EU.

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven met welke bedragen de EU bijdraagt aan de financiering van de activiteiten van UNESCO?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven met welk doel de EU deze bijdragen schenkt aan UNESCO?

3. Op welke wijze controleert de Commissie de besteding van de bijdragen die zij aan UNESCO schenkt?

4. Welke financiële of niet-financiële sancties legt de EU op aan UNESO als die organisatie de door de EU gestelde doelen niet volgt?

5. Is het de Commissie bekend dat UNESCO een leerstoel financiert aan de islamitische universiteit van Gaza?

6. Is de Commissie zich ervan bewust dat de EU daarmee (indirect) Hamas ondersteunt?

7. Welke gevolgen trekt de EU uit deze constatering?

**Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie**
*(11 december 2012)*

1.-2. Voor informatie ([1]) over de steun die de Commissie toekent aan begunstigden verwijst de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid naar het stelsel voor financiële transparantie en voor details over de projecten op het vlak van onderzoek ([2]), ontwikkeling ([3]), onderwijs en cultuur ([4]) verwijst ze naar de specifieke websites van de Commissie.

3.-4. Het monitoren van EU-steun en het opleggen van sancties worden uitgevoerd overeenkomstig de algemene voorwaarden van de bijdrageovereenkomst tussen de EU en internationale organisaties ([5]) en een specifieke beoordeling wordt uitgevoerd in het kader van het Financieel Reglement ([6]). Voor acties onder contract die worden gesteund door het zevende kaderprogramma (FP7) staan de regels en voorwaarden voor het monitoren van de besteding van de door het zevende kaderprogramma toegekende bijdragen in de artikelen 34, 36, 37, en 38, van de regels voor deelneming aan het zevende kaderprogramma ([7]).

5. De Commissie is op de hoogte van de oprichting van de UNESCO-leerstoel ([8]) voor astronomie, astrofysica en ruimtevaartwetenschappen aan de „Islamic University of Gaza". De leerstoel komt er na een akkoord van 2 maart 2012 tussen UNESCO en drie universiteiten, de „Islamic University of Gaza", de „Al Aqsa University" en de „Al Azhar University", in het kader van het UNITWIN-UNESCO leerstoelprogramma dat universiteiten samenbrengt opdat zij kunnen samenwerken aan onderzoeksprogramma's die worden uitgekozen na een streng selectieproces. Niettemin menen wij dat UNESCO geen financiële steun verleent aan UNESCO-leerstoelen.

6.-7. De Commissie komt niet tussenbeide in beslissingen die door UNESCO worden genomen. De Commissie verleent geen financiële steun voor deze actie. De veronderstelling dat de EU Hamas enigszins direct of indirect ondersteunt, is dus volledig onjuist.

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([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm
([2]) Meer informatie over projecten in het kader van het zevende kaderprogramma (2007-2013) kan worden verkregen via de CORDIS-portaalsite: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/international-organisations/documents/europeaid_financial_contributions_to_the_un2010-2011 _full.pdf
([4]) Gezamenlijk Erasmus Mundusmasterprogramma: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/selected_projects_action_1_master_courses_en.php
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/financing/international_organisations/documents/c2_contribution_agr_gc_en.pdf
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:298:0001:0096:NL:PDF. Zie ook de EuropAid FAQ over de financiering van internationale organisaties: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/financing/international_organisations/documents/c2_contribution_agr_gc_en.pdf
([7]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1906/2006 (PB L 391 van 30.12.2006, blz. 1). Zie ook: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:391:SOM:NL:HTML
([8]) UNESCO = Organisatie van de Verenigde Naties voor onderwijs, wetenschap en cultuur.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008381/12**
**to the Commission**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(24 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Unesco grant to the University of Gaza

Since 1996, the number of Unesco projects has been steadily increasing. This is being made possible, *inter alia*, by the financial contribution of the European Union.

1. Can the Commission specify how much money the EU is contributing to Unesco's activities?

2. Can the Commission indicate the purpose of these EU contributions to Unesco?

3. How does the Commission monitor the use made of the funds which it gives to Unesco?

4. What financial or non-financial penalties does the EU impose on Unesco if the organisation does not pursue the aims specified by the EU?

5. Is the Commission aware that Unesco is funding a chair at the Islamic University of Gaza?

6. Is the Commission aware that, in this way, the EU is (indirectly) supporting Hamas?

7. What action will the EU take on the basis of this observation?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(11 December 2012)*

1-2. The Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult the Financial Transparency System ([1]) for information on grants awarded by the Commission to beneficiaries, and refers the Honourable Member to specific Commission websites to find details on projects in the field of research ([2]), development ([3]), education and culture ([4]).

3-4. The monitoring of EU funds and in position of penalties is carried out in accordance with the General Conditions of the EU Contribution Agreement with International Organisations ([5]) and a specific assessment is foreseen by the Financial Regulation ([6]). In the case of indirect actions financed under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), the rules and conditions concerning the monitoring of the use made of the funds awarded to FP7 grant holders are presented in Articles 34, 36, 37 and 38 of the 'FP7 Rules of participation' ([7]).

5. The Commission is aware of the establishment of the Unesco ([8]) Chair in Astronomy, Astrophysics and Space Sciences at the Islamic University of Gaza. This chair is the result of an Agreement signed on 2 March 2012 between Unesco and three universities respectively, the Islamic University of Gaza, the Al Aqsa University and the Al Azhar University under the umbrella of the UNITWIN-Unesco Chairs Programme, which aims at twinning universities to allow them to cooperate on research programmes selected following a rigorous review process. Nevertheless, it is our understanding that Unesco does not provide financial support to Unesco Chairs.

6-7. The Commission does not intervene in decisions taken by Unesco. No financial support has been granted for this action by the Commission. Consequently, the assumption that any direct or indirect support to Hamas could have been provided by the EU is entirely incorrect.

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([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm
([2]) Additional details on projects under the Seventh Framework Programme (2007-2013) can be obtained via the CORDIS portal at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/international-organisations/documents/europeaid_financial_contributions_to_the_un2010-2011_full.pdf
([4]) Erasmus Mundus — Joint Masters Programmes: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/selected_projects_action_1_master_courses_en.php
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/financing/international_organisations/documents/c2_contribution_agr_gc_en.pdf
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:298:0001:0096:EN:PDF . See also the EuropAid FAQ on financing international organisations: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/faq/international_organiszations_en.htm
([7]) Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 in OJ L 391, 30.12.2006, p.1). See also: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:391:SOM:EN:HTML.
([8]) Unesco = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-008383/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Bernd Posselt (PPE)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Beneš-Dekrete und EU-Grundrechtecharta

Vertritt die Kommission als Hüterin der Verträge — also auch des Lissabon-Vertrages und der EU-Grundrechtecharta — nach wie vor die Ansicht, dass die sogenannten Beneš-Dekrete, mit denen Deutsche und Ungarn in der Nachkriegs-Tschechoslowakei kollektiv entrechtet wurden, mit dem EU-Beitritt erloschen sind, oder teilt sie inzwischen die Auffassung des tschechischen Staatspräsidenten Václav Klaus, wonach diese Dekrete und Gesetze nach wie vor nötig seien, um das „tschechische Nationalinteresse" zu verteidigen, weshalb er eine Opt-out-Klausel aus der Grundrechtecharta durchsetzen will? Besteht zwischen der Klaus-Klausel und den Beneš-Dekreten nach Ansicht der Kommission ein juristischer Zusammenhang, oder würde eine solche Opt-out-Klausel nicht, wie etwa von tschechischen Oppositionspolitikern geäußert, lediglich die Einklagbarkeit von Sozial- und anderen Grundrechten für tschechische Staatsbürger einschränken?

**Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission**
*(23. Oktober 2012)*

Was die sogenannten „Beneš-Dekrete" betrifft, so hat die Kommission bereits in ihren Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-5310/11, E-1925/11, E-6938/08, E-4307/08, E-4776/07 und E-2238/04 ([1]) darauf hingewiesen, dass Rechtshandlungen, die die frühere Tschechoslowakei vor dem Beitritt zur Europäischen Union vorgenommen hat, die aber heutzutage keine dem Unionsrecht zuwiderlaufenden Rechtswirkungen mehr entfalten, nicht rückwirkend überprüft werden können.

Was die mögliche Anwendung der Grundrechtecharta der Europäischen Union betrifft, so gilt diese gemäß Artikel 51 Absatz 1 für die Mitgliedstaaten ausschließlich bei der Durchführung des EU-Rechts. Aus der Anfrage geht nicht hervor, dass der geschilderte Sachverhalt mit der Umsetzung von EU-Rechtsvorschriften in Verbindung steht. Deshalb obliegt es einzig den Mitgliedstaaten sicherzustellen, dass ihre Verpflichtungen in Bezug auf die Grundrechte, die ihnen aus internationalen Übereinkommen und dem innerstaatlichen Recht erwachsen, eingehalten werden. Die Kommission sieht sich daher nicht in der Lage, zu den aufgeworfenen Grundrechtsfragen Stellung zu nehmen. Auch das künftige Protokoll über die Anwendung der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union auf die Tschechische Republik wird daran nichts ändern.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008383/12**
**to the Commission**
**Bernd Posselt (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* The Benes Decrees and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

As guardian of the Treaties (including the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights), is the Commission still of the view that the Benes Decrees, which deprived Germans and Hungarians of their collective rights in post-World War II Czechoslovakia, have become null and void on accession to the EU, or does it now share the opinion of Czech President Václav Klaus that the decrees and associated laws remain necessary in order to defend the 'Czech national interests', with the result that he is trying to obtain an opt-out clause from the Charter of Fundamental Rights? Does the Commission believe that there is a legal connection between the 'Klaus clause' and the Benes Decrees? Would such an opt-out clause not simply restrict the enforceability of social and other fundamental rights for Czech citizens, as Czech opposition politicians maintain?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(23 October 2012)*

Regarding the so-called Benes decrees, as noted in the Commission's previous replies E-5310/11, E-1925/11, E-6938/08, E-4307/08, E-4776/07 and E-2238/04 ([1]), historical acts, undertaken by the authorities of the former Czechoslovakia prior to accession and not giving rise to new legal effects which would be contrary to Union law, cannot be subject to retroactive scrutiny.

As regards a possible application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, according to its Article 51(1), the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member, it does not appear that the matter referred to is related to the implementation of EC law. In that matter it is thus for Member States alone to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected. Therefore, the Commission is not in a position to comment further on the fundamental rights issues raised by the question of the Honourable Member. The future Protocol on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union to the Czech Republic will not change this situation.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-008384/12**
**à la Commission**
**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Contrôle technique des véhicules à moteur

La proposition de règlement présentée le 13 juillet dernier par la Commission européenne, relative au contrôle technique des véhicules à moteur, soulève des interrogations méthodologiques. Dans son texte, la Commission invoque des «études approfondies» selon lesquelles «8 % des accidents impliquant des motocycles sont dus ou liés à des défaillances techniques».

La Commission peut-elle préciser à quelles études elle fait précisément référence? Sont-elles plurielles? Ont-elles, surtout, un lien avec des centres de contrôle technique, qui pourraient en être la source? Les fédérations nationales de motards contestent en effet la statistique avancée, et mettent en avant un chiffre de… 0,7 % (pourcentage où l'âge du véhicule est la source principale de l'accident), selon l'étude «Maids» présentée, en 2004, par les constructeurs de deux-roues à moteur. La Commission peut-elle à cet égard préciser si elle a soutenu cette dernière étude, et selon quelles modalités?

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-008596/12**
**à la Commission**
**Brice Hortefeux (PPE)**
*(27 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Durcissement des contrôles techniques sur les véhicules motorisés

Le 13 juillet 2012, la Commission a présenté une proposition visant à compléter la réglementation actuelle en matière de contrôle technique dans le sens d'un durcissement des règles et d'une couverture plus large du type de véhicules motorisés contrôlés.

La Commission affirme que les défaillances techniques, qui augmentent avec l'âge du véhicule, sont responsables de 6 % de l'ensemble des accidents de voiture et de 8 % des accidents de moto. Elle établit donc une corrélation directe entre les défaillances techniques et les accidents de la route en se fondant sur des données statistiques.

1. Dans ce cas, la Commission pourrait-elle publier la ou les études à l'appui desquelles elle a produit cette proposition?

2. La Commission pourrait-elle préciser dans quels pays cette étude a été menée et sur quelle période?

3. Pourrait-elle préciser quel échantillon de véhicules motorisés a été étudié?

4. La Commission est-elle en mesure de prouver que le contrôle technique des deux roues contribuerait à la diminution des accidents de la route, de même qu'un contrôle annuel pour les voitures?

5. Est-elle en mesure de prouver que l'obligation d'un contrôle technique contribuerait à la baisse du nombre d'accidents des deux roues chez les jeunes?

**Réponse commune donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission**
*(30 octobre 2012)*

Les références des études se trouvent dans l'analyse d'impact ([1]) sur laquelle se fonde la proposition de la Commission, et ces études ont toutes été rendues publiques ([2]). Celles-ci couvrent une grande partie de l'Union européenne. Les échantillons de véhicules routiers étudiés varient en fonction des études. En ce qui concerne les accidents de véhicules, notamment ceux impliquant des motocycles, il convient de souligner que la question de la causalité des accidents est complexe et, qu'en général, le même accident de la route est dû à plusieurs causes. Dès lors, les études mentionnées par la Commission présentent différents pourcentages, selon que les défaillances techniques sont la cause principale ou l'un des facteurs. Par exemple, le chiffre de 0,7 % annoncé dans l'étude Maids ([3]) porte sur les accidents dans lesquels les défaillances techniques constituent le facteur principal alors que cette étude conclut aussi que, dans plus de 5 % des accidents, les défaillances techniques en constituent l'un des facteurs.

Par ailleurs, en ce qui concerne les cyclomoteurs, très souvent utilisés par les jeunes conducteurs, la Commission aimerait attirer l'attention de l'Honorable Parlementaire sur une publication récente de l'administration suédoise des transports ([4]) qui se fonde sur une analyse des accidents mortels survenus au cours de la période 2005-2011 pour montrer que seuls quatre cyclomoteurs sur dix impliqués dans des accidents mortels ne présentaient pas de défaillance technique établie. Au moins 23 % des cyclomoteurs impliqués dans des accidents mortels étaient débridés.

L'analyse d'impact de la Commission a établi qu'il existe de solides preuves empiriques et scientifiques démontrant que les mesures envisagées permettront de renforcer la sécurité routière, notamment pour les jeunes conducteurs d'anciens véhicules et les conducteurs de deux-roues motorisés, qui seront moins souvent impliqués dans des accidents liés à une défaillance technique.

([1]) SWD(2012) 206 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2012_07_13_press_release_en.htm
([3]) Étude Maids BE 2004; http://www.maids-study.eu/
([4]) «Increased safety for motorcycle and moped riders» (Une sécurité accrue pour les conducteurs de motocycles et de cyclomoteurs; Administration suédoise des transports, août 2012: http://publikationswebbutik.vv.se/upload/6859/2012_194_increased_safety_for_motorcycle_and_moped_riders.pdf

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008384/12**
**to the Commission**
**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles

The proposal for a regulation put forward by the Commission on 13 July 2012 on roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles raises questions about methodology. The Commission text mentions 'in-depth studies' according to which '8 % of accidents involving motorcycles happen as a direct or indirect result of technical defects'.

Could the Commission specify the studies to which it is referring? Is there more than one study? And are they linked to roadworthiness test centres, from where they might emanate? National motorcycling associations disagree with the figure given, suggesting a figure of 0.7 % (the percentage for which the age of the vehicle is the main cause of the accident), which is taken from the 'Maids' study produced in 2004 by manufacturers of powered two-wheelers. Will the Commission state whether — and in what way — it supported this study?

**Question for written answer P-008596/12**
**to the Commission**
**Brice Hortefeux (PPE)**
*(27 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Tougher roadworthiness tests on motor vehicles

On 13 July 2012, the Commission submitted a proposal aimed at supplementing current rules on roadworthiness tests. Under the proposal, rules would be strengthened and a greater number of motor vehicle categories would be subject to tests.

The Commission points out that technical failures, which increase as a vehicle ages, are responsible for 6 % of all car accidents and 8 % of all motorcycle accidents. It therefore establishes, on the basis of statistical data, a direct correlation between technical failures and road accidents.

1. Can the Commission publish the study or studies on which it drew when drafting this proposal?

2. Can it indicate in which countries this study was carried out and over what period?

3. Can it indicate what sample group of motor vehicles was studied?

4. Is the Commission able to prove that roadworthiness tests on two-wheeled vehicles, as well as annual tests on cars, would help reduce the number of road accidents?

5. Is it able to prove that making roadworthiness tests compulsory would lead to a fall in the number of accidents involving young people and two-wheeled vehicles?

**Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(30 October 2012)*

Reference to studies are indicated in the impact assessment ([1]) on which the Commission's proposal is based on, all of which are publicly available ([2]). These studies cover a significant part of the European Union. The different sample groups of road vehicles depend on the different studies. As regards vehicle accidents, notably those involving motorcycle, it should be stressed that the matter of accident causalities is a complex subject where usually more than one element contribute to the causality of an individual road accident. Therefore the studies mentioned by the Commission provide different percentages, depending on whether the technical deficiencies are the primary cause or one of the factors. For instance the figure of 0.7 % in the Maids Study ([3]) relates to accidents where technical defects constitute the primary accident factor, while the same study also concludes that in more than 5 % of accidents technical failure constitutes one of the contributing factors.

([1]) SWD(2012) 206 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2012_07_13_press_release_en.htm
([3]) Maids Study BE 2004; http://www.maids-study.eu/

Furthermore in relation to mopeds — a vehicle very frequently used by young drivers — the Commission would like to draw the Honourable member's attention to a recent publication of the Swedish Transport Administration ([4]) that, based on analysis of fatal accidents, period 2005-2011, shows that only 4 out of 10 mopeds involved in fatal accidents had no known technical defects. At least 23 % of mopeds involved in fatal accidents were tuned.

As established in the Commission's Impact Assessment there is strong empiric and research evidence that the envisaged measures will result in enhanced road safety, in particular among young drivers of old vehicles and riders of powered two-wheel vehicles that would be less frequently involved in accidents in relation to technical failure.

([4]) Increased safety for motorcycle and moped riders ; Swedish Transport Administration August 2012 http://publikationswebbutik.vv.se/upload/6859/2012_194_increased_safety_for_motorcycle_and_moped_riders.pdf

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-008385/12**
**à la Commission**
**Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Report de la réévaluation de la sécurité de l'aspartame

En mai 2011, vous avez demandé à l'EFSA d'avancer la réévaluation complète de la sécurité de l'aspartame (E 951) à 2012.

Précédemment programmé pour être achevé en 2020, l'examen de cet édulcorant relève de la réévaluation systématique de tous les additifs alimentaires autorisés dans l'Union avant le 20 janvier 2009, comme prévu par le règlement UE no 257/2010.

L'EFSA a accepté ce mandat et a lancé un appel public en vue de recueillir des données scientifiques, ainsi qu'un réexamen approfondi de la littérature, permettant au groupe scientifique sur les additifs alimentaires et les sources de nutriments ajoutés aux aliments (ANS) de l'Autorité de commencer son évaluation des risques dès le début 2012.

Attendue pour juillet 2012, la réévaluation complète des risques et de la dose journalière admissible (DJA) de l'aspartame sera finalement réalisée d'ici mai 2013.

Pouvez-vous préciser les raisons de ce report?

**Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission**
*(31 octobre 2012)*

Dans une lettre datée du 11 juillet 2012, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a demandé à la Commission de prolonger jusqu'au mois de mai 2013 le délai de réévaluation de l'aspartame (E 951). En effet, elle a reçu, à la suite de son appel public de données scientifiques sur cette substance, plus de huit cents ensembles de données inédites — dont des données brutes — ou déjà publiées. Pour analyser ces informations de façon approfondie et se prononcer sur les principales études à prendre en considération dans la caractérisation des dangers, le groupe d'experts de l'Autorité a besoin de plus de temps qu'initialement prévu. D'autre part, ce groupe a constaté que des données supplémentaires étaient requises quant à l'occurrence d'un produit de dégradation de l'aspartame dans les aliments, produit connu sous le nom d'acide 5-benzyl-3,6-dioxo-2-pipérazineacétique (DKP).

Par ailleurs, tenant compte du fait que l'EFSA comptait soumettre le projet d'avis à une consultation publique s'étendant sur les mois de décembre 2012 et janvier 2013, la Commission a accepté d'accorder la prolongation demandée.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008385/12**
**to the Commission**
**Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Postponement of re-evaluation of the safety of aspartame

In May 2011, the Commission asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to bring forward the complete re-evaluation of aspartame (E 951) to 2012.

The evaluation of this sweetener, originally scheduled for completion in 2020, is part of the comprehensive re-evaluation of all food additives that were already permitted in the EU before 20 January 2009, as provided for in Regulation (EU) No 257/2010.

The EFSA accepted the remit, made a public call for submissions, with a view to collecting scientific evidence, and undertook a thorough reassessment of the relevant literature, so that its panel on food additives and nutrient sources added to food (ANS) could begin work on the risk evaluation in early 2012.

The complete re-evaluation of the risks, and the acceptable daily intake, of aspartame was expected to appear in July 2012 but is now scheduled for May 2013.

Can the Commission explain in detail the reasons for the postponement?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) requested the Commission by letter of 11 July 2012 to extend the deadline for the re-evaluation of aspartame (E 951) to May 2013 for the following reasons: with its public call for scientific data regarding aspartame over 800 datasets were submitted to EFSA. This data encompassed previously published data as well as unpublished data, also including raw data on aspartame. In order to ensure that the expert Panel in EFSA can thoroughly evaluate this information and take a decision on the key studies to be used in the hazard characterisation, more time for discussions in the relevant Panel is needed than originally foreseen. In addition, the Panel identified the need for additional data on the occurrence of a breakdown product of aspartame in foodstuffs known as 5-benzyl-3,6-dioxo-2-piperazineacetic acid (DKP). This public call for data was published in July 2012.

Taking also into account that EFSA also intends to organise a public consultation on the draft opinion during December 2012 — January 2013, the Commission has accepted the requested extension of the deadline.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-008386/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Projekt „CleanIT“

In dem von der Kommission geförderten und von der niederländischen Polizei koordinierten Projekt „CleanIT“ wird ein „Leitfaden“ für den „Kampf gegen den Terrorismus im Internet“ ausgearbeitet.

1. Warum werden die Vorschläge zu CleanIT als „vertraulich“ bzw. „nicht zu publizieren“ eingestuft?

2. Welche Ziele verfolgt die Kommission mit CleanIT?

3. Welche Ziele verfolgt die Kommission mit der nächsten CleanIT-Konferenz am 5./6. November 2012 in Wien?

4. In dem jüngsten CleanIT-Papier wird unter anderem als Ziel „die Aufhebung aller gesetzlichen Bestimmungen, die der Filterung/Überwachung der Internetanschlüsse von Angestellten in Betrieben entgegenstehen“ genannt. Was sagt die Kommission dazu?

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008569/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Robert Goebbels (S&D)**
*(27. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Clean IT will sämtliche Kommunikation im Internet überwachen

Das von der Europäischen Kommission finanzierte und von der niederländischen Polizei koordinierte Clean-IT-Projekt zielt offiziell darauf ab, die terroristische Nutzung des Internets zu unterbinden.

Internet-Firmen wird empfohlen, ihre allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen und Nutzungsbestimmungen so zu ändern, dass die illegale terroristische Nutzung des Internets unterbunden wird.

Laut Clean IT gibt es keine eindeutige Definition von terroristischer Nutzung des Internets. Auch unterscheidet sich eine eventuelle terroristische Nutzung des Internets in der Technik nicht vom normalen, legalen Gebrauch des Internets.

Diese Sachlage überlässt es Firmen, Inhalte nach ihrem subjektiven Urteilsvermögen zu verbieten, da die Rechtsdurchsetzung auf Privatunternehmen, etwa Provider, übergeht. Unliebsame Inhalte würden somit präventiv herausgefiltert und den Strafverfolgungsbehörden gemeldet.

1. Verfolgt die Kommission diese Vorgänge?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, etwas gegen diese Form der Internet-Kontrolle zu unternehmen?

3. Ist die Kommission nicht der Meinung, dass sich das Projekt Clean IT wesentlich von seinem ursprünglich angekündigten Ziel entfernt hat?

4. Was berechtigt Internetprovider, die Überwachung der Internet-Aktivitäten selbst zu unternehmen?

**Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission**
*(19. November 2012)*

Clean IT ist eine Initiative des niederländischen Ministeriums für Sicherheit und Justiz, die öffentliche und private Partner zu einer offenen Debatte darüber zusammenführt, wie mit illegalen terroristischen Inhalten im Internet umgegangen werden soll ([1]).

Das Projekt entspricht der Aufforderung des Rates, „Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung des Missbrauchs des Internet zu terroristischen Zwecken zu entwickeln, wobei jedoch die Grundrechte und Rechtsgrundsätze zu achten sind“ ([2]) sowie „eine europäische Mustervereinbarung über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen Strafverfolgungsbehörden und privaten Betreibern“ ([3]) auszuarbeiten.

Dieses Projekt ist eine Bottom-up-Initiative ohne legislative Ziele. Es wurde eine entsprechende Website ([4]) eingerichtet, die jedem Gelegenheit geben soll, Gedanken und Ideen auszutauschen. Die Teilnehmer der Clean-IT-Workshops werden vom Projektkoordinator (dem niederländischen Ministerium für Sicherheit und Justiz) so ausgewählt und eingeladen, dass alle Interessenkreise in ausgewogener Weise vertreten sind ([5]).

Die Kommission ist nicht an der Ausarbeitung des Clean-IT-Dokuments beteiligt und nimmt auch nicht an dem in Kürze stattfindenden Workshop in Wien teil. Das Dokument selbst ist nicht vertraulich, sondern lediglich ein Arbeitspapier, das zurzeit noch häufig geändert wird, weshalb es noch als nicht zur Veröffentlichung bestimmt gilt. Die endgültige Fassung wird allerdings veröffentlicht und auf einer Konferenz Anfang 2013 zur Diskussion gestellt.

Die Schlussfolgerungen des Projekts werden ausschließlich die Meinung der Autoren wiedergeben, nicht aber die Auffassung der Europäischen Kommission. Die Kommission wird keine Eigentumsrechte an den Ergebnissen von Clean IT besitzen. Allerdings wird sie, wie bei allen vom Programm „Kriminalprävention und Kriminalitätsbekämpfung“ (ISEC) kofinanzierten Projekten, bei der abschließenden Evaluierung bewerten, ob mit dem Projekt die im Projektvorschlag beschriebenen Ergebnisse erreicht worden sind.

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([1]) Dies betrifft insbesondere die „öffentliche Aufforderung zur Begehung einer terroristischen Straftat”, die „Ausbildung für terroristische Zwecke“ und die „Anwerbung für terroristische Zwecke“, die seit Annahme des Rahmenbeschlusses 2008/919/JI am 28. November 2008 als Straftaten gelten.

([2]) Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom 15.-16.2006.

([3]) Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom 27.11.2008.

([4]) www.cleanITproject.eu

([5]) Die Liste der Teilnehmer, die auf der Projekt-Website eingesehen werden kann (www.cleanITproject.eu), enthält nur die Angaben derjenigen Teilnehmer, die bereit waren, ihren Namen oder den Namen ihres Unternehmens zu veröffentlichen.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008569/12**
**à la Commission**
**Robert Goebbels (S&D)**
*(27 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Le projet Clean IT entend surveiller toutes les communications sur Internet

Le projet Clean IT, financé par la Commission et coordonné par la police néerlandaise, a pour objectif officiel d'empêcher l'utilisation d'Internet à des fins terroristes.

Ainsi, il est recommandé aux entreprises du web de modifier leurs conditions générales de vente et leurs conditions d'utilisation de façon à empêcher les utilisations terroristes illégales d'Internet.

Or, selon Clean IT, il n'existe pas de définition incontestable de ce qu'est une utilisation terroriste d'internet. Sur le plan technique, il n'est pas possible de distinguer une éventuelle utilisation terroriste d'internet d'un usage normal et légal.

Dans cette situation, les entreprises ont toute latitude pour apprécier, de leur point de vue, quels contenus elles doivent interdire, car c'est aux entreprises privées, à savoir aux fournisseurs d'accès, qu'il revient finalement de faire appliquer la réglementation. Ainsi, les contenus indésirables seraient filtrés à titre préventif et signalés aux services répressifs.

1. La Commission suit-elle ce dossier?

2. Envisage-t-elle de prendre des mesures contre cette forme de contrôle d'Internet?

3. N'estime-t-elle pas le projet Clean IT s'est largement écarté de l'objectif affiché initialement?

4. Les fournisseurs d'accès à Internet sont-ils habilités à surveiller les activités du web de leur propre chef?

**Réponse commune donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission**
*(19 novembre 2012)*

L'initiative «Clean IT» («Nettoyer» l'internet) est organisée par le ministère néerlandais de la sécurité et de la justice. Elle rassemble des partenaires publics et privés en vue de la tenue d'un débat ouvert sur la façon de lutter contre les contenus illégaux à visée terroriste sur l'internet.

Ce projet répond à un appel du Conseil européen à «mettre au point des mesures visant à lutter contre l'utilisation abusive d'Internet à des fins terroristes, dans le respect des droits et principes fondamentaux» et à élaborer «un modèle d'accord européen en matière de coopération entre les services répressifs et les opérateurs privés (…)».

Le projet repose sur une initiative venant de la base («bottom-up») sans aucune visée législative. Un site web spécifique a été créé, fournissant à chacun la possibilité de faire part de son point de vue et de ses idées. Les participants aux ateliers «Clean IT» sont sélectionnés et invités par le coordinateur du projet (le ministère néerlandais de la sécurité et de la justice) afin d'assurer une représentation équilibrée de toutes les parties prenantes concernées.

La Commission ne participe pas au processus d'élaboration du document «Clean IT» et elle ne prendra pas part au prochain atelier organisé à Vienne. Le document lui-même n'est pas classifié, mais est un simple document de travail sujet à des modifications fréquentes durant la phase actuelle, raison pour laquelle il est spécifié qu'il n'est pas destiné à être publié. Sa version définitive sera cependant rendue publique et fera l'objet d'un débat lors d'une conférence qui se tiendra au début de l'année 2013.

Les conclusions auxquelles ce projet aboutira reflèteront uniquement l'opinion de leurs auteurs et ne représenteront aucunement les opinions de la Commission européenne. Celle-ci n'aura pas de droit de propriété sur le document «Clean IT» final; néanmoins, elle évaluera si le projet a, ou non, produit les résultats attendus décrits dans la proposition du projet, comme prévu pour tous les projets cofinancés par le programme ISEC («Prévenir et combattre la criminalité»).

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-008906/12**
**à Comissão**
**Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)**
*(4 de outubro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Projeto Clean IT

Em 21 de setembro de 2012, a European Digital Rights, uma organização de defesa dos direitos civis, divulgou um documento redigido no âmbito do projeto Clean IT, financiado pela Comissão, sobre o uso da internet para fins terroristas ([1]). O documento suscita sérias preocupações quanto à compatibilidade das atividades e propostas do projeto com os direitos fundamentais, apesar das garantias apresentadas no sítio Web do projeto de que este «não tem como objetivo restringir a liberdade na internet, embora as questões de segurança sejam uma preocupação, pelo que se pretende limitar o uso da internet para fins terroristas» ([2]). A Comissão financia outros projetos como a coligação para a segurança em linha das crianças, com o propósito de combater a circulação de material sobre abusos sexuais de crianças na internet.

Pode a Comissão explicar por que motivo financiou um projeto de cooperação que, aparentemente, não está sujeito a quaisquer obrigações mínimas relativamente aos níveis de representatividade dos participantes?

**Resposta conjunta dada pela Comissária Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão**
*(19 de novembro de 2012)*

A iniciativa *Clean IT* é gerida pelo Ministério da Segurança e da Justiça dos Países Baixos. Reúne parceiros públicos e privados com o objetivo de levar a cabo um debate aberto sobre a forma de lidar com conteúdos ilegais e terroristas na Internet ([3]).

O projeto responde ao apelo do Conselho de «desenvolver medidas para combater o uso ilícito da Internet para fins terroristas, no respeito dos direitos e princípios fundamentais. ([4])» e elaborar «um modelo de acordo europeu de cooperação entre as autoridades de aplicação da lei e os operadores privados (…)» ([5]).

O projeto é uma iniciativa da base para o topo sem objetivos de natureza legislativa. Foi criado um sítio Web ([6]) específico com o objetivo de dar a todos os interessados a oportunidade de partilhar opiniões e ideias. Os participantes nos *workshops* da iniciativa *Clean IT* são selecionados e convidados pelo Coordenador do Projeto (Ministério da Segurança e da Justiça dos Países Baixos) para garantir uma representação equilibrada de todas as partes interessadas ([7]).

A Comissão não participa no processo de redação do documento *Clean IT* e não participará no *workshop* que se realizará em breve em Viena. O documento em si não é um documento classificado mas apenas um documento de trabalho sujeito a alterações frequentes nesta fase, motivo pelo qual está atualmente marcado como não sendo para publicação. Contudo, a versão final será tornada pública e discutida numa conferência no início de 2013.

As conclusões do projeto refletirão apenas a opinião dos autores e não representarão os pontos de vista da Comissão Europeia. A Comissão não será proprietária do resultado final do projeto *Clean IT*; contudo, no âmbito da avaliação final do projeto, a Comissão avaliará se o projeto alcançou ou não os resultados descritos na respetiva proposta, como é o caso em relação a todos os projetos cofinanciados pelo ISEC.

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([1]) http://www.edri.org/cleanIT
([2]) http://www.cleanitproject.eu/faq/
([3]) Especificamente, «incitamento público à prática de infrações terroristas», «treino para o terrorismo» e «recrutamento para o terrorismo», que são considerados infrações penais desde a adoção da Decisão-Quadro 2008/919 JAI de 28 de novembro de 2008.
([4]) Conclusões do Conselho, 15-16.6.2006.
([5]) Conclusões do Conselho, 27.11.2008.
([6]) www.cleanITproject.eu
([7]) A lista de participantes disponível no sítio Web do projeto (www.cleanITproject.eu) contem apenas os dados dos participantes que concordaram em divulgar o seu nome ou o da sua empresa.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008386/12**
**to the Commission**
**Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* 'CleanIT' project

A 'manual' for the fight against terrorism in the Internet is being put together as part of the 'CleanIT' project which is promoted by the Commission and coordinated by the Dutch police.

1. Why are the proposals concerning CleanIT categorised as 'confidential' and 'not for publication'?

2. What are the Commission's objectives with CleanIT?

3. What are the Commission's objectives with the coming CleanIT conference, due to take place in Vienna on 5/6 November 2012?

4. One objective which appears in the latest CleanIT paper is given as 'the lifting of all legal requirements preventing the filtering/monitoring of the Internet connections of employees in businesses'. What is the Commission's view of this?

**Question for written answer E-008569/12**
**to the Commission**
**Robert Goebbels (S&D)**
*(27 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Clean IT project seeks to monitor all communication via the Internet

The official objective of the Clean IT project that is financed by the European Commission and coordinated by the Dutch police is to prevent the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.

Internet firms are being advised to amend their general terms of business and conditions of use so as to prevent illegal use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.

According to Clean IT, there is no clear definition of the term 'terrorist use of the Internet', and no distinction can be made in the technology between the use of the Internet for potentially terrorist purposes and normal, legal use of the Internet.

In this situation, it is left to firms to decide whether or not to ban web content according to their own subjective assessment, since enforcement of the law is being transferred to private enterprises, i.e. the providers. Undesirable content would thus be filtered out as a preventive measure and reported to the law enforcement authorities.

1. Is the Commission following these developments?

2. Does it intend to take any action against this form of Internet monitoring?

3. Does it not think that the Clean IT project has deviated substantially from its originally announced aim?

4. What justification is there for Internet providers to take over the task of monitoring activity on the Internet themselves?

**Question for written answer P-008906/12**
**to the Commission**
**Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)**
*(4 October 2012)*

*Subject:* Clean IT

On 21 September 2012, European Digital Rights, a civil rights organisation, released a document written by the Commission-funded Clean IT project on the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes ([1]). The document raises serious concerns regarding the compatibility of the project's activities and proposals with fundamental rights, despite the assurances on the project's website that the 'project does not aim to restrict Internet freedom, but we do have security

([1]) http://www.edri.org/cleanIT

concerns and want to limit the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes' ([2]). The Commission is also funding projects such as the 'CEO Coalition' to fight child abuse material on the Internet.

Why has the Commission funded a 'cooperation' project which appears to have no minimum obligations regarding levels of representativeness of the participants?

**Joint answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 November 2012)*

The Clean IT initiative is run by the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice. It brings together public and private partners for an open debate on how to deal with illegal, terrorist content on the Internet ([3]).

The project responds to the call from the Council to: 'develop measures to combat the misuse of the Internet for terrorist purposes while respecting fundamental rights and principles' ([4]) and to draft 'a European agreement model for cooperation between law enforcement agencies and private operators (…)' ([5]).

The project is a bottom-up initiative with no legislative aims. A dedicated website ([6]) has been developed to provide everyone with the opportunity to share thoughts and ideas. Participants in the Clean IT workshops are selected and invited by the Project Coordinator (Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice) to ensure a balanced representation of all stakeholders concerned ([7]).

The Commission is not participating in the drafting process of the Clean IT document and will not take part in the upcoming workshop in Vienna. The document itself is not a classified one but simply a working document subject to frequent changes at this stage, which is why it is currently marked as not for publication. However, its final version will be made public and discussed at a conference at the beginning of 2013.

The conclusions of the project will only reflect the opinion of the authors and will not represent the views of the European Commission. The Commission will not be an owner of the Clean IT final result, however, as a part of the project's final evaluation, the Commission will assess whether or not the project has produced the deliverables as described in the project proposal, as it is the case with all projects co-funded by ISEC.

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([2]) http://www.cleanitproject.eu/faq/
([3]) Specifically the 'public provocation to commit a terrorist offence', 'training for terrorism' and 'recruitment for terrorism' which have been criminal offences since the adoption of Framework Decision 2008/919 JHA of 28 November 2008.
([4]) Council Conclusions, 15-16.6.2006.
([5]) Council Conclusions, 27.11.2008.
([6]) www.cleanITproject.eu
([7]) A list of participants, which is available on the project's website (www.cleanITproject.eu) contains the data only of those participants who have agreed to make their name, or a name of their company, public.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008387/12**
**to the Commission**
**Liam Aylward (ALDE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Accessibility of public transport in Europe for the visually impaired

One in six people in the EU (an estimated 80 million) have a disability. Included in this figure are the estimated 15.5 million European citizens who are visually impaired.

While the safety level of rail transport in Europe is high, there are a number of rail services which have a poor audible announcement system, which makes it increasingly difficult for visually impaired passengers to travel.

What measures has the Commission taken to ensure that all rail services have a high-quality audible announcement system and are accessible to the visually impaired?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to Commission Decision 2008/164/EC concerning technical specifications of interoperability for persons with reduced mobility ([1]) (PRM TSI) which has as its objective to enhance the accessibility of rail transport. The PRM TSI consists of technical requirements which apply to stations and rolling stock and has been applicable in all Member States from 1 July 2008 and applies to new, renewed and upgraded infrastructure and rolling stock on the trans-European rail network. Other national accessibility legislation and requirements may be applicable where the PRM TSI does not apply.

As regards audible announcement systems which facilitate rail travel for passengers with visual impairments, the Commission would refer to sub-Section 4.1.2.12. of the TSI which sets out basic parameters related to spoken information within railway stations and to sub-Section 4.2.2.8. of the TSI which sets out basic parameters related to customer information (including public address systems) on board trains. In addition, other provisions in the TSI relate to tactile surfaces and signage, obstacle free routes and lighting.

Finally, Regulation 1371/2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations ([2]) includes provisions on minimum information to be provided by railway undertakings during a journey. Article 8(3) of the regulation establishes that such information should be provided in the most appropriate format, paying particular attention to the needs of people with auditory or visual impairments.

The Commission seeks to ensure that rail transport in Europe is accessible to all, including passengers with disabilities, and monitors the implementation of the above legislation closely.

([1]) Commission Decision 2008/164/EC of 21 December 2007 concerning the technical specification of interoperability relating to 'persons with reduced mobility' in the trans-European conventional and high-speed rail system, OJ L 64 7.03.2008, p.72.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations, OJ L 315 3.12.2007, p.14.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008388/12**
**adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(25 septembrie 2012)*

*Subiect:* VP/HR — Arestarea a patru cetățeni români în Indonezia

În data de 7 septembrie, patru cetățeni români (Titel Maghiar, Ionuț Maghiar, Sergiu Berci și Denis Daniel Ross) au fost arestați în Republica Indonezia, Insula Maluku, sub acuzația de a fi comercializat literatură religioasă creștină (Biblia). Cei patru sunt misionari la The Christian and Missionary Alliance, cu sediul în statul Colorado, SUA. Ulterior, cei patru cetățeni europeni au fost puși în libertate.

Vicepreședintele / Înaltul Reprezentant este rugat să precizeze în ce mod ar putea Serviciul de Acțiune Externă să se implice în prevenirea unor astfel de situații, pe viitor, precum și dacă are cunoștință de cazuri similare în Republica Indonezia sau în alte state.

**Răspuns dat de dna Ashton, Înalt Reprezentant/vicepreședinte, în numele Comisiei**
*(22 noiembrie 2012)*

Doamna Ashton, Înalt Reprezentant/vicepreședinte (ÎR/VP), nu are cunoștință de acest caz specific din Republica Indonezia, însă s-au înregistrat incidente similare în trecut. Cu ocazia dialogului UE-Indonezia privind drepturile omului din mai 2012, Uniunea Europeană a ridicat, în mod special, problema tratamentului la care sunt supuși creștinii. De asemenea, UE a accentuat necesitatea respectării de către Indonezia a obligațiilor internaționale privind drepturile omului și a interpretării, în sens larg, a libertății religioase sau de credință în temeiul dreptului internațional.

De asemenea, delegația Uniunii Europene la Jakarta întreține contacte frecvente cu reprezentanții principalelor ONG - uri care își desfășoară activitatea în domeniul libertății religioase. În acest sens, delegația UE a organizat, în iulie 2010 și octombrie 2011, două seminare importante privind aspectele interconfesionale și pentru luna octombrie 2012, o conferință cu societatea civilă în Jakarta, intitulată „Nediscriminarea: de la principii la practică". Mai mult, delegația UE lucrează pe teme interconfesionale împreună cu Nahdlatul Ulama, cea mai mare organizație musulmană la nivel mondial cu rol esențial în protecția minorităților din Indonezia.

În ceea ce privește situația din alte țări, UE va continua să abordeze problema libertății religioase sau de credință și, prin adoptarea noilor orientări ale UE până la sfârșitul anului 2012, ar trebui să își sporească gradul de vizibilitate în materie.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008388/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Arrest of four Romanian citizens in Indonesia

On 7 September, four Romanian citizens (Titel Maghiar, Ionut Maghiar, Sergiu Berci and Denis Daniel Ross) were arrested on Maluku Island in the Republic of Indonesia, accused of selling Christian religious literature (the Bible). The four are missionaries of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, based in the state of Colorado, USA. The four European citizens were subsequently released.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative specify how the External Action Service could help prevent such situations in the future, and if she knows of similar cases in the Republic of Indonesia or in other countries?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

The HR/VP is not aware of this specific case in the Republic of Indonesia but there have been similar incidents in the past. The EU specifically raised the treatment of Christians at the last EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue, which took place in May 2012. The EU equally stressed the need for Indonesia to fulfil international human rights obligations and the broad interpretation of the freedom of religion or belief under international law.

The EU Delegation in Jakarta is also in frequent contact with representatives of leading NGOs dealing with freedom of religion. In this regard, the EU Delegation has organised two major seminars on interfaith issues, in July 2010 and in October 2011 and a conference with civil society in Jakarta in October 2012 on 'Non-Discrimination: From Principles to Practice'. Moreover, the EU Delegation is working on interfaith issues with Nahdlatul Ulama, the world's largest Muslim organisation which has a pivotal role in protecting minorities in Indonesia.

As regards other countries, the EU will carry on addressing the issue of Freedom of Religion or Belief and should enhance its visibility on the issue by adopting new EU Guidelines before the end of 2012.

*(Dansk udgave)*

**Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008390/12**
**til Kommissionen**
**Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)**
*(25. september 2012)*

*Om:* Inddragelse af ikke-indløst pantmidler — den danske finanslov 2013

I det danske finanslovsforslag for 2013 fremgår det af en tekstanmærkning (nr. 23.23.08) under Miljøministeriet, at det pålægges Dansk Retursystem A/S at indbetale 8,6 mio. EUR (64 mio. DKK) for 2013 og 2014 og 10 mio. EUR (75 mio. DKK) i de følgende år. Pengene skal komme fra ikke indløst pant i Dansk Retursystem A/S. Det er penge, der stammer fra flasker og dåser, der ikke bliver afleveret tilbage i butikkerne. Pantpengene bliver brugt til at forbedre systemet, til miljøinitiativer og informationskampagner, samt almennyttige formål, herunder Hold Danmark Rent.

Dansk Retursystem A/S er et privat selskab, som ejes af bryggerierne, og som har en tildelt eneret. Selskabet drives på non-profit basis og har til opgave at indsamle tomme engangsemballager til genanvendelse. De ikke-indløste pantmidler opstår inden for indsamlingssystemet (pantsystemet) og anvendes i dag inden for indsamlingssystemet. Det er en del af de midler, som den danske regering nu foreslår, at selskabet skal overføre til staten.

1. Den gebyrforhøjelse, som Dansk Retursystem A/S vil være tvunget til at gennemføre, er altså ikke begrundet i en meromkostning ved selve pant- og retursystemet eller selskabets indsamling. Er Kommissionen enig i, at den danske regering foreslår en gebyrmodel, hvor indtægter isoleres fra udgifter, således at de aktører, som pålægges at betale gebyret til staten, reelt betaler mere end de nettoomkostninger, der er forbundet med indsamlingen af brugt emballage?

2. Er dette i overensstemmelse med gældende EU-lovgivning på området?

3. Er det Kommissionens vurdering, at den foreslåede ordning forvrider konkurrencen ved at diskriminere i forhold til importører, der kommer til at skulle kræve højere gebyrer pr. flaske end indenlandske producenter, da lokale bryggerier og tapperier i højere grad kan anvende genbrugsflasker?

**Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik**
*(30. november 2012)*

Direktiv 94/62/EF om emballage og emballageaffald ([1]) indeholder ikke specifikke krav vedrørende det emne, der rejses af det ærede medlem. Det er heller ikke omfattet af Kommissionens meddelelse 2009/C 107/01 om drikkevareemballage, pantordninger og fri bevægelighed for varer ([2]). Dertil kommer, at de foranstaltninger, der gennemføres i Danmark, ikke synes at være i modstrid med de gældende regler om producentens ansvar.

Det specificeres i emballagedirektivet, at indsamlings- og genanvendelsessystemer skal gælde for importerede varer på ikke-diskriminerende betingelser. Det fremgår af de oplysninger, Kommissionen råder over, at der i den danske ordning ikke diskrimineres for så vidt angår afgifter, der skal betales af importører og indenlandske producenter.

([1]) EUT L 365 af 31.12.1994.
([2]) EUT C 107 af 9.5.2009.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008390/12**
**to the Commission**
**Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* The confiscation of non-redeemed deposits — the Danish Finance Act 2013

According to a text annotation (No 23.23.08) from the Danish Ministry of the Environment in the Danish budget proposal for 2013, Dansk Retursystem A/S is to pay EUR 8.6 million (DKK 64 million) for 2013 and 2014 and EUR 10 million (DKK 75 million) in the following years. The money is to come from the non-redeemed deposits of Dansk Retursystem A/S. This is money that comes from bottles and cans not returned to the stores. The deposit money will be used for improving the system, for environmental initiatives and information campaigns, and charitable causes, including Keep Denmark Tidy (*Hold Danmark Rent*).

Dansk Retursystem A/S is a private company owned by the breweries and has been granted a monopoly. The company operates on a non-profit basis and is responsible for collecting empty disposable packaging for recycling. The unredeemed deposit funds accrue within the collection system (the deposit system) and are currently used within the collection system. It is part of the funds the Danish Government now proposes the company transfer to the state.

1. The charge increases Danish Retursystem A/S will be forced to implement are not based on the additional costs of the deposit and return system or the company's collection. Does the Commission agree that the Danish Government proposes a fee model in which revenue is isolated from costs so that the participants required to pay the fee to the state actually pay more than the net costs associated with the collection of used packaging?

2. Is this in accordance with the relevant EU legislation?

3. Does the Commission believe that the proposed scheme distorts competition by discriminating against importers who will have to charge higher fees per bottle than domestic producers, as local breweries and bottling plants are better able to make use of reusable bottles?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(30 November 2012)*

Directive 94/62/EC on Packaging and Packaging Waste ([1]) does not set out specific requirements concerning the issue raised by the Honourable Member; neither is it covered by Commission Communication 2009/C 107/01 on beverage packaging, deposit systems and free movement of goods ([2]). Moreover, the measures being implemented in Denmark do not seem to conflict with the existing rules on producer's responsibility.

The Packaging Directive specifies that the collection and recovery systems need to apply to imported products under non-discriminatory conditions. The information available to the Commission indicates that under the Danish system there is no discrimination as regards the charges to be paid by importers and domestic producers.

([1]) OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.
([2]) OJ C 107, 9.5.2009.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008391/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Lucas Hartong (NI) en Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)**
*(25 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Vervolgvragen absorptiepercentages EU-spoorprojecten

Op 18 september jl. gaf de Raad ons antwoord op eerder gestelde vragen inzake de absorptiepercentages van EU-spoorprojecten (E-006163/2012). De Raad gaf in zijn beantwoording de juistheid van de PVV aan, namelijk dat „… vrijgemaakte kredieten uiteindelijk ten goede kunnen komen aan de nationale begrotingen…" In dat kader de volgende vervolgvragen aan de Commissie:

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke lidstaten tot op heden aanvragen hebben ingediend in het kader van TEN-T-spoorprojecten en om welke bedragen dat gaat?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven wat zij voornemens is te doen aan het einde van het huidige MFK inzake het verrichten van vrijmakingen op de begroting richting de lidstaten? Met andere woorden: onderschrijft de Commissie de conclusie van de Raad in genoemde beantwoording van vraag E-006163/2012?

**Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie**
*(12 november 2012)*

24 lidstaten hebben in het kader van het TEN-T-programma in totaal 384 projecten ingediend voor een totaal bedrag van 12 552,1 miljoen euro. Daarvan werden er 173 geselecteerd voor een totale kostprijs van 4 526,6 miljoen euro. 35 projecten zijn voltooid, 67 zijn nog in uitvoering, vijf projecten werden geschrapt en twee andere zijn stilgelegd. In de TEN-T-subsidiebesluiten voor spoorwegprojecten wordt meestal gewerkt met jaarlijks tranches zodat het niveau van de toegekende middelen zeer nauw aansluit bij de financiële en technische vooruitgang van de projecten. Bedragen die niet worden uitgegeven, kunnen derhalve tijdig worden teruggevorderd en opnieuw in het programma worden geïnvesteerd. De omvang van de vrijgemaakte kredieten op het einde van het MFK zal daardoor zeer bescheiden zijn.

De structuurfondsen en het Cohesiefonds vallen onder een systeem van gedeeld beheer waarbij veel besluiten door de autoriteiten van de lidstaten worden genomen en zij een groot aantal taken voor hun rekening nemen. De Commissie ontvangt geen informatie van de lidstaten over individuele vervoersprojecten waarvan de totale kostprijs minder dan 50 miljoen euro bedraagt. Zij beschikt over gegevens inzake programmatoewijzingen (goedgekeurde ontwerpplannen), maar niet over de verdeling van de uitgaven per thema. Elk jaar wordt de Commissie via de door de nationale administraties van de lidstaten ingediende jaarlijkse uitvoeringsverslagen in kennis gesteld van de door de beheersautoriteiten aan de verschillende sectoren en subsectoren toegewezen bedragen (geen betalingen). In de bijlage is aangegeven welke bedragen uit het Europees Fonds voor Regionale Ontwikkeling (EFRO) en het Cohesiefonds binnen het programma 2007-2013 zijn toegewezen aan trans-Europese spoorwegprojecten.

De Commissie is het eens met het antwoord van de Raad en wijst erop dat de in het kader van het Cohesiebeleid vrijgemaakte kredieten niet terugvloeien naar de EU-begroting, maar definitief in mindering worden gebracht van de toewijzingen van de lidstaten.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008391/12**
**to the Commission**
**Lucas Hartong (NI) and Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Follow-up questions on absorption rates of EU rail projects

On 18 September 2012, the Council replied to our earlier question on the absorption rates of EU rail projects (E-006163/2012). In its reply, the Council vindicated the PVV's position by saying that 'decommitted funds may ultimately benefit the national budgets'. In view of this, please answer the follow-up questions below:

1. Can the Commission indicate what Member States have submitted applications relating to TEN-T rail projects and what sums are involved there?

2. Can the Commission give an indication as to what it is going to do at the end of the current Multiannual Financial Framework regarding budget decommitments in favour of the Member States? In other words, does the Commission agree with the Council's conclusion presented in the aforesaid reply to Question E-006163/2012?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 November 2012)*

As regards the TEN-T Programme, 24 Member States have submitted applications for 384 rail projects, for a total of EUR 12 552.1 million, out of which 173 were selected, amounting to EUR 4 526.6 million; 35 projects have been completed, 67 are still ongoing, five projects have been cancelled and two others discontinued. Most of the TEN-T funding Decisions adopted for rail projects foresee annual instalments such that the level of commitment is following very closely the financial and technical progress achieved by the projects. Amounts which will not be spent can therefore timely be recovered and reinjected in the Programme. The level of decommitted funds at the end of the MFF will therefore be minimal.

As regards Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund they are operating under shared management system whereby many decisions are taken and tasks executed by the Member State's authorities. The Commission does not receive information from Member States for individual transport projects whose total cost is below EUR 50 million. While thematic data on programme allocations (agreed initial plans) is available, the Commission does not have data on spending thematically. The Commission is informed by Member States once a year, via the Annual Implementation Reports sent by national administrations, about the amounts selected (not paid) by the managing authorities by sector and subsector. As regards allocations for TEN-T rail in the programmes approved for 2007-2013, the amounts of aid from ERDF and Cohesion Fund foreseen are indicated in the annex.

The Commission agrees with the Council reply and notes that decommitments under cohesion policy do not see funds returned to the EU budget, but instead see funds deducted permanently from Member State allocations.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008392/12**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(25 septembrie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Declarația din 12 septembrie 2012 a Președintelui Barroso în Parlamentul European

În timpul dezbaterii privind Situația Uniunii (miercuri, 12 septembrie 2012, la Strasbourg), Președintele Barroso a făcut următoarea afirmație, adresându-se lui Nigel Farage, copreședinte al Grupului Europa Libertății și Democrației: „Ori de câte ori ați încercat să fiți ales în Marea Britanie, ați eșuat; de aceea ați venit aici. Aceasta arată că poporul britanic știe că este mult mai bine să fiți ținut departe de propriul sistem".

Aceasta este opinia Comisiei, că deputații în Parlamentul European sunt oameni politici respinși de propriul popor? Președintele Barroso are intenția să prezinte scuze pentru aceste remarci?

**Răspuns dat de dl Barroso în numele Comisiei**
*(6 noiembrie 2012)*

Distinsul membru face referire la o observație adresată exclusiv domnului Farage. Această declarație, ca oricare alta, ar trebui să fie considerată în contextul în care a fost făcută, dat fiind că scoaterea ei din context ar putea duce la interpretări eronate, ceea ce s-a întâmplat în cazul de față.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008392/12**
**to the Commission**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* President Barroso's statement in the European Parliament on 12 September 2012

During the debate on the State of the Union (Wednesday, 12 September 2012 in Strasbourg), President Barroso made the following statement, as a remark addressed to Nigel Farage, Co-Chair of the Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group: 'Every time you have tried to be elected in Britain you were rejected; that is why you came here. It shows that the British people know that it is much better to keep you away from your own system'.

Is it the Commission's view that the Members of the European Parliament are politicians rejected by their own people? Does President Barroso intend to apologise for his remarks?

**Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 November 2012)*

The Honourable Member refers to a remark addressed solely to Mr Farage. This statement, as any other, should not be taken out of its context, as it can lead to wrong interpretations, which is the case here.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008393/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Iva Zanicchi (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Crisi alimentare in Lesotho

Il Primo Ministro del Lesotho ha dichiarato lo stato di emergenza alimentare. Rispetto alla popolazione totale del paese di 1,8 milioni di persone, infatti, circa 725 519 sono considerate bisognose di ricevere aiuti umanitari.

La crisi alimentare, iniziata tra il 2010 e il 2011, è il risultato di pessime condizioni ambientali, quali piogge tardive e insufficienti e gelate anticipate che hanno provocato scarsi raccolti, distruzione d'infrastrutture, colture e abitazioni. L'Ufficio di statistica del Lesotho ha rilevato che la produzione è diminuita del 77 % rispetto all'anno precedente e che nel 2012/2013 la crisi alimentare colpirà profondamente il paese. Secondo il governo, unendo raccolti interni, importazioni e aiuti alimentari già concessi, mancherebbero ancora almeno 30 mila tonnellate di cereali. Il paese ha chiesto l'aiuto internazionale dopo che la peggiore siccità degli ultimi trent'anni ha distrutto il 30 % del raccolto di mais.

Intanto i prezzi di mais, sorgo, e grano continuano a salire a livelli inaccessibili.

La situazione è critica soprattutto per le fasce più deboli, già vittime di povertà estrema e Aids, sindrome quest'ultima che secondo le stime dell'ONU colpisce il 14 % della popolazione.

Il 30 % della popolazione è costituita da orfani e bambini vulnerabili che basano la propria sopravvivenza su aiuti internazionali o su progetti di assistenza governativi. Risultano di conseguenza fondamentali un'attenzione speciale e un supporto finanziario per garantire le necessità alimentari di coloro che non possono provvedere al proprio sostentamento.

Come intende agire il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per aiutare il governo del Lesotho a evitare questa grave crisi alimentare e garantire alla popolazione l'accesso al cibo, quale diritto fondamentale?

**Risposta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione**
*(9 novembre 2012)*

La Commissione segue con la massima attenzione la situazione umanitaria in Lesotho ed è pienamente consapevole dell'aggravarsi dei problemi di sicurezza alimentare nel paese.

La missione di esperti che la Commissione ha inviato in Lesotho nell'agosto 2012 per raccogliere dati e informazioni ha elaborato una relazione da cui risulta chiaramente che, dopo due stagioni agricole disastrose e visto che l'insicurezza alimentare colpisce il 40 % degli abitanti, occorre una risposta della comunità internazionale sotto forma di assistenza umanitaria e di cooperazione allo sviluppo.

All'inizio del 2012 l'UE ha stanziato 1,5 milioni di euro, provenienti dalla riserve del 10° Fondo europeo di sviluppo, per soccorrere le persone più vulnerabili colpite dalle inondazioni del 2011. L'assistenza umanitaria è stata fornita tramite il PAM ([1]) e la FAO ([2]), che attuano progetti di assistenza alimentare nella valle del Senqu.

La Commissione sta predisponendo un intervento per far fronte all'insicurezza alimentare in alcuni paesi dell'Africa meridionale (Angola, Lesotho, Malawi e Zimbabwe), che potrebbe comportare lo stanziamento di fondi supplementari a favore del Lesotho per rafforzare gli interventi di emergenza attuati con partner come il PAM e la FAO e soddisfare il fabbisogno più urgente delle persone vulnerabili.

Nell'allegato, che viene trasmesso direttamente all'onorevole parlamentare e al segretariato del Parlamento, figurano informazioni più dettagliate sull'aspetto «sviluppo».

([1]) PAM = Programma alimentare mondiale delle Nazioni Unite.
([2]) FAO = Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite per l'alimentazione e l'agricoltura.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008393/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Iva Zanicchi (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Food crisis in Lesotho

The Prime Minister of Lesotho has declared a food emergency. Of the country's total population of 1.8 million people, some 725 519 are considered to be in need of humanitarian aid.

The food crisis, which started between 2010 and 2011, is the result of terrible environmental conditions, such as late and insufficient rainfall and early frosts which have caused poor harvests, and destruction of infrastructure, crops and homes. The Statistical Office of Lesotho has noted that production has fallen by 77 % compared with the previous year and that in 2012/2013 the food crisis will hit the country hard. According to the government, even combining domestic crops, imports and the food aid that has already been granted, there would still be a shortfall of at least 30 000 tons of cereals. The country asked for international help after the worst drought in the last 30 years destroyed 30 % of the corn crop.

Meanwhile the prices of corn, millet and wheat continue to rise to unaffordable levels.

The situation is critical above all for the weakest groups in society who already suffer from extreme poverty and AIDS, with the latter affecting 14 % of the population according to UN estimates.

30 % of the population consists of orphans and vulnerable children whose survival depends on international aid or on government assistance projects. Consequently, special attention and financial support are essential to guarantee the food needs of those who cannot provide for themselves.

What will the Vice-President/High Representative do to help the Government of Lesotho overcome this serious food crisis and guarantee the population access to food as a fundamental right?

**Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

The Commission is following very carefully the humanitarian situation in Lesotho and it is fully aware of the deteriorating food security situation in the country.

In August 2012 experts from the Commission carried out a mission in Lesotho to collect data and information. This report made clear that, after two consecutive years of poor agricultural seasons and with 40% of the population of the country food insecure, a response of the international community is required, both in terms of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation.

The EU has already allocated, at the beginning of 2012, an amount of EUR 1.5 million from the reserves of the 10th European Development Fund to assist the most vulnerable population affected by the floods in 2011. The humanitarian assistance has been channelled via WFP ([1]) and FAO ([2]) who are implementing food assistance projects in the Senqu valley.

An intervention to cope with the food security situation affecting few Southern African countries (Angola, Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe) is currently being identified by the Commission. This might result in additional funds being allocated to Lesotho for reinforcing the emergency interventions with partners such as WFP and FAO and addressing the most urgent needs of the vulnerable people.

The Honourable Member can find further details concerning the Development aspect in the annex, which is sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

([1]) WFP = United Nations World Food Programme.
([2]) FAO = Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008394/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Mario Mauro (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Interpretazione normativa sull'allevamento in quanto attività agricola ai fini della produzione di lana

La lana, come prodotto agricolo definita dal regolamento (CE) 510/2006 del Consiglio, è un importante comparto nel mercato italiano.

A causa di alcuni problemi subiti da aziende agricole italiane è stata presentata un'interrogazione scritta su un possibile contrasto di norme tra i due regolamenti (CE) 51/2006 e 1069/2009 sulla definizione della lana.

Il regolamento (CE) 510/2006 del Consiglio non fornisce una definizione di lana, ma nell'allegato II, la lana è classificata come prodotto agricolo, essendo stata inclusa nell'elenco dei prodotti agricoli che possono essere tutelati da un marchio DOP o IGP. Il regolamento (CE) 1069/2009 prevede invece norme sanitarie relative ai sottoprodotti di origine animale e ai prodotti derivati non destinati al consumo umano, che considera la lana come prodotto di scarto e, solo dopo un trattamento igienizzante, prodotto tecnico.

Poiché tali regolamenti hanno ambiti di applicazione diversi, come la Commissione ha indicato nella sua risposta del 21.8.2012, essi non confliggono tra loro.

Alla luce di questi elementi, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se ritiene che l'allevamento ai fini della produzione di lana sia attività agricola;

2. se ritiene che tale allevamento possa fruire di fondi europei stanziati per i prodotti agricoli;

3. dato che la lana è un prodotto agricolo, se reputa che anche tale prodotto possa fruire dei fondi europei stanziati per i prodotti agricoli?

**Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione**
*(26 novembre 2012)*

La questione di stabilire se l'allevamento ai fini della produzione di lana sia un'attività agricola deve essere affrontata nel quadro del regime di sostegno pertinente. Con riguardo ai pagamenti diretti di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009 del Consiglio ([1]), l'articolo 2, lettera c), di tale regolamento definisce come attività agricola «la produzione, l'allevamento o la coltivazione di prodotti agricoli, comprese la raccolta, la mungitura, l'allevamento e la custodia degli animali per fini agricoli, nonché il mantenimento della terra in buone condizioni agronomiche e ambientali ai sensi dell'articolo 6». L'allevamento in quanto tale rientra quindi nel campo di applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009 del Consiglio.

L'allevamento di ovini può beneficiare dei premi per pecora e per capra di cui al titolo IV, capitolo 1, sezione 10, del regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009 del Consiglio negli Stati membri che hanno optato per il mantenimento di tali pagamenti.

Nessuno Stato membro ha deciso di assegnare fondi europei all'allevamento finalizzato alla produzione di lana nel quadro delle misure di sostegno specifico a norma del titolo III, capitolo 5, del regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009 del Consiglio.

([1]) GU L 30 del 31.1.2009, pag. 16.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008394/12**
**to the Commission**
**Mario Mauro (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Regulatory interpretation on stock-breeding as an agricultural activity for the purposes of wool production

Wool, as an agricultural product defined by Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006, is an important segment on the Italian market.

Owing to some problems experienced by Italian agricultural undertakings, a written question has been submitted on a possible clash between two regulations, (EC) No 51/2006 and 1069/2009, on the definition of wool.

Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 does not provide a definition of wool, but in Annex II, wool is classified as an agricultural product, since it has been included in the list of agricultural products that can be protected by a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) or Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) marking. Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009, on the other hand, includes healthcare provisions relating to animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption; it considers wool as a waste product and, only after sanitising treatment, as a processed product.

Since these regulations have different scopes, as the Commission stated in its reply of 21 August 2012, they do not conflict.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it believes that stock-breeding for the purposes of wool production is an agricultural activity?

2. Whether such stock-breeding can benefit from European funds allocated for agricultural products?

3. Given that wool is an agricultural product, whether it considers that such a product can also benefit from European funds allocated for agricultural products?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

The question whether stock breeding for the purposes of wool production is an agricultural activity is to be answered in the context of the relevant support scheme. As far as direct payments under Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([1]) are concerned, Article 2(c) of that regulation defines an agricultural activity as 'the production, rearing or growing of agricultural products including harvesting, milking, breeding animals and keeping animals for farming purposes, or maintaining the land in good agricultural and environmental condition as established in Article 6;'. Stock-breeding as such therefore falls under the scope of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.

Stock-breeding of sheep can benefit from ewe and goat premiums based on Title IV, Chapter 1, Section 10 of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 in the Member States having opted for maintaining such payments.

No Member State has decided to allocate European funds to stock breeding for the purposes of wool production in the framework of the specific support measures based on Title 3, Chapter 5 of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.

([1]) OJ L 30 of 31.1.2009, p. 16.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008395/12**
**an den Rat**
**Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Kontrollmechanismen bei der Klassifizierung von Dokumenten

1. Welche Kontrollmechanismen gibt es, um festzustellen, dass klassifizierte Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

2. Wie oft wurde in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011 festgestellt, dass klassifizierte Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

3. Welche Konsequenzen sind für den Urheber vorgesehen, wenn Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

**Antwort**
*(10. Dezember 2012)*

Die Einstufung von Informationen als EU-Verschlusssachen beinhaltet eine Einschätzung und eine Entscheidung des Herausgebers, dass die Weitergabe dieser Informationen an unbefugte Personen die Interessen der Europäischen Union oder eines bzw. mehrerer Mitgliedstaaten in einem gewissen Maße beeinträchtigen würde. Im Generalsekretariat des Rates dürfen ausschließlich befugte Personen unter Aufsicht ihrer Dienstvorgesetzten Informationen als EU-Verschlusssachen erstellen und einstufen.

Um Informationen als EU-Verschlusssachen mit einem bestimmten Geheimhaltungsgrad einzustufen, müssen die betreffenden Personen die Leitlinien befolgen, die in den Sicherheitsvorschriften des Rates ([1]) und dem vom Rat gebilligten „Konzept für die Erstellung von EU-Verschlusssachen" (Ratsdokument 10872/11) enthalten sind. Es ist Politik des Rates, dass Informationen in den Geheimhaltungsgrad eingestuft werden sollten, der dem Ausmaß des Schadens entspricht, den ihre unbefugte Weitergabe verursachen könnte: weder in einen zu hohen noch in einen zu niedrigen Geheimhaltungsgrad. Der Rat hat vor den Gefahren einer zu hohen Einstufung (da sie einen unnötigen Aufwand bei der Handhabung der Informationen bewirkt und unnötige Kosten verursacht) und einer zu niedrigen Einstufung (da sie die Informationen einem erhöhten Risiko der Weitergabe an unbefugte Personen aussetzt) gewarnt.

In den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011 wurden dem Rat keine konkreten Fälle einer unrichtigen Klassifizierung zur Kenntnis gebracht. Der Geheimhaltungsgrad der Informationen kann jedoch mit der Zeit geändert werden. Denn die Einstufung als Verschlusssache ist nur so lange beizubehalten, wie die Informationen vor einer unbefugten Weitergabe geschützt werden müssen. Zum Zeitpunkt der Erstellung eines als Verschlusssache eingestuften Dokuments kann der Herausgeber mitteilen, dass dessen Geheimhaltungsgrad zu einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt oder im Anschluss an ein bestimmtes Ereignis herabgestuft oder aufgehoben werden kann. Anderenfalls werden als Verschlusssache eingestufte Dokumente regelmäßig überprüft, um festzustellen, ob ihr Geheimhaltungsgrad herabgestuft oder aufgehoben werden kann. Eine solche Überprüfung kann auch durch einen konkreten Antrag auf Dokumentenzugang eingeleitet werden, der von einer Einzelperson nach der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1049/2001 ([2]), einem anderen EU-Organ oder einem Dritten gestellt wird. Der Rat hat die „Leitlinien für eine Herabstufung oder Freigabe von Ratsdokumenten" (Ratsdokument 14845/11) gebilligt.

([1]) Beschluss 2011/292/EU des Rates vom 31. März 2011 (ABl. L 141 vom 27.5.2011, S. 17).
([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1049/2001 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 30. Mai 2001 über den Zugang der Öffentlichkeit zu Dokumenten des Europäischen Parlaments, des Rates und der Kommission (ABl. L 145 vom 31.5.2001, S. 43).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008395/12**
**to the Council**
**Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Control mechanisms for the classification of documents

1. What control mechanisms exist for determining that classified documents have been incorrectly classified?

2. How often was it found in 2009, 2010 and 2011 that classified documents had been incorrectly classified?

3. What are the consequences for the person responsible if documents have been incorrectly classified?

**Reply**
*(10 December 2012)*

Classifying information as EU classified information involves an assessment and a decision by the originator that the disclosure of such information to unauthorised persons would cause a degree of prejudice to the interests of the European Union or of one or more of the Member States. Within the General Secretariat of the Council, only authorised persons are entitled to create and classify information as EU classified information, under the authority of their hierarchical superiors.

In order to classify information at a given level, those persons must follow the guidelines contained in the Council's security rules ([1]) and in the 'Policy on creating EU classified information' approved by the Council (Council document 10872/11). It is Council policy that information should be classified at the level which corresponds to the degree of prejudice its unauthorised disclosure could cause: not higher, not lower. The Council has warned against the dangers of over-classification (since it puts an unnecessary burden on the handling of the information and entails unnecessary costs) and of under-classification (since it exposes the information to an increased risk of disclosure to unauthorised persons).

No specific cases of 'incorrect' classification have been drawn to the attention of the Council in 2009, 2010 or 2011. However, the level of classification of information may be subject to change over time. Indeed, classification is to be maintained only as long as the information requires protection against unauthorised disclosure. At the time of creation of a classified document, the originator may indicate that the document may be downgraded or declassified at a certain date or following a specific event. Otherwise, classified documents are kept under periodic review in order to determine whether they may be downgraded or declassified. Such review may also result from a specific request for access by a member of the public under Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 ([2]), by another EU institution or by a third party. The Council has approved 'Guidelines on downgrading and declassifying Council documents' (Council document 14845/11).

([1]) Council Decision 2011/292/EU of 31 March 2011, OJ L 141, 27.5.2011, p. 17.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008396/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Kontrollmechanismen bei der Klassifizierung von Dokumenten

1. Welche Kontrollmechanismen gibt es, um festzustellen, dass klassifizierte Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

2. Wie oft wurde in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011 festgestellt, dass klassifizierte Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

3. Welche Konsequenzen sind für den Urheber vorgesehen, wenn Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

**Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission**
*(22. November 2012)*

Bei der Festlegung des Geheimhaltungsgrads einer von der Kommission stammenden EU-Verschlusssache wird das Ausmaß des Schadens geprüft, den die unbefugte Weitergabe der betreffenden Informationen den Interessen der EU oder der Mitgliedstaaten zufügen könnte.

Die Kriterien zur Festlegung des Geheimhaltungsgrads finden sich in den Sicherheitsvorschriften im Anhang zum Beschluss der Kommission 2001/844/EG, EGKS, Euratom vom 29. November 2001 zur Änderung ihrer Geschäftsordnung ([1]). Sie entsprechen in vollem Umfang den EU-Standards sowie den internationalen Standards.

Schon der Wortlaut (*„den wesentlichen Interessen […] äußerst schweren Schaden zufügen“*, *„den wesentlichen Interessen […] schweren Schaden zufügen“*, *„den wesentlichen Interessen […] Schaden zufügen“*, *„für die wesentlichen Interessen […] nachteilig“*) verdeutlicht, dass der Geheimhaltungsgrad auf der Grundlage von Einzelbewertungen durch den Urheber oder Verfasser in Abstimmung mit der Hierarchie festgelegt wird. Es gibt also keine *„zu Unrecht“* als vertraulich eingestuften Dokumente, weshalb die Fragen 2 und 3 nicht beantwortet werden können.

Im Einklang mit den Sicherheitsvorschriften und der Rahmenvereinbarung über die Beziehungen zwischen dem Europäischen Parlament und der Europäischen Kommission ([2]) stellt die Kommission die Anwendung geeigneter Geheimhaltungsgrade sicher, u. a. durch Unterrichtung der Mitarbeiter über die Sicherheitsvorschriften zum Schutz von EU-Verschlusssachen und durch die jeweilige Neubewertung des Geheimhaltungsgrads, wenn aufgrund einer veränderten Sachlage die Herabstufung oder Aufhebung des Geheimhaltungsgrads einer bestimmten Verschlusssache angezeigt ist.

Bei Verschlusssachen, die nicht von der Kommission stammen, müssen die Kommissionsdienststellen den ursprünglichen Geheimhaltungsgrad beachten, da nur der Urheber zur Festlegung des Geheimhaltungsgrads befugt ist.

([1]) ABl. L 317 vom 1.12.2001.
([2]) ABl. L 304 vom 20.11.2010.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008396/12**
**to the Commission**
**Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Control mechanisms for the classification of documents

1. What control mechanisms exist for determining that classified documents have been incorrectly classified?

2. How often was it found in 2009, 2010 and 2011 that classified documents had been incorrectly classified?

3. What are the consequences for the person responsible if documents have been incorrectly classified?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

Decisions regarding the classification levels of European Union Classified Information (EUCI) originating in the Commission are based on an assessment of the prejudice the unauthorised disclosure of such information could cause to the interests of the EU or the Member States.

The criteria for determining the classification level are set out in the Commission's security provisions annexed to Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001 amending its internal Rules of Procedure ([1]).They fully comply with EU and international standards.

Taking into account their wording (*'cause exceptionally grave prejudice to the essential interests', 'seriously harm the essential interests', 'harm the essential interests', 'disadvantageous to the interests'), it is obvious that decisions regarding the classification levels are a matter of individual case-by-case assessments, made by the author or originator under the authority of his hierarchy. In that sense, there is no incorrect* way to classify a document, and hence questions 2 & 3 must remain unanswered.

In accordance with its security provisions and the framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission ([2]), the Commission ensures that it applies appropriate levels of classification, a.o.t. by providing briefings to staff on the security rules for protecting EUCI and by reassessing the classification levels each time new developments occur which call for a downgrading or declassifying of a particular piece of EUCI.

For classified information not originating in the Commission, the Commission services have to respect the original classification, as only the originator is entitled to determine the level of classification.

([1]) OJ L 317 1.12.2001.
([2]) OJ L 304, 20.11.2010.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008397/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* VP/HR — Kontrollmechanismen bei der Klassifizierung von Dokumenten

1. Welche Kontrollmechanismen gibt es, um festzustellen, dass klassifizierte Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

2. Wie oft wurde in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011 festgestellt, dass klassifizierte Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

3. Welche Konsequenzen sind für den Urheber vorgesehen, wenn Dokumente zu Unrecht klassifiziert wurden?

**Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission**
*(20. November 2012)*

Zu Frage 1: Die Einstufung von Informationen in Geheimhaltungsgrade erfolgt durch deren Urheber anhand von Standardkriterien gemäß dem Beschluss des Rates vom 31. März 2011 über die Sicherheitsvorschriften für den Schutz von EU-Verschlusssachen (2011/292/EU), insbesondere nach den Artikeln 2 und 3.

Der Beschluss des Rates wird vom EAD gemäß dem Beschluss der Hohen Vertreterin der Europäischen Union für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik vom 15. Juni 2011 über die Sicherheitsvorschriften für den Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst (2011/C 304/05) angewandt.

Die Kontrolle wird durch den Vorgesetzten des Urhebers ausgeübt, dessen Genehmigung bei sämtlicher amtlicher Korrespondenz einzuholen ist.

Darüber hinaus werden von der Dienststelle des Urhebers regelmäßig Neubewertungen vorgenommen, um festzustellen, ob die Einstufung als Verschlusssache bzw. der Geheimhaltungsgrad beizubehalten ist.

Zu Frage 2: Der EAD verfügt über keine Aufzeichnungen zu Dokumenten, die seit Januar 2011, d. h. seit der Einrichtung des EAD, irrtümlich als Verschlusssache eingestuft wurden.

Zu Frage 3: Je nach Schwere des Irrtums können gegen den verantwortlichen Beamten folgende Schritte eingeleitet werden:

— Disziplinarmaßnahmen gemäß der Verordnung Nr. 31 (EWG) 11 (EAG) über das Statut der Beamten und die Beschäftigungsbedingungen für die sonstigen Bediensteten der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft und der Europäischen Atomgemeinschaft, Artikel 51, Artikel 86 und Anhang IX;

— gegebenenfalls rechtliche Schritte nach demselben Beschluss des Rates, wenn das Verhalten des Beamten EU-VS beeinträchtigt;

— Konsequenzen in Bezug auf die Sicherheitsüberprüfung des Beamten nach dem obengenannten Beschluss des Rates (2011/292/EU).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008397/12**
**to the Commission**
**Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Control mechanisms for the classification of documents

1. What control mechanisms exist for determining that classified documents have been incorrectly classified?

2. How often was it found in 2009, 2010 and 2011 that classified documents had been incorrectly classified?

3. What are the consequences for the person responsible if documents have been incorrectly classified?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

1. The classification level of information is determined by the originator who has to value the information against the standard criteria, as set out in the Council Decision of 31 March 2011 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (EUCI) (2011/292/EU), in particular Articles 2 and 3.

This decision is applied by the EEAS, pursuant to the decision of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 15 June 2011 on the security rules for the European Action Service (2011/C 304/05).

The control is exercised by the hierarchy of the originator, who needs to approve all official correspondence.

Furthermore, regular reassessments are made by the originating service, to determine whether or not the validity or the level of the classification marking is to be maintained.

2. The EEAS has no records of documents incorrectly classified since January 2011, when the EEAS was created.

3. Depending on the gravity of the action, an official may be subject to:

— disciplinary measures, which are set out in the Regulation No 31 (EEC), 11 (EAEC), laying down the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community, Articles 51, 86 and Annex IX;

— legal action, as appropriate, according to the same Council Decision, if his conduct compromises EUCI;

— consequences concerning his Personnel Security Clearance, pursuant to the aforementioned Council Decision (2011/292/EU).

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008398/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Iva Zanicchi (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Diffusione dell'epidemia di Ebola nel nord-est della Repubblica democratica del Congo

Secondo un nuovo bilancio diffuso dall'Oms, l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità, l'epidemia di Ebola che ha colpito negli ultimi mesi il nord-est della Repubblica democratica del Congo, ha provocato 32 morti. Rispetto a questi, un'indagine condotta da MSF parla di 17 casi confermati in laboratorio.

La situazione è allarmante, nonostante MSF sottolinei che in questo momento i casi attivi di Ebola siano solo sei. Il focolaio è scoppiato nelle città di Isiro e Viadana, nelle province del nord-est.

In collaborazione con il Ministero della salute congolese e altre organizzazioni, MSF si sta prendendo cura dei pazienti cercando di contenere l'epidemia. Sono state infatti attuate misure preventive e ricoveri nei centri di trattamento per evitare il diffondersi del virus.

La squadra di emergenza di MSF ha promosso la formazione del personale del Ministero della salute e sta dando assistenza psicosociale ai pazienti e alle famiglie.

Di fondamentale importanza in tale situazione divengono le abitudini comportamentali della comunità locali; misure igieniche valide possono, infatti, prevenire il contagio.

La febbre emorragica dell'Ebola è potenzialmente mortale e comprende una gamma di sintomi quali febbre, vomito, diarrea, dolore o malessere generalizzato e a volte emorragia interna ed esterna. Il tasso di mortalità è estremamente alto, variabile dal 50 % all'89 % secondo il ceppo virale, e un trattamento tramite vaccino non è tuttora disponibile.

Quali azioni intende dunque intraprendere la Commissione al fine di supportare le organizzazioni internazionali e il governo locale nel contenimento della diffusione del virus dell'Ebola nel nord-est della Repubblica democratica del Congo?

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008480/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(26 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Virus Ebola nella Repubblica democratica del Congo

Il 14 settembre 2012, il quotidiano del Regno Unito *The Times* ha riferito che il virus mortale Ebola si sta diffondendo fuori controllo nella Repubblica democratica del Congo (RDC). Almeno 31 persone ne sono morte e l'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità ha avvertito che il virus potrebbe diffondersi in molte città. La malattia è incurabile e un certo numero di organizzazioni sanitarie internazionali asseriscono che il bilancio delle vittime è raddoppiato in una settimana. Molte delle vittime sono operatori umanitari.

L'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità e Medecin Sans Frontières sono al lavoro per individuare le zone più colpite, e creare aree dove effettuare i test e informare la popolazione su come evitare di contrarre la malattia. Il 18 settembre 2012, l'OMS ha riferito che casi della malattia sono emersi nei distretti sanitari di Isiro e Viadana nella zona di Haut Uele nella provincia orientale.

Un portavoce dell'OMS a Kinshasa ha dichiarato che «L'epidemia non è sotto controllo. Al contrario, la situazione è molto, molto grave». Ha aggiunto: «Se non si interviene ora, la malattia raggiungerà altri luoghi, e anche le città più grandi saranno minacciate».

Ci sono stati casi di Ebola anche in Uganda, dove sedici persone sono morte di questa malattia. La RDC è poco attrezzata per affrontare l'epidemia. Al momento, la malattia non ha colpito Kinshasa, che ha nove milioni di abitanti, ma se anche una sola persona infetta entra nella capitale, ciò permetterà la diffusione della malattia. Il tasso di mortalità per le vittime di Ebola è compreso tra il 25 e il 90 %.

1. Quali passi sta effettuando la Commissione per valutare l'entità dell'epidemia di Ebola nella Repubblica democratica del Congo?

2. La Commissione ha offerto di sostenere gli sforzi per combattere la diffusione della malattia?

3. Quale aiuto pratico è disposta a offrire?

**Risposta congiunta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione**
*(14 novembre 2012)*

Secondo l'ultima relazione dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità dell'8 ottobre scorso, nel nord-est della RDC sono stati registrati 49 casi di febbre emorragica Ebola, di cui 31 casi di laboratorio confermati e 18 considerati probabili. I casi letali sono stati 24, di cui 10 confermati e 14 considerati probabili.

È stata costituita una task force nazionale per individuare tutte le possibili catene di trasmissione e garantire l'adozione di misure appropriate per interrompere la trasmissione e arginare l'epidemia. La task force è composta dal ministero della Sanità congolese e da diversi organismi internazionali quali Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), l'OMS e lo US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Nel 2012 la Commissione europea ha versato 2 milioni di euro a Médecins Sans Frontières per sostenere il Pool d'Urgence — Congo (PUC).

Il PUC partecipa alle operazioni in corso fornendo ai pazienti e ai loro familiari cure adeguate e sostegno psicosociale. Il PUC ha inoltre istituito un programma di promozione della salute volto a sensibilizzare la popolazione alle modalità di trasmissione della malattia.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008398/12**
**to the Commission**
**Iva Zanicchi (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Spread of the Ebola epidemic in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo

According to a new report issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Ebola epidemic, which has recently struck the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, has caused 32 deaths. Against this, a survey conducted by *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) talks of 17 cases confirmed in the lab.

The situation is alarming, despite MSF stressing that currently there are only six active cases of Ebola. The epidemic broke out in the cities of Isiro and Viadana in the north-eastern provinces.

In collaboration with the Congolese Ministry of Health and other organisations, MSF is taking care of the patients and seeking to contain the epidemic. Preventative measures have been implemented as has hospitalisation in treatment centres to avoid the virus spreading.

The MSF emergency team has promoted the training of Ministry of Health staff and is providing psychosocial support to patients and their families.

In such a situation, the habits of local communities are of fundamental importance; valid hygiene measures can actually prevent the contagion.

Ebola's haemorrhagic fever is potentially fatal and includes a range of symptoms such as fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, pain or general discomfort and sometimes internal and external haemorrhaging. The mortality rate is extremely high, varying from 50 % to 89 % depending on the viral strain, and vaccine treatment is still not available.

What will the Commission do, therefore, to support international organisations and the local government in containing the spread of the Ebola virus in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo?

**Question for written answer E-008480/12**
**to the Commission**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(26 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Ebola virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 14 September 2012, the UK's The Times newspaper reported that the fatal Ebola virus is spreading out of control in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). At least 31 people have been killed and the World Health Organisation has warned that the virus could spread to many towns. The disease is incurable and a number of international health organisations say that the death toll doubled within one week. Many of the victims are aid workers.

The World Health Organisation and *Médecins Sans Frontières* are trying to identify the most affected areas, and are setting up testing areas and informing people on how to avoid contracting the disease. On 18 September 2012, the WHO reported that cases of the disease have emerged in the health zones of Isiro and Viadana in the Haut-Uele district in Province Orientale.

One spokesman for the WHO in Kinshasa said: 'The epidemic is not under control. On the contrary, the situation is very, very serious'. He added: 'If nothing is done now, the disease will reach other places, and even major towns will be threatened'.

There have also been cases of Ebola in Uganda, where 16 people have died from the disease. The DRC is poorly equipped to deal with the outbreak. At the moment, the disease has not affected Kinshasa, which has a population of nine million, but if one infected person walks into the capital, this will allow the disease to spread. The death rate for victims of Ebola ranges from 25 % to 90 %.

1. What steps is the Commission taking in order to assess the extent of the Ebola outbreak in the DRC?

2. Has the Commission offered to support efforts to combat the spread of the disease?

3. What practical aid is it prepared to offer?

**Joint answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 November 2012)*

According to the latest World Health Organisation (WHO) report of October 8th, 49 cases of Ebola haemorrhagic fever have been registered in North-eastern DRC, with 31 laboratory cases confirmed and 18 considered to be probable. There have been 24 fatal cases, 10 of which were confirmed and 14 considered probable.

A National Task Force has been set up to identify all possible chains of transmission and ensure that appropriate measures are taken to interrupt transmission and stop the outbreak. This Task Force is composed of the Congolese Ministry of Health and a number of international actors, including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the WHO, and the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In 2012, the European Commission allocated 2 million euros in financial support to Médecins Sans Frontières for the Pool d'Urgence — Congo (PUC).

PUC participates in the ongoing operations by providing patients and their relatives with adequate care and psychosocial support. In addition, it has developed a health promotion programme aimed at raising awareness among the community about the modes of transmission of the disease.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008401/12**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)**
*(25 septembrie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Mecanismul Conectarea Europei — Lista proiectelor identificate în prealabil din rețeaua primară

Comisia Europeană a prezentat prin Propunerea de Regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului de instituire a mecanismului Conectarea Europei, COM(2011)0665 final, intenția de a crea un nou instrument integrat pentru investițiile în priorități de infrastructură din domeniul transporturilor, al energiei și al telecomunicațiilor: mecanismul Conectarea Europei.

În sectorul transporturilor s-a identificat o „rețea primară" la nivelul întregii Europe, utilizând o metodologie de planificare paneuropeană. Această rețea primară cu coridoare prin care pot fi transportate mărfurile și pasagerii, cu eficiență ridicată și emisii scăzute, utilizează pe scară largă infrastructura existentă.

Din păcate „rețeaua primară" nu cuprinde toate rutele de transport cu importanță deosebită pentru Uniunea Europeană, un exemplu fiind Coridorul Pan-European IX Helsinki – Vyborg – St. Petersburg – Pskov – Gomel – Kiev – Ljubashevka – Chișinău – București – Dimitrovgrad – Alexandroupolis. Deși o parte a acestui coridor străbate state non-membre ale UE, totuși porțiunea situată între Alexandroupolis și punctul de trecere al frontierei dintre România și Republica Moldova putea fi inclusă intr-unul din cele 10 coridoare ale „rețelei primare", acesta străbătând 3 state membre și făcând legătura cu piețe externe deosebit de importante pentru UE.

1. Având în vedere că rețeaua primară a fost identificată în urma unor studii complexe, poate Comisia să ne informeze de ce acest coridor nu a fost inclus în mecanismul Conectarea Europei?

2. În condițiile în care, în urma negocierilor, Anexa 1 a acestui regulament va rămâne nemodificată, care este posibilitatea ca pentru regulamentul aferent următoarei perioade de programare rețeaua primară să fie extinsă?

**Răspuns dat de domnul Kallas în numele Comisiei**

*(9 noiembrie 2012)*

Metodologia de planificare a TEN-T menționată în întrebare cuprinde două etape:

— identificarea nodurilor principale de importanță europeană, care sunt orașele mari,porturile maritime importante și o selecție de puncte de trecere a frontierei către țărileînvecinate care nu sunt membre ale UE;

— conexiunile dintre aceste noduri utilizându-se toate modurile de transport, în măsura încare acestea există sau se pot realiza până în 2030.

Pe baza acestei metodologii, următoarele secțiuni s-au calificat pentru rețeaua primară:

— Helsinki – frontiera FI-RU (Vaalimaa/Vainikkala),

— frontiera MD/RO (Ungheni) – București – Dimitrovgrad – frontiera BG-TR (Svilengrad),

— secțiunea Alexandroupolis – frontiera GR-TR (Kipi/Pythion).

Fostul coridor paneuropean IX, secțiunea rutieră dintre Svilengrad – Kipi și secțiunea feroviară între Svilengrad și Pythion, reprezintă numai o parte din rețeaua globală, astfel încât nu poate face parte dintr-un coridor al rețelei primare. Coridoarele rețelei primare trebuie să cuprindă în mod exclusiv secțiuni ale rețelei primare. Din acest motiv, nu este posibil să se stabilească un coridor al rețelei primare între Ungheni și Alexandroupolis.

De asemenea, deoarece coridoarele rețelei primare au fost create ca un instrument pentru a se asigura buna realizare a acestei rețele, în special a secțiunilor cu puncte de trecere a frontierei ale acestora, un astfel de coridor nu ar avea sens într-o relație în care nu există proiecte relevante pentru punctele de trecere a frontierei.

Având în vedere necesitatea unei stabilități a planificării pe termen lung pentru investițiile în infrastructură, propunerea de regulament TEN-T ([1]) (articolul 57) prevede o revizuire a implementării rețelei primare până la 31 decembrie 2023 cel târziu, cu ocazia căreia s-ar putea propune modificări pentru perioada de planificare 2028-2034.

([1]) COM(2011)0650.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008401/12**
**to the Commission**
**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Connecting Europe Facility — List of pre-identified projects from the core network

The European Commission has presented, via the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, COM(2011) 0665 final, its intention to create a new integrated instrument for priority infrastructure investments in the transport, energy and telecommunications sectors: the Connecting Europe Facility.

A 'core network' has been identified in the Europe-wide transport sector, using a pan-European planning methodology. This core network with corridors that can carry freight and passenger traffic with high efficiency and low emissions largely uses existing infrastructure.

Unfortunately the 'core network' does not include all the critical transport routes for the European Union, one example being the IX Pan-European Corridor Helsinki-Vyborg-St Petersburg-Pskov-Gomel-Kiev-Ljubashevka-Chisinau-Bucharest-Dimitrovgrad-Alexandroupolis. Although a part of this corridor crosses non-EU Member States, the section situated between Alexandroupolis and the border crossing point between Romania and the Republic of Moldova could have been included in one of the 10 corridors of the 'core network', as it crosses three Member States and connects with critical external markets for the EU.

1. Given that the core network was identified following complex studies, can the Commission inform us why this corridor was not included in the Connecting Europe Facility?

2. Given that, following negotiations, Annex I of this regulation will remain unchanged, what is the possibility of the core network being extended in the next planning period in terms of this regulation?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

The TEN-T planning methodology, which is mentioned in the question, consists of two steps:

— the identification of main nodes of European importance, which are large cities, important seaports and a selection of border crossing points to neighbouring non-EU countries;

— the connections of these nodes on all available modes of transport, wherever existing or feasible by 2030.

On the base of this methodology, the following sections have qualified for the core network: — Helsinki — border FI-RU (Vaalimaa/Vainikkala) — border MD/RO (Ungheni) — Bucuresti — Dimitrovgrad — border BG-TR (Svilengrad) — section Alexandroupolis — border GR-TR (Kipi/Pythion).

The former Pan-European Corridor IX road section between Svilengrad and Kipi, and rail section between Svilengrad and Pythion is only part of the comprehensive network, so it cannot be part of a core network corridor. Core network corridors have to consist of core network sections, exclusively. For this reason, it is not possible to establish a core network corridor between Ungheni and Alexandroupolis.

Taking furthermore into account that the core network corridors have been created as an instrument for a smooth implementation of the core network, in particular of their border crossing sections, such a corridor would not make sense in a relation which lacks relevant border crossing projects.

In view of the long-term planning stability as needed for infrastructure investments, the proposal for the TEN-T Regulation ([1]) (Art. 57) foresees a review of the implementation of the core network by 31 December 2023 at the latest, which could allow modifications to be proposed in the planning period 2028-2034.

([1]) COM(2011)0650.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008402/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)**
*(25 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Malos tratos en Marruecos

El relator de las Naciones Unidas contra la tortura y los tratos inhumanos y degradantes acaba de terminar su visita a Marruecos y en su Informe preliminar declara que todavía es frecuente el uso de la tortura y de malos tratos en los centros de detención de este país.

Ante la gravedad de esta denuncia, a este diputado le interesa saber si la Unión Europea, comprometida en la defensa de los derechos humanos, va a analizar esta situación denunciada y, en su caso, adoptar medidas concretas ante las autoridades marroquíes.

**Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión**
*(27 de noviembre de 2012)*

El respeto de los derechos humanos es el núcleo central de nuestro diálogo con Marruecos y, por lo tanto, esta cuestión se aborda con regularidad en las reuniones de los organismos mixtos pertinentes establecidos en virtud del Acuerdo de Asociación entre la UE y Marruecos. En este contexto, las conclusiones preliminares formuladas por el Relator especial de las Naciones Unidas contra la tortura se discutieron con las autoridades marroquíes durante la 7ª reunión del Subcomité de derechos humanos, gobernanza y democracia UE-Marruecos celebrada en Rabat los días 16 y 17 de octubre de 2012.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta considera que, en general, Marruecos está haciendo progresos en el cumplimiento de los principios de los derechos humanos, aunque se necesitan nuevas mejoras, especialmente esfuerzos para erradicar la tortura y los malos tratos. El fortalecimiento de las libertades fundamentales y los principios democráticos en la nueva Constitución y la creación del Consejo Nacional de Derechos Humanos son avances positivos en este sentido.

Además, el Estatuto avanzado, al que Marruecos se ha adherido en sus relaciones con la UE, implica que se están haciendo progresos en este ámbito y que la UE se compromete a garantizar un estrecho seguimiento de esta cuestión.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008402/12**
**to the Commission**
**Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Ill-treatment in Morocco

The United Nations rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment has just finished visiting Morocco, and states in his preliminary report that torture and ill-treatment still frequently occur in detention centres in the country.

In view of the gravity of this allegation, I would like to know whether the European Union, which is committed to defending human rights, intends to analyse the situation that has been described and, if applicable, whether it will adopt specific measures vis-à-vis the Moroccan authorities.

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 November 2012)*

Respect for human rights is at the heart of our dialogue with Morocco and consequently this issue is regularly addressed in the meetings of the relevant joint bodies established under the EU Morocco Association Agreement. In this framework, the preliminary conclusions drawn up by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture were discussed with the Moroccan authorities during the 7th meeting of the EU-Morocco Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Governance and Democracy which took place in Rabat on 16-17 October 2012.

The HR/VP considers that overall Morocco is making progress towards compliance with the human rights principles, although further improvements are necessary, notably efforts to eradicate torture and ill-treatment. The strengthening of fundamental freedoms and democratic principles by the new Constitution and the establishment of the National Council for Human Rights are positive developments in this regard.

Moreover, the Advanced Status, to which Morocco has acceded in its relations with the EU, implies that progress is being made in this area and the EU is committed to ensuring close follow up in this regard.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008403/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Energiesparlampe versus LEDs

In den Medien ist von „giftigen EU-Energiesparlampen" die Rede, die zudem sogar kurz nach ihrer Einführung wieder veraltet seien, da die LED-Technologie bereits Verbreitung finde.

1. Sieht die Kommission eine Möglichkeit, das Potenzial der LED, die in der Bevölkerung weit mehr Zustimmung finden, gesondert zu bewerten und gegebenenfalls zu fördern?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, einen direkten und umfassenden Vergleich beider Technologien anzustellen und anhand dieses Vergleichs die Situation am Markt neu zu bewerten (unter anderem auch unter Berücksichtigung des Entschließungsantrages B7-0381/2012, in dem die Vorteile der LED verdeutlicht werden)?

**Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission**
*(15. November 2012)*

1. Die Kommission möchte die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage 7742/12 verweisen, in der die Maßnahmen zur Förderung effizienter Leuchtmittel (einschließlich der Lichtemissionsdioden oder LED) dargelegt wurden.

Als Teil der Digitalen Agenda für Europa veröffentlichte die Kommission zudem im Dezember 2011 das Grünbuch „Die Zukunft der Beleuchtung"([1]), das eine öffentliche Anhörung zu diesem Thema ergänzte.

2. Die vorbereitende Studie der Kommission zu den Anforderungen an die umweltgerechte Gestaltung der Beleuchtung([2]) privater Haushalte, die die Grundlage der einschlägigen Rechtsvorschriften für dieses Produktspektrum darstellt, vergleicht sämtliche Lichttechnologien, einschließlich der technischen, umweltbezogenen und wirtschaftlichen Aspekte und ist öffentlich verfügbar. Die Auswirkungen des gesamten Lebenszyklus auf die Umwelt sind für Kompaktleuchtstofflampen und LED zurzeit ähnlich. Es steht zu erwarten, dass künftige technische Entwicklungen die LED begünstigen dürften.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission KOM(2001)889 endgültig zu innovativen Lichttechnologien, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0889:FIN:DE:PDF
([2]) http://www.eup4light.net/, Teil I und II

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008403/12**
**to the Commission**
**Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Energy efficient light bulbs versus LEDs

Reports in the media refer to 'poisonous energy-efficient light bulbs' which, it is claimed, have already become outmoded a short time after their introduction because LED technology is already in widespread use.

1. Does the Commission see any way to assess the potential of LEDs separately and to promote this potential in an appropriate way, as these products are much more popular among the public?

2. Would the Commission consider carrying out a direct and comprehensive comparison of both technologies and using this comparison to re-evaluate the situation in the market (also taking account of motion B7-0381/2012, which clarifies the advantages of LED technology, among other things)?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 November 2012)*

1. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member back to its answer to written question 7742/12, where measures promoting efficient lighting products (including light emitting diodes or LEDs) are described.

Furthermore, as part of the Digital Agenda for Europe the Commission in December 2011 published the Green Paper 'Lighting the Future' ([1]) in support of a public consultation on the matter.

2. The Commission's preparatory study for Ecodesign requirements ([2]) on domestic lighting products, being the basis for Ecodesign legislation in this product range, compares all lighting technologies, including the technical, environmental, and economical aspects, and is publically available. The environmental impact over the entire life cycle is currently comparable for CFLs and LEDs. It is expected that future technological advances will shift this balance in favour of LEDs.

([1]) Commission Communication COM(2001) 889 final on innovative lighting technologies, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0889:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) http://www.eup4light.net/, Part I and II.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008404/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Umstrittene Energiesparlampen — Gesundheitsrisiko

Abgesehen davon, dass die Bedenken der Bevölkerung von einer Stellungnahme des Ausschusses SCHER, die besagt, dass das „freigesetzte Quecksilber mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit kein Risiko für die Gesundheit" darstellt und „wahrscheinlich" für keine Bevölkerungsgruppe ein Risiko ist, kaum ausgeräumt sein werden, bleibt die Tatsache bestehen, dass die Bürgerinnen und Bürger im Fall einer schadhaften Lampe dennoch Quecksilber ausgesetzt sind.

Zudem ist die Entsorgung für den einzelnen Bürger weitaus komplizierter.

Auf diesen Tatsachen beruht auch die breite Ablehnung der Bevölkerung.

Kann die Kommission angesichts der ohnehin anhaltenden Diskussionen in verschiedenen EU-Ländern über die Zustimmung der Bevölkerung zum System der Europäischen Union insgesamt folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Imageschaden, den die EU möglicherweise davonträgt, wenn sie so vehement an einem Vorhaben festhält, das in der breiten Mehrheit der Bevölkerung keine Zustimmung findet?

2. Wann kann die Kommission ihrer Einschätzung nach entsprechende gesundheitsgefährdende Risiken ausschließen, so dass für die Bürgerinnen und Bürger auch die Frage des „wahrscheinlich kein Risiko" geklärt sein kann?

**Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission**
*(20. November 2012)*

1. Das Ausphasen herkömmlicher Glühlampen wird aus den folgenden Gründen weithin akzeptiert:

— Es gibt technische Alternativen zu herkömmlichen Glühlampen wie Halogenleuchtmittel und LED-Leuchtmittel, die weniger Energie verbrauchen und für die Verbraucher kostengünstiger sind.

— Aufgrund der Qualitätsanforderungen, die im Zuge des Ausphasens an Ersatzprodukte gestellt werden, hat sich die durchschnittliche Qualität von Kompaktleuchtstofflampen (einer Unterform von Leuchtstofflampen) verbessert.

— Leuchtstofflampen finden in den letzten 50 Jahren breite Verwendung, auch in Haushalten. Durch das Ausphasen wird ein großer Beitrag zur Minderung der Treibhausgasemissionen geleistet.

Die Kommission hat die wissenschaftlichen Ausschüsse damit beauftragt, potenziellen Gesundheitsrisiken im Zusammenhang mit der Verwendung von Kompaktleuchtstofflampen nachzugehen. Die Ausschüsse fanden keine Anhaltspunkte für ein Gesundheitsrisiko (siehe Antworten auf verschiedene schriftliche Anfragen, z. B. auf die Anfrage 280/11 von Herrn Reul, 4836/2012 von Herrn D. Martin und 7245/2012 von Herrn Obermayr). Das Verbot bedeutet nicht, dass die Verbraucher verpflichtet sind, Kompaktleuchtstofflampen zu verwenden. Wenn sich die Verbraucher trotz des Fehlens wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisse zu potenziellen Gesundheitsrisiken gegen die Verwendung von Kompaktleuchtstofflampen entscheiden, stehen ihnen auf dem Markt Alternativprodukte (Halogenlampen) zur Verfügung.

Die Kommission hat verschiedene Maßnahmen eingeleitet (Einrichtung einer speziellen Internet-Seite ([1]), Bereitstellung mehrsprachiger Materialen an Verbraucherschutzorganisationen, Einzelhändler und die Mitgliedstaaten für deren eigenen Informationskampagnen, Beantwortung von Bürgeranfragen usw.), um die Verbraucher korrekt über das Ausphasen der Glühlampen zu informieren und ihnen die Möglichkeit zu geben, die für sie richtige Entscheidung zu treffen.

2. Hinsichtlich der zweiten Frage verweist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf die Antwort auf ihre frühere schriftliche Anfrage 8247/12.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/lumen

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008404/12**
**to the Commission**
**Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Controversy surrounding energy efficient light bulbs — health threat

Apart from the fact that it is almost impossible to allay public scepticism in relation to the statement from the Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks indicating that 'released mercury is very unlikely to pose a threat to health' and is 'unlikely' to pose a threat to any group in the population, the fact remains that the population will still be exposed to mercury if a light bulb is damaged.

In addition, it is much more complicated for individual members of the public to dispose of such light bulbs.

These are the reasons why the population is generally reluctant to use these light bulbs.

In view of the ongoing discussions in various EU Member States regarding public support for the European Union system as a whole, can the Commission answer the following:

1. How would the Commission assess the damage that may be done to the EU's image if it sticks so rigidly to a project that is rejected by the broad majority of the population?

2. In the Commission's own assessment, when will it be in a position to exclude the relevant health risks, making it possible to clarify the question of the 'unlikely risk' for the public?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

1. The phase out of incandescent bulbs has been broadly accepted for the following reasons:

— There are alternative technologies to incandescent bulbs such as halogen bulbs and LED bulbs, which are more energy efficient and cost-effective for consumers.

— Quality requirements accompanying the phase out have improved the average quality of compact fluorescent lamps (a subtype of fluorescent lamps).

— Fluorescent lamps have been widely used over the last 50 years, including in households; the phase out makes an important contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gases emissions.

The Commission mandated the Scientific Committees to explore potential health risks linked to the use of compact fluorescent lamps. The Committees did not find evidence of a health risk (see answers to written questions, e.g. 280/11by Mr Reul, 4836/2012 by Mr D. Martin, 7245/2012 by Mr Obermayr). The ban does not oblige consumers to use compact fluorescent lamps. If despite the lack of scientific evidence about potential health risks, consumers decide not to use compact fluorescent lamps, there are other alternatives available in the market (halogen lamps).

The Commission has launched different activities (dedicated website ([1]), providing multilingual material to consumer organisations, retailers and Member States for their own information campaigns, replies to questions from citizens, etc.) to inform consumers properly about the phase out and to enable them to make the right choice.

2. Regarding the second question, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question E-8247/12 by Ms Werthmann.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/lumen.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008405/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)**
*(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Σύριοι πρόσφυγες στην ΕΕ

Η συνεχιζόμενη σύγκρουση στη Συρία και η βίαιη καταστολή από το καθεστώς, με πάνω από 20 000 θύματα, έχει προκαλέσει βίαιο εκτοπισμό και μετακινήσεις περισσοτέρων των 1 200 000 ανθρώπων, ενώ, σύμφωνα με την Ύπατη Αρμοστεία του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες (UNHRC), οι καταγεγραμμένοι πρόσφυγες από τη Συρία ([1]), ή οι αναμενόμενοι να καταγραφούν ανέρχονται σε 278 392. Η ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια που παρέχει η UNHRC, η ΕΕ και άλλοι διεθνείς οργανισμοί προς τις γειτονικές χώρες υποδοχής προσφύγων είναι πιθανόν να μην επαρκέσει για την κάλυψη των διευρυμένων αναγκών. Η Οδηγία 2001/55/ΕΚ προβλέπει ότι σε περίπτωση «μαζικής εισροής» «εκτοπισθέντων» παρέχεται «προσωρινή προστασία» μέσω της δημιουργίας ενός «ευρωπαϊκού μηχανισμού», όμως αυτός δεν έχει ενεργοποιηθεί ποτέ από το 2001 έως σήμερα καθώς φαίνεται ιδιαίτερα δύσκολο να υπάρξει πολιτική συμφωνία μεταξύ των μελών του Συμβουλίου. Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θα ήταν έτοιμη να ενθαρρύνει και να στηρίξει τη δημιουργία (από τις αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές) ενός εθνικού συστήματος προσωρινής προστασίας — αυξάνοντας όμως και τον σχετικό προϋπολογισμό των «εκτάκτων μέτρων» — που θα ενεργοποιείται όταν δεν ενεργοποιείται ο ευρωπαϊκός μηχανισμός προσωρινής προστασίας, όπως αυτός προβλέπεται από την Οδηγία, ώστε οι ελληνικές αρχές να έχουν σχεδιασμό και ετοιμότητα για εναλλακτικές λύσεις;

2. Έχει προετοιμάσει σχέδιο για επιμερισμό της ευθύνης προστασίας των προσφύγων στις διάφορες χώρες, και όχι μόνο στις χώρες εισόδου, με δεδομένο ότι οι περισσότεροι επιθυμούν να συνδεθούν με τις οικογένειές τους σε διάφορες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες;

3. Πώς θα διασφαλίσει την εφαρμογή από τα κράτη μέλη των νέων κατευθυντηρίων γραμμών της Ύπατης Αρμοστείας ([2]) που καθιστούν σαφές ότι η αίτηση ασύλου δεν είναι εγκληματική πράξη και ότι οι επ' αόριστον και υποχρεωτικές μορφές κράτησης συνιστούν παραβίαση του διεθνούς δικαίου;

4. Έχει λάβει μέτρα για ουσιαστική κι αποτελεσματική αντιμετώπιση συγκεκριμένων παραλήψεων ή πρακτικών κρατών μελών, όπως της Ελλάδας, που καταστρατηγούν την διαδικασία ασύλου, καταπατώντας βασικά ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα ατόμων που χρήζουν διεθνούς προστασίας και των αιτούντων άσυλο, αφήνοντας χώρο για ανάπτυξη ρατσιστικών πρακτικών; Ποια είναι αυτά;

**Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(28 Νοεμβρίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί την κατάσταση των προσφύγων από τη Συρία και είναι έτοιμη να συντονίσει ή παράσχει βοήθεια στα κράτη μέλη τα οποία ενδέχεται να βρεθούν υπό πίεση. Η ΕΕ και τα κράτη μέλη έχουν στη διάθεσή τους μια σειρά ευέλικτων μέσων αλληλεγγύης, μεταξύ των οποίων, χρηματοδοτική βοήθεια και στήριξη από εμπειρογνώμονες. Αυτά τα μέτρα ενεργοποιούνται κατόπιν αιτήσεως του ενδιαφερόμενου κράτους μέλους. Ειδικότερα, θα μπορούσαν να διατεθούν στην Ελλάδα 4 εκατ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο του μηχανισμού έκτακτης ανάγκης του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου για τους Πρόσφυγες του 2012.

Η αρμοδιότητα για την εξέταση αίτησης ασύλου καθορίζεται σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό του Δουβλίνου ([3]), ο οποίος προβλέπει μια ιεραρχική σειρά κριτηρίων που ευνοούν τη συνεκτίμηση περιστάσεων οικογενειακής φύσεως και αφήνουν την κατανομή των αρμοδιοτήτων στη χώρα εισόδου στην περίπτωση που δεν εφαρμόζεται άλλο σημαντικότερο κριτήριο. Οι αναγνωρισμένοι πρόσφυγες παραμένουν, κατ' αρχήν, στο κράτος μέλος το οποίο τους έχει χορηγήσει αυτό το καθεστώς, με εξαίρεση τους πρόσφυγες που υπάγονται σε προγράμματα μετεγκατάστασης.

Οι νέες κατευθυντήριες οδηγίες της Υπάτης Αρμοστείας του ΟΗΕ για τους πρόσφυγες (UNHCR) στις οποίες αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος τονίζουν ότι η επιδίωξη ασύλου δεν συνιστά εγκληματική πράξη και ότι η απεριόριστη και υποχρεωτική κράτηση απαγορεύεται από το διεθνές δίκαιο. Οι σχετικές πράξεις του κεκτημένου για το άσυλο εγγυώνται ήδη αυτά τα δικαιώματα ([4]).

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει πλήρως την απαράδεκτη κατάσταση των αιτούντων άσυλο στην Ελλάδα. Ωστόσο, η Ελλάδα έχει δεσμευτεί πλήρως για την εκτεταμένη μεταρρύθμιση του συστήματός της παροχής ασύλου βάσει του εθνικού σχεδίου δράσης που υποβλήθηκε το 2010. Η Επιτροπή, από κοινού με άλλους εταίρους, υποστηρίζει τη μεταρρύθμιση με χρηματοδοτική βοήθεια και με την παροχή εμπειρογνωσίας επί τόπου.

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([1]) http://www.unhcr.gr/nea/artikel/f38540873335e847b40439f34a09b547/paidia-prosfyges-ap.html
([2]) http://www.unhcr.org/505c33199.html
([3]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) 343/2003.
([4]) Οδηγίες 2004/83/ΕΚ και 2011/95/ΕΚ, 2005/85/ΕΚ, 2003/9/ΕΚ και 2008/115/ΕΚ.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008405/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Syrian refugees in the EU

The continuing conflict in Syria and the actions of the harshly repressive regime have claimed over 20 000 victims and resulted in the forced displacement and upheaval of over 1 200 000 people. According to the office of the United High Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the number of refugees from Syria ([1]), either registered or waiting to be registered, is 278 392. The humanitarian aid provided by the UNHCR, the EU and other international organisations for neighbouring countries receiving refugees is likely to be insufficient to cover growing needs. Council Directive 2001/55/EC provides for 'temporary protection' in the event of a 'mass influx' of 'displaced persons' by means of a European 'mechanism'. However, this measure has never been implemented from 2001 until the present, since it appears particularly difficult to reach the necessary political agreement between the Council members.

In view of this:

1. Would the Commission be prepared to encourage and support the introduction (by the Greek authorities) of national temporary protection arrangements — while increasing the budget for 'emergency measures' to be activated in place of the European temporary protection mechanism provided for under the directive so as to ensure that the Greek authorities have an alternative plan of action and are suitably prepared?

2. Has it drawn up a plan for the allocation of responsibility for the protection of refugees to different countries and not just the countries of entry, given that the majority of refugees wish to be united with their families in various European countries?

3. How will it guarantee that Member States comply with the new guidelines issued by the High Commissioner ([2]), which clearly establish that seeking asylum is not a criminal act and that mandatory detention for indefinite periods is a violation of international law?

4. Has it taken real and effective measures in response to specific acts or omissions by Member States, for example Greece, which undermine the asylum procedure, thereby infringing the basic human rights of individuals in need of international protection and asylum-seekers, paving the way for the spread of racist practices? What are these measures?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

The Commission is following the situation of refugees from Syria and stands ready to provide or coordinate assistance to those Member States that could find themselves under pressure. A number of flexible solidarity tools are at the disposal of the EU and Member States, including financial assistance and expert support. Such measures are activated at the request of the Member States concerned. In particular, EUR 4 million could be made available to Greece, under the 2012 European Refugee Fund emergency mechanism.

The responsibility for examining an asylum application is established in accordance with the Dublin Regulation, ([3]) which provides for a hierarchical set of criteria favouring family considerations and leaving the allocation of responsibility to the country of entry for the case where no other superior criterion applies. Recognised refugees remain, in principle, in the Member State that granted them status, with the exception of refugees subject to relocation programmes.

The new UNHCR guidelines to which the Honourable Member refers reiterate that seeking asylum is not a criminal act and that indefinite and mandatory detention is prohibited under international law. These rights are already guaranteed in the relevant instruments of the asylum *acquis* ([4]).

The Commission is fully aware of the unsatisfactory situation for asylum-seekers in Greece. However, Greece is engaged in a full-scale reform of its asylum system on the basis of a national Action Plan submitted in 2010. The Commission, together with other partners, is supporting the reform through financial assistance and by providing expertise on the ground.

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([1]) http://www.unhcr.gr/nea/artikel/f38540873335e847b40439f34a09b547/paidia-prosfyges-ap.html
([2]) http://www.unhcr.org/505c33199.html
([3]) Regulation 343/2003.
([4]) Directives 2004/83/EC and 2011/95/EC, 2005/85/EC, 2003/9/EC and 2008/115/EC.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008406/12**
**to the Commission**
**Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* European Health Insurance Card

I have been contacted by a number of constituents regarding their treatment when using the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) while abroad, particularly in the tourist areas of Spain.

It has been reported that staff in some state hospitals are rejecting a valid EHIC if they are aware that the patient already has travel insurance. Despite holidaymakers being entitled to free or discounted medical treatment through the EHIC, it is becoming an increasingly common occurrence for some hospitals to attempt to claim for treatment costs using travel insurance instead, in order to make a profit out of their tourist patients.

Could the Commission clarify if it is aware of such practices occurring in Member States and also what it intends to do to combat this sort of behaviour?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 November 2012)*

The Commission is aware that the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is not being recognised in certain provinces in Spain.

In March 2010 the Commission received a complaint that the EHIC was not being accepted in certain provinces in that Member State. It contacted the Spanish authorities via the administrative cooperation arrangements for the handling of cases on the coordination of social security systems. As a result, the Spanish authorities informed the autonomous communities in Spain that certain Spanish State hospitals' refusal to accept the EHIC in cases where the patient had private medical insurance was not compatible with EC law. They also informed the Commission that the Spanish national health service's inter-territorial council (*Consejo Interterritorial del Sistema Nacional de Salud* — CISNS) had reached an agreement on 18 April 2012 to ensure that the rights granted by the EHIC were respected.

Nevertheless, in the last few months the Commission has learned of a large number of new cases of foreign patients' EHICs being rejected by public hospitals in Spain. As a result it recently opened an investigation to examine the situation in detail.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008407/12**
**à la Commission**
**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Prêt de véhicule lors de séjours temporaires dans un autre pays de l'Union

Alors que l'intégration européenne et l'instauration de l'espace Schengen ont permis une meilleure mobilité des citoyens européens au sein de l'Union, la législation européenne concernant le prêt de véhicule lors de séjours temporaires dans un autre pays de l'Union pourrait être plus équitable et répondre davantage aux besoins des citoyens de l'Union.

Actuellement, lors de tout séjour temporaire de moins de six mois dans un autre État membre, un citoyen européen ne peut ni prêter, ni louer sa voiture à un résident du pays d'accueil sans l'accompagner.

Cependant, ce même citoyen européen peut prêter son véhicule aux membres de sa famille ou à des amis en visite, à condition que ces personnes ne soient pas des résidents du pays d'accueil.

Dans le cas où le propriétaire du véhicule n'est pas présent, il est donc curieux de constater que seules les personnes non résidentes ont le droit de conduire le véhicule, sachant que les personnes résidentes ont en général une meilleure connaissance des infrastructures routières de leur pays.

Afin de remédier à cette situation incohérente, dans le cas où le conducteur résidant dans le pays d'accueil possède toutes les assurances nécessaires, la Commission envisage-t-elle de proposer des mesures législatives?

**Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission**
*(30 novembre 2012)*

La Commission tient à informer l'Honorable Parlementaire qu'elle a adopté le 4 avril 2012 une proposition de règlement qui simplifie le transfert des véhicules à moteur immatriculés dans un autre État membre au sein du marché unique, comme expliqué dans la réponse à la question E-8408/12.

Le problème soulevé par l'Honorable Parlementaire n'est pas lié à une question d'assurance, mais à la disposition prévoyant «l'importation temporaire de certains moyens de transport à usage privé» au sens de l'article 3 de la directive 83/182/CEE relative aux franchises fiscales applicables à l'intérieur de la Communauté en matière d'importation temporaire de certains moyens de transport ([1]).

La Commission va présenter une communication avant la fin de l'année afin de préciser les règles de l'Union que les États membres doivent respecter lors de l'application des taxes d'immatriculation automobile et de circulation. La Commission fera des recommandations pour améliorer le marché unique, en particulier afin d'éviter une double imposition des voitures lorsque les citoyens se déplacent d'un État membre à l'autre et dans les situations d'utilisation temporaire d'un véhicule à moteur telles que décrites par l'Honorable Parlementaire.

([1]) JO L 105 du 23.4.1983, p. 59.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008407/12**
**to the Commission**
**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Vehicle loans during temporary stays in other EU countries.

Although European integration and the introduction of the Schengen Area have allowed European citizens greater mobility within the EU, European legislation concerning vehicle loaning during temporary stays in other EU countries could be improved to better meet EU citizens' needs.

Currently, during any temporary stay (less than six months) in another Member State, a European citizen may not lend or rent his/her car to a host country resident without accompanying them.

However, this same European citizen may lend his/her vehicle to visiting friends or family, provided that these people are not resident in the host country.

In cases where the vehicle owner is not present, it is therefore interesting that only non-resident persons have the right to drive the vehicle, given that residents generally have a better understanding of their country's road infrastructure.

Will the Commission change legislation to remedy this inconsistent situation in cases where the host country resident holds all the necessary insurance?

**Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission**
*(30 November 2012)*

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it adopted on 4 April 2012 a proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the single market as explained in the reply to Question E-8408/12.

The problem raised by the Honorable Member is not linked to a question of insurance but to the provision for 'temporary importation of certain means of transport for private use' as laid down in Art 3 of Directive 83/182/EEC on tax exemptions within the Community for certain means of transport temporarily imported into one Member State from another ([1]).

The Commission will present a communication later this year to clarify EU rules that Member States must respect when car registration and circulation taxes are applied. The Commission will make recommendations to improve the single market, in particular to avoid double taxation of cars when citizens move from one Member State to another and in situations of temporary use of a motor vehicle in situations such as described by the Honourable Member.

([1]) OJ L 105, 23.4.1983, p.59.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008408/12**
**à la Commission**
**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Immatriculation de véhicule en Europe

Alors que l'intégration européenne et l'instauration de l'espace Schengen ont permis une meilleure mobilité des citoyens européens au sein de l'Union, la législation européenne concernant les immatriculations de véhicules pourrait être plus efficace et plus transparente pour les citoyens de l'Union.

Actuellement, pour tout séjour temporaire de moins de six mois dans un autre État membre, un citoyen européen est exempté d'immatriculation dans le pays d'accueil. Au delà de ce seuil, le citoyen européen est obligé de faire immatriculer son véhicule dans le pays d'accueil (sauf pour les étudiants inscrits dans une université présente sur le territoire d'accueil).

Cependant, les différentes législations nationales ne s'accordent pas concernant ce seuil de six mois. Certains pays considèrent que ce délai commence à la date de départ du pays d'origine, quand d'autres considèrent la date d'arrivée dans le pays d'accueil comme référence.

Afin d'améliorer la mobilité des citoyens européens et de permettre une meilleure harmonisation au sein de l'Union, que compte faire la Commission pour que les législations nationales s'accordent afin que les citoyens européens n'aient plus de mauvaises surprises?

La Commission ne pourrait-elle pas allonger ce délai à un an, par exemple, afin de favoriser la mobilité des citoyens de l'Union et de permettre la réduction des démarches administratives et bureaucratiques?

**Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission**
*(8 novembre 2012)*

La Commission souhaite informer l'auteur de la question qu'elle a adopté, le 4 avril 2012, une proposition de règlement relatif à la simplification du transfert des véhicules à moteur immatriculés dans un autre État membre à l'intérieur du marché unique ([1]).

En vertu de cette proposition, un État membre ne peut exiger l'immatriculation sur son territoire d'un véhicule immatriculé dans un autre État membre que si le titulaire du certificat d'immatriculation a sa résidence normale sur son territoire. Elle prévoit également que, lorsque le titulaire du certificat d'immatriculation transfère sa résidence normale dans un autre État membre, il doit demander l'immatriculation de son véhicule dans un délai de six mois à compter de la date de son arrivée. D'autres dispositions de ce texte visent à une simplification des formalités de réimmatriculation des véhicules ainsi qu'à une réduction des démarches administratives et bureaucratiques imposées aux citoyens.

La proposition est en cours d'examen par le Parlement européen et le Conseil.

([1]) COM(2012)164 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008408/12**
**to the Commission**
**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Vehicle registration in Europe

Although European integration and the introduction of the Schengen Area have allowed European citizens greater mobility within the EU, European legislation concerning vehicle registration could be more efficient and transparent for EU citizens.

Currently, during any temporary stay (less than six months) in another Member State, European citizens are exempt from registration in the host country. Beyond this threshold, European citizens are required to register their vehicles in the host country (except for students enrolled in a university in the host country).

However, different national legislations disagree on this six-month threshold. Some countries believe this period begins on the departure date from the country of origin, while others use the arrival date in the host country as the start.

What will the Commission do to improve European citizens' mobility, allow for greater harmonisation/transparency within the EU and ensure that national legislations converge?

Could the Commission extend this period to a year, for example, to promote EU citizens' mobility and reduce administrative and bureaucratic formalities?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 November 2012)*

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it adopted on 4 April 2012 a proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the single market ([1]).

This proposal provides that a Member State may only require registration on its territory of a vehicle registered in another Member State if the holder of the registration certificate has their normal residence on its territory. The proposal also contains a provision that where the holder of the registration certificate moves their normal residence to another Member State, he or she shall request registration of a vehicle registered in another Member State within a period of six months following his or her arrival. This is complemented by provisions simplifying the procedures for the re-registration of vehicles and reducing the administrative and bureaucratic formalities on citizens.

The proposal is currently being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council.

([1]) COM(2012) 164 final.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008409/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Lucas Hartong (NI)**
*(25 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Subsidieverlening aan failliete subsidieontvanger

IB Consultancy ontvangt onder FV7 — security subsidie voor IFREACT ([1]) en PRACTICE ([2]). In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven om welke subsidiebedragen het hier gaat?

2. Is zij bekend met het gegeven dat IB Consultancy BV op 3 augustus 2012 failliet is verklaard door de Haagse rechtbank ([3])?

3. Heeft dit vonnis gevolgen voor de bestaande en mogelijk toekomstige subsidieverlening aan IB Consultancy BV?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe zij in het algemeen omgaat met subsidieverlening in het geval van faillietverklaring van een aanvrager?

5. Is zij voornemens eventueel ontvangen subsidie per direct terug te vorderen?

**Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie**
*(22 november 2012)*

De Commissie wijst het geachte Parlementslid erop dat de subsidies (maximale EU-financiering) voor de deelname van IB Consultancy BV aan de projecten IF REACT en PRACTICE samen minder dan een miljoen EUR bedragen.

De Commissie is ervan op de hoogte dat IB Consultancy BV in augustus 2012 failliet is verklaard door de Rechtbank 's-Gravenhage (Zaak F12/591). Deze verklaring is van toepassing op eventuele toekomstige subsidies aan IB Consultancy BV, aangezien de entiteit niet langer over de vereiste rechtspersoonlijkheid beschikt.

De subsidies die een failliete partner heeft ontvangen, worden vergeleken met de gedeclareerde en aanvaarde kosten die hij tijdens zijn arbeidsperiode heeft gemaakt. Overschrijden de ontvangen subsidies de aanvaarde kosten (op basis van de gedeclareerde kosten van de partner) voor de arbeidsperiode vóór het faillissement, dan zal de Commissie het verschil van IB Consultancy BV terugvorderen. Het teruggevorderde bedrag zou in dat geval opnieuw aan de projectcoördinator worden toegekend, om volgens de subsidieovereenkomst verder te werken. Als het bedrag niet van de partner kan worden teruggevorderd, treedt het Garantiefonds voor KP7 in werking.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document document& PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=12513503&pid=5&q=FD8A9BBC079BD5FCECD584ADBD3CE6A7&type=adv.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document document& PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=12003306&pid=0&q=F868445E98D954BBBC0C563CD685D9A6&type=adv.
([3]) http://www.faillissementsdossier.nl/en/bankruptcy/522203/ib-consultancy-bv.aspx.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008409/12**
**to the Commission**
**Lucas Hartong (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Subsidies issued to a bankrupt recipient

IB Consultancy is receiving, as part of FP7, a security subsidy for IF REACT ([1]) and PRACTICE ([2]). In this context, please answer the following questions:

1. What sums are involved?

2. Is the Commission aware that on 3 August 2012 the Hague court declared IB Consultancy BV bankrupt ([3])?

3. Will this court ruling affect the current and any future subsidies to IB Consultancy BV?

4. Can the Commission tell us what happens in general with subsidies when the recipient is declared bankrupt?

5. Does it intend to immediately reclaim any allocated subsidy?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the sums (maximum EC funding foreseen) involved in the participation of IB Consultancy BV in the projects IF REACT and PRACTICE are together under EUR 1 million.

The Commission is aware that IB Consultancy BV was declared bankrupt in August 2012 by the Court (case F12/591) in The Hague. This declaration is applicable to any future subsidies to IB Consultancy BV as the entity no longer has the required legal identity.

Subsidies received by a bankrupt partner are compared to the declared and approved costs occurred during the working period of the partner. If the received subsidies exceed the approved costs (based on the declared costs from the partner) covering the working period before the bankrupcy, a recovery order will be launched by the EC against IB consultancy BV. The money which is recovered would then be reallocated to the project coordinator to continue the work according to the grant agreement. If the sum cannot be recovered from the partner, the FP7 Guarantee Fund will be activated.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=12513503&pid=5&q=FD8A9BBC079BD5FCECD584ADBD3CE6A7&type=adv.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=12003306&pid=0&q=F868445E98D954BBBC0C563CD685D9A6&type=adv.
([3]) http://www.faillissementsdossier.nl/en/bankruptcy/522203/ib-consultancy-bv.aspx.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008410/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Semana Europeia da Mobilidade

Vários municípios portugueses, a propósito da iniciativa anual da Comissão Europeia «Semana Europeia da Mobilidade», incentivaram, na semana passada, o uso da bicicleta, no sentido de cumprir os critérios definidos da implementação de. pelo menos. uma «medida permanente». Segundo os meios de comunicação social, consta que mais de 2 300 destas medidas foram já implementadas em território nacional, a maioria das quais relativas ao incentivo do uso de bicicleta. Em simultâneo, assistimos em Portugal a um aumento dos preços dos transportes públicos e à tendência para a sua privatização (com consequente aumento de preços), na sequência das medidas acordadas com a «troika». Esse aumento de preços, combinado com a perda de poder de compra, levou a que a empresa pública Carris tivesse perdido mais de 26 milhões de utentes no primeiro semestre de 2012 (em comparação com igual período de 2011) na área da Grande Lisboa e que o Metropolitano de Lisboa tivesse registado uma redução de 11 500 milhões de passageiros, no mesmo período.

Assim sendo, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apoios foram disponibilizados para o desenvolvimento destas medidas?

2. Não considera que o impacto desta iniciativa seria muito maior e mais abrangente se desenvolvido em paralelo com a promoção do melhoramento e acessibilidade aos utentes do setor público de transporte, em lugar da sua liberalização e privatização, como se tem assistido nas políticas levadas a cabo pela UE?

**Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão**
*(12 de novembro de 2012)*

A Comissão tem trabalhado em conjunto com as autarquias para tornar os transportes públicos mais atraentes e eficientes. Um exemplo desse trabalho é a iniciativa Civitas (que abrange vários municípios em Portugal), no âmbito da qual foram implementadas mais de 100 medidas no domínio dos transportes públicos: http://www.civitas-initiative.org. No entanto, nos Estados-Membros, a organização e a estrutura de propriedade dos transportes públicos, bem como as tarifas, são estabelecidas pelas autoridades locais competentes.

Em 2011, 2 268 cidades, que representam cerca de 227 milhões de cidadãos, participaram oficialmente na campanha de 2012 da Semana Europeia da Mobilidade. Até agora, foram implementadas, no total, 7 506 medidas permanentes, centradas sobretudo nas infraestruturas para ciclistas e peões, na moderação do tráfego, na melhoria da acessibilidade dos meios de transporte e na sensibilização para os comportamentos de mobilidade sustentável. As medidas permanentes são propostas e financiadas pelas cidades participantes.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008410/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* European Mobility Week

To celebrate the Commission's annual 'European Mobility Week' initiative, a number of Portuguese municipalities organised activities last week to encourage cycling, with the aim of complying with the stated goal of implementing at least one 'permanent measure'. According to the media, over 2 300 such measures have already been introduced in Portugal, most of them aimed at encouraging cycling. At the same time, public transport in Portugal is becoming more expensive and increasingly being privatised (with further fare increases) as a result of the measures agreed with the Troika. This increase in fares, combined with loss of purchasing power, has caused the state-owned public transport company Carris to lose over EUR 26 million users in the greater Lisbon area during the first six months of 2012 (as compared with the same period in 2011). Lisbon's metro (Metropolitano de Lisboa) has lost 11.5 million passengers during the same period.

1. Can the Commission say what form of support was provided for the development of these measures?

2. Does the Commission not consider that the impact of this initiative could be far greater and more far-reaching if it were developed in tandem with actions to promote better access by users and improvements to the public transport system, instead of liberalising and privatising it, as we have seen happening due to the EU's current policies?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 November 2012)*

The Commission has been working together with cities to improve the attractiveness and efficiency of public transport. It has done this, for example, through the Civitas initiative (which includes several cities in Portugal), whereby over 100 measures have been implemented in the area of public transport: http://www.civitas-initiative.org. The organisation and the ownership structure of public transport, as well as fares within EU Member States are, however, established by the responsible local authorities.

In 2011, 2 268 cities, representing some 227 million citizens, officially registered for the European Mobility Week 2012 campaign. A total of 7 506 permanent measures have been implemented so far, mainly focusing on infrastructure for cycling and walking, traffic calming, improving transport accessibility and raising awareness about sustainable travel behaviour. The permanent measures are proposed and financed by the participating cities.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008411/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Financiamento de vídeo «Direitos Iguais»

A rede europeia «Indoors» promoveu um concurso público para a produção de um vídeo designado «Direitos Iguais». O vídeo, em circulação na internet, equipara a rotina de uma mulher arquiteta com a de uma mulher aqui designada «trabalhadora do sexo», equiparando-as, e defendendo a «legalização» da prostituição. Este vídeo é cofinanciado pelo Programa Daphne III. A ONU caracteriza como «violência contra as mulheres» qualquer ato de violência de género que cause, ou seja passível de causar, às mulheres dano ou sofrimento físico, sexual ou psicológico. A Convenção das Nações Unidas para a supressão do Tráfico de Pessoas e de Exploração da Prostituição de Outrem, de 1950, considera «que a prostituição e o mal que a acompanha, a saber, o tráfico de pessoas com vista à prostituição, são incompatíveis com a dignidade e valor da pessoa humana». O Programa Daphne III, que cofinancia a realização do supramencionado vídeo, afirma como objetivo específico «contribuir para a prevenção e combate contra todas as formas de violência que ocorrem no espaço público ou privado, incluindo a exploração sexual e o tráfico de seres humanos».

Desta forma, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento do conteúdo expresso no vídeo «Direitos Iguais»?

2. Pensa que o financiamento aplicado neste caso, no quadro do Programa Daphne III, foi corretamente avaliado e que o projeto financiado está de acordo com os princípios expressos no Programa Daphne III?

3. Tem conhecimento de outros projetos financiados pela Comissão que defendam o mesmo teor, a saber, a «legalização» da prostituição? Quais?

**Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão**
*(26 de novembro de 2012)*

O vídeo a que o Senhor Deputado faz referência é apenas uma das várias componentes de um projeto de grande envergadura, financiado no âmbito do programa Daphne III, que incidiu sobre a capacitação de mulheres envolvidas na prostituição e de mulheres vítimas de tráfico de seres humanos. O objetivo desse projeto é ajudar as mulheres a desenvolverem estratégias para se protegerem contra a violência. Como parte da descrição do projeto o beneficiário apresentou o plano de realizar um vídeo destinado às mulheres envolvidas na prostituição e vítimas de redes de tráfico com informações úteis para estas. No relatório intercalar de 7 de outubro de 2011, o beneficiário informou a Comissão que o vídeo estava em preparação e que se iria centrar nos direitos destas mulheres. O projeto ainda está em curso e a Comissão não foi informada sobre o conteúdo específico do vídeo antes da receção da presente pergunta parlamentar.

O projeto em questão está em conformidade com os objetivos do programa Daphne III, nomeadamente contribuir para a prevenção e a luta contra todas as formas de violência, pública e privada, contra as crianças, os adolescentes e as mulheres, incluindo a exploração sexual e o tráfico de seres humanos, em particular prestando apoio e proteção às vítimas e aos grupos de risco.

Os resultados do projeto não refletem de forma alguma a posição da Comissão, que assume uma posição neutra no que respeita às políticas dos Estados-Membros em matéria de prostituição, tendo financiado projetos que refletem abordagens divergentes.

No entanto, a Comissão reconhece que existe uma relação entre a prostituição e o tráfico de seres humanos e possui competências inequívocas quando a prostituição se insere no âmbito do tráfico de seres humanos ou da exploração sexual de mulheres e crianças.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008411/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Financing of the video *Direitos Iguais*

The European network 'Indoors' has run a public competition to produce a video entitled *Direitos Iguais* (Equal Rights). The video, in circulation on the Internet, compares the routine of a female architect with that of a woman called a 'sex worker' and subsequently advocates the 'legalisation' of prostitution. This video is co-financed by the Daphne III programme. The UN defines 'violence against women' as any act of gender violence that causes or could cause women physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering. The 1950 United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others takes the view that 'prostitution and the accompanying evil of the traffic in persons for the purpose of prostitution are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person'. The specific stated objective of the Daphne III programme, which co-finances the aforementioned video, is 'to contribute to the prevention of, and the fight against all forms of violence occurring in the public or private domain, including sexual exploitation and trafficking of human beings'.

In view of this, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the content expressed in the video *Direitos Iguais*?

2. Does it think that the funding allocated in this case — from the Daphne III programme — has been correctly assessed and that the financed project is in line with the principles expressed in the Daphne III programme?

3. Is it aware of other Commission-financed projects arguing for the same thing — that is, the 'legalisation' of prostitution — and, if so, which ones?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

The video mentioned by the Honourable Member is one of a range of deliverables of a large-scale project focused on empowering women in prostitution and trafficked women which is funded under the Daphne III programme. The aim of the project is to help such women to develop strategies to protect themselves against violence. As part of the project description the beneficiary informed about its plan to prepare a video aimed at women in prostitution and victims of trafficking with useful information for them. In the progress report dated 7 October 2011, the beneficiary specified that the video was under preparation and would focus on the rights of those women. The project is still ongoing and prior to the receipt of the parliamentary question the Commission was not informed about the specific content of the video.

The project in question is in line with the objectives of the Daphne III programme which is to contribute to the prevention of and the fight against all forms of violence occurring in the public or the private domain against children, young people and women, including sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings, in particular by providing support and protection for victims and groups at risk.

The results of the project do not in any manner reflect the position of the Commission which has a neutral approach regarding Member State's policies on prostitution and has funded projects that reflect divergent approaches.

However, the Commission acknowledges the interplay between prostitution and trafficking in human beings and has a clear mandate when prostitution falls within the ambit of trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of women and children.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008412/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Regiões Ultraperiféricas e Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020

Decorreu na ilha do Faial, nos Açores, a Conferência de Presidentes das Regiões Ultraperiféricas, onde foi debatida a comunicação relativa às RUP e de onde saiu a decisão de apresentar à Comissão um plano anticrise, que possa dar resposta às necessidades daquelas regiões, que têm desvantagens naturais permanentes e que atravessam uma grave situação social e económica.

Numa fase crucial das negociações do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (QFP) para o período 2014-2020 e mediante a importância de acautelar uma programação que tenha em devida conta as RUP e suas especificidades, questiono a Comissão:

1. Que enquadramento específico para as RUP prevê a Comissão adotar no próximo QFP 2014-2020 no que respeita à elegibilidade para os apoios financeiros concedidos no âmbito da Política de Coesão?

2. Que estudos atuais existem sobre o impacto das políticas gerais da UE nas RUP, designadamente nas Regiões Autónomas da Madeira e dos Açores?

3. Que medidas adicionais estão previstas para mitigar os sobrecustos da ultraperifericidade e apoiar as RUP a fazer face aos acrescidos problemas sociais e económicos que enfrentam?

**Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão**
*(26 de novembro de 2012)*

1. No contexto do quadro financeiro plurianual para o período de 2014-2020 (QFP), o âmbito de intervenção dos fundos para o objetivo de «investimento e crescimento e emprego» será fundamentalmente determinado para todas as regiões da UE, incluindo as ultraperiféricas (RUP), por categoria em função do respetivo PIB per capita em relação à média da UE. Contudo, dados os problemas específicos que travam o desenvolvimento das RUP, a Comissão propôs que fosse dada continuidade às medidas específicas, como a taxa de cofinanciamento de 85 % independentemente do seu PIB e uma subvenção específica — além das atribuídas pelo FEDER e pelo FSE, a todas as regiões da UE — para contrabalançar os custos adicionais das suas desvantagens e diversificar e modernizar as suas economias. O montante desta subvenção específica será estritamente calculado em função da população de cada região. No que diz respeito ao objetivo de cooperação territorial, a Comissão propõe-se reforçar o apoio para projetos conjuntos entre as RUP e os países vizinhos, através de um aumento da respetiva dotação de cooperação e através de uma maior percentagem de apoio do FEDER que podem ser utilizados para execução dos projetos em países terceiros.

2. A Comissão assegura sistematicamente que, quando necessário, a dimensão RUP seja tida em conta nas avaliações de impacto e outros trabalhos preparatórios para novas iniciativas políticas. Este requisito foi recentemente aplicado a várias propostas legislativas da Comissão relativas a diferentes políticas, como a política de coesão, a agricultura, as pescas e o comércio.

3. Para fazer face às dificuldades específicas das RUP, a Comissão já propôs um conjunto de medidas específicas em diferentes domínios, tais como a política de coesão, a agricultura, a pesca e o setor das telecomunicações.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008412/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Outermost regions and multiannual financial framework

The Conference of Presidents of the EU's Outermost Regions took place on the island of Faial, in the Azores. It debated the communication on the outermost regions and decided to submit to the Commission an anti-crisis plan that can respond to the needs of these regions, which have permanent natural disadvantages and are experiencing a grave social and economic situation.

At a crucial stage of the negotiations on the multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2014-2020, and given the importance of ensuring a programme that takes due account of the outermost regions and their uniqueness, can the Commission state:

1. What specific framework for the outermost regions does the Commission plan to adopt in the upcoming MFF 2014-2020 as regards eligibility for cohesion policy financial support?

2. What current studies are there on the impact of general EU policy on the outermost regions, specifically the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores?

3. What additional measures are envisaged for mitigating the extra costs imposed on the outermost regions by their nature and for helping tackle the increased social and economic problems they face?

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

1. Under the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework (MFF), the scope of assistance of the Funds within the 'investment and growth and jobs' goal will be mainly determined for all EU regions, including the outermost regions (ORs), by the category under which each of them will fall according to their GDP per capita in relation to the EU average. However, given the specific problems restraining the development of the ORs, the Commission has proposed to continue with specific measures, such as a co-financing rate of 85% regardless of their GDP and a specific allocation — on top of their ERDF and ESF allocations, given to all EU regions — to offset the additional costs of their handicaps and to diversify and modernise their economies. The amount of this specific allocation will be calculated in strict proportion to the population of each region. As regards the territorial cooperation goal, the Commission proposes to strengthen the support for joint projects between the ORs and neighbouring countries through a guaranteed increase in their cooperation allocation and through an increased percentage of ERDF support that can be used for project implementation in third countries.

2. The Commission systematically ensures that, where appropriate, the OR dimension is taken into account in impact assessments and other preparations for new policy initiatives. This has already been the case with several recent Commission regulatory proposals concerning different policies, such as cohesion policy, agriculture, fisheries and trade.

3. To tackle the ORs' specific difficulties, the Commission has already proposed a set of specific measures under different fields such as cohesion policy, agriculture, fisheries and telecommunications.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008413/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de Setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Níveis de escolaridade dos portugueses

De acordo com dados disponibilizados pela Associação Portuguesa de Educação e Formação de Adultos, cerca de um milhão de portugueses não tem qualquer nível de escolaridade, número correspondente a 10,6 % da população.

Por outro lado, cerca de 49,1 % da população com mais de 15 anos não possui o nono ano de escolaridade e 25,5 % tem apenas o primeiro ciclo do ensino básico. O abandono escolar em 2011 situou-se nos 23,2 %.

Na nossa opinião, para fazer face a este desastre, impõe-se um desenvolvimento do sistema educativo com o objetivo de educar para a vida, formando homens e mulheres para intervir no plano político, económico, social e cultural, só possível através de uma escola pública de qualidade, que garanta a igualdade de oportunidades no acesso a todos os níveis de ensino.

As medidas impostas pela «troika» (FMI/BCE/CE) a Portugal conduziram a cortes nos serviços públicos, nomeadamente na educação, e nos já magros salários das famílias portuguesas. Uma família com um filho tem custos com a educação em média de 894 euros/ano, o equivalente a dois salários mínimos nacionais.

Perante esta situação, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual a situação do analfabetismo nos restantes países da UE?

2. Qual a taxa de abandono escolar nos restantes países da UE?

3. Considera que cortes orçamentais no ensino são compatíveis com uma Europa democrática, do conhecimento e da inovação, que diz colocar o cidadão no centro da União Europeia e das suas instituições?

**Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão**
*(28 de novembro de 2012)*

Só se dispõe de escassos dados relativamente ao desempenho dos adultos em matéria de literacia na UE. Em 2011, cerca de 73 milhões de adultos (entre os 25 e os 64 anos de idade) em toda a Europa tinham apenas obtido baixos níveis de habilitações, apresentando muitos deles igualmente problemas de literacia. Quanto aos adolescentes, o estudo PISA da OCDE revela uma melhoria do desempenho em muitos Estados-Membros. Nos 18 países da UE com resultados comparáveis para os anos 2000, 2006 e 2009, a percentagem de alunos com fraco desempenho em leitura, que havia aumentado de 21,3 %, em 2000, para 24,1 %, em 2006, passou para 20 %, em 2009.

No que diz respeito ao «abandono escolar precoce», em 2011, 13,5 % de todos os jovens entre os 18 e os 24 anos de idade na UE abandonaram o ensino e a formação, tendo concluído apenas o ensino básico ou um nível de ensino inferior. Todavia, existem grandes diferenças de desempenho entre os Estados-Membros e também entre as regiões no interior dos Estados-Membros. Atualmente, dez Estados-Membros registam percentagens de abandono escolar precoce (AEP) inferiores a 10 %. Malta (33,5 %), Espanha (26,5 %) e Portugal (23,2 %) têm as maiores taxas de abandono escolar precoce; Itália (18,5 %), Roménia (17,5 %) e Reino Unido (15 %) registam também taxas superiores à média europeia.

A Comissão, na sua Análise Anual do Crescimento para 2012, instou os Estados-Membros, no contexto das suas políticas de consolidação orçamental, a «dar prioridade às despesas favoráveis ao crescimento, tais como as associadas à educação, investigação, inovação e energia, as quais constituem um investimento no crescimento futuro, e garantir a eficácia dessas despesas». A Recomendação do Conselho, de junho de 2011, sobre as políticas de redução do abandono escolar precoce e o relatório do Grupo de Peritos de Alto Nível sobre Literacia, publicado em setembro de 2012, formulou recomendações que deverão ajudar os Estados-Membros a aplicar políticas eficazes e eficientes em tempos de crise económica e financeira.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008413/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Portuguese schooling levels

Data provided by the Portuguese Association of Adult Education and Training show that around 1 million Portuguese people have no schooling, representing 10.6 % of the population.

Moreover, around 49.1 % of the population have not completed nine years of schooling and 25.5 % have only finished the first four years of school. In 2011, the school dropout rate was 23.2 %.

We believe that, in order to tackle this disaster, the education system needs to be changed with the aim of educating men and women for life and training them for involvement in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. This is only possible through high-quality state education that guarantees equal opportunity access to all levels of education.

The measures imposed on Portugal by the 'Troika' (IMF/ECB/Commission) have led to cuts to public services, particularly education, and to the already scant incomes of Portuguese families. The average education costs for a family with one child are EUR 894 per year, representing more than two months' earnings under the national minimum wage.

In view of this situation, can the Commission state:

1. What is the illiteracy situation in other EU countries?

2. What is the school dropout rate in other EU countries?

3. Does it consider education-budget cuts to be compatible with a democratic Europe, or with the knowledge and innovation that it claims make the public central to the European Union and its institutions?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

There are only limited data available on the literacy performance of adults in the EU. In 2011, approximately 73 million adults (25 to 64-year olds) across Europe had reached only low levels of educational attainment, many of them also having literacy problems. For adolescents the OECD PISA study shows an improvement in performance in many Member States. In the 18 EU countries with comparable results for the years 2000, 2006 and 2009 the share of low achieving pupils in reading, which had increased from 21.3% in 2000 to 24.1% in 2006, reduced to 20% in 2009.

As regards 'school dropout', in 2011, 13.5% of all 18 to 24-year olds in the EU left education and training with only lower secondary education or less. However, there are large differences in the performance of Member States and also regions within Member States. Currently, 10 Member States have early school leaving (ESL) rates below 10%. Malta (33.5%), Spain (26.5%) and Portugal (23.2%) have the highest rates of early school leaving; Italy (18.5%), Romania (17.5%) and the UK (15%) also have rates above the European average.

The Commission in its Annual Growth Survey for 2012 has urged Member States, in the context of their policies for fiscal consolidation to undertake 'prioritising growth-friendly expenditure, such as education, research, innovation and energy which are an investment in future growth, and ensuring the efficiency of such spending'. The Council Recommendation of June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving and the report of the High Level Group of Experts on Literacy, published in September 2012, set out recommendations which should help Member States to implement efficient and effective policies in times of financial and economic crisis.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008414/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Condições de trabalho em «Guimarães, Cidade Europeia do Desporto»

A Cidade Europeia do Desporto é um evento financiado pela União Europeia com o objetivo de divulgar atividades desportivas, valorizando simultaneamente o papel da cidade acolhedora como promotora do desporto. A cidade de Guimarães será, em 2013, Cidade Europeia do Desporto. Vieram recentemente a público informações segundo as quais a instituição «Tempo Livre», pertencente à Câmara Municipal de Guimarães, estaria a colocar como um dos critérios de elegibilidade para a contratação de professores de Educação Física para as «Atividades de Enriquecimento Curricular» o facto de estes se disponibilizarem «voluntariamente» para «oferecer» horas de trabalho na Cidade Europeia do Desporto. O Sindicato de Professores do Norte (SPN) já veio denunciar esta situação, considerando que o que está acontecer é a intimidação destes professores para trabalharem gratuitamente para este evento.

Desta forma, pergunto à Comissão o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Tem conhecimento do tipo de vínculos contratuais pelos quais estão abrangidos os trabalhadores da «Guimarães — Cidade Europeia do Desporto»?

3. Está de acordo com a prática mencionada, de fazer depender contratos de professores da sua disponibilidade para trabalharem gratuitamente para um evento financiado pela União Europeia?

4. Que medidas vai tomar a Comissão para impedir que verbas do orçamento da UE sejam utilizadas para promover o trabalho precário, ou mesmo formas extremas de exploração, como a que este exemplo de «trabalho sem salário» consubstancia?

**Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão**
*(19 de novembro de 2012)*

O prémio da Cidade Europeia do Desporto não é um evento financiado pela UE, mas uma iniciativa da Federação das capitais europeias e cidades do desporto (ACES-Europe), que é uma associação privada estabelecida em Bruxelas. A Comissão não está envolvida na gestão da ACES-Europe e das suas iniciativa como, por exemplo, a Cidade Europeia do Desporto:

1 e 2. A Comissão não teve conhecimento prévio da situação descrita pela Senhora Deputada.

3. De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, *Tempo Livre* recebeu, em 2008, um apoio financeiro no montante de 27 176,28 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE). A Comissão gostaria de chamar a atenção da Senhora Deputada para o facto de não haver ligação entre este financiamento e as atividades relacionadas com o evento Cidade Europeia do Desporto de 2013. A autoridade responsável pela gestão do FSE em Portugal confirmou igualmente que as operações selecionadas para financiamento estavam em conformidade com as regras da UE e nacionais ao longo de todo o período de execução.

4. No âmbito das regras sobre gestão partilhada aplicáveis à política de coesão e ao FSE, cabe às autoridades nacionais aprovar projetos em conformidade com as condições fixadas nos programas nacionais e cumprir as regras nacionais, em particular em matéria de condições de trabalho e direito laboral.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008414/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Working conditions at 'Guimarães, European City of Sport 2013'

The European City of Sport is an EU-funded event designed to get more people involved in sport while at the same time emphasising the host city's role as a promoter of sport. The city of Guimarães will be the European City of Sport in 2013. I have recently learned that the institution 'Tempo Livre', owned by the Guimarães City Council, has declared that one of the eligibility criteria for recruiting physical education teachers relating to 'extra-curricular activities' is being 'voluntarily' available to 'offer' one's time working at the European City of Sport. The Northern Teachers' Union (SPN) has already denounced this situation, perceiving it as intimidating these teachers into working for free at the event.

I would therefore ask the Commission to answer the following:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Is it aware of the types of contracts binding workers at 'Guimarães, European City of Sport'?

3. Does it agree with the aforementioned practice of making teachers' contracts conditional on their willingness to work for free at EU-funded events?

4. What measures will the Commission take to prevent funds from the EU budget being used to promote precarious work or other extreme forms of exploitation, such as this demonstrable example of unpaid labour?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 November 2012)*

The European City of Sport award is not an EU-funded event but an initiative of the Federation of European Capitals and Cities of Sport (ACES-Europe), which is a private association established in Brussels. The Commission is not involved in the management of ACES-Europe and of their initiatives, such as the European City of Sport:

1 and 2. The Commission was not previously aware of the situation described by the Honourable Member.

3. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, in 2008 *Tempo Livre* received financial support amounting to EUR 27 176.28 from the European Social Fund (ESF). The Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that there was no link between this funding and activities relating to the 2013 European City of Sport event. The managing authority for the ESF in Portugal has also confirmed that the operations selected for funding complied with EU and national rules throughout the implementation period.

4. Under the shared management rules applicable to cohesion policy and the ESF, it is for the national authorities to approve projects in line with the conditions set in the national programmes and to comply with national rules, in particular on working conditions, and labour market law.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008415/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Diminuição dos níveis salariais dos trabalhadores portugueses

Segundo notícias divulgadas pela comunicação social portuguesa, o Comissário Europeu para o Emprego, Assuntos Sociais e Inclusão, Laszlo Andor, defendeu que os salários dos trabalhadores alemães aumentem de forma a que se estimule a economia europeia, premissa com a qual estamos de acordo.

Em Portugal, em 2012, as medidas impostas pela «troika», FMI/BCE/CE, conduziram a cortes brutais nos salários das famílias portuguesas, agora agravados com a intenção anunciada pelo Governo de aumentar em 7 pontos percentuais a taxa de contribuição dos trabalhadores para a Segurança Social.

Consequentemente, os trabalhadores portugueses do setor privado terão uma redução nas remunerações líquidas nominais superior a um salário líquido e os trabalhadores do setor público sofrerão uma redução anual no ganho líquido que varia entre 244,50 e 5 717,50 euros.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera que as medidas impostas pela «troika» FMI/BCE/CE aos trabalhadores portugueses vão contribuir para estimular a economia europeia?

2. Está de acordo que haja dois pesos e duas medidas na União Europeia, ou seja, aumento de salários para os trabalhadores alemães e imposição de redução salarial a outros trabalhadores?

**Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão**
*(28 de novembro de 2012)*

As medidas que Portugal está atualmente a adotar, no quadro do programa de ajustamento económico, são necessárias para corrigir os desequilíbrios internos e externos que estão na origem do facto da dívida soberana portuguesa ter deixado de ser transacionada no mercado. Os salários em Portugal subiram acima da produtividade ao longo de um período bastante alargado, conduzindo a que os custos unitários do trabalho crescessem de tal forma que deixaram de estar em consonância com os dos seus parceiros na área do euro. Tal teve como consequência défices da balança de transações correntes muito elevados e crónicos, e a acumulação excessiva de endividamento externo. A fim de inverter esta perda de competitividade, os salários em Portugal terão de crescer abaixo da produtividade durante um certo período de tempo. Além disso, a moderação salarial tem de ser acompanhado de uma reforma estrutural, por forma a aumentar o crescimento da produtividade a médio prazo. Esta é a única forma de os salários portugueses voltarem a um crescimento sustentável e saudável no futuro.

A situação na Alemanha é bastante diferente, uma vez que este país assistiu a uma queda dos seus custos unitários do trabalho, em relação a todos os outros países da área do euro desde a introdução da moeda única. Em consequência, a sua posição concorrencial melhorou continuamente, tal como espelhado pelos elevados excedentes da balança de transações correntes ao longo de muitos anos. Tendo em conta igualmente os aumentos da produtividade que se situaram, quase de forma consistente, acima da média da área do euro, a Alemanha pode permitir-se aumentos salariais mais elevados do que a maioria dos outros países, sem correr um risco imediato de perca da sua posição concorrencial favorável.

A moderação salarial em Portugal e os aumentos salariais na Alemanha são como as duas faces da mesma moeda, ajudando ambos a corrigir os desequilíbrios que se criaram na área do euro. Constituem um elemento fundamental da solução de crise e não a prova de que existam dois pesos e duas medidas.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008415/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Wage cuts for Portuguese workers

Reports in the Portuguese media state that the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, has advocated increased wages for German workers to stimulate the European economy. We agree with this premise.

In 2012, the measures imposed by the 'Troika' in Portugal — IMF/ECB/Commission — have led to brutal cuts in the earnings of Portuguese families, now exacerbated by the government's declared intention of a 7 % increase in workers' Social Security contributions.

As a result, the nominal net remuneration of Portuguese private-sector workers will be cut by more than one month's earnings and public-sector workers will endure a cut in their net wages of between EUR 244.50 and EUR 5 717.50 per year.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it believe the measures imposed on Portuguese workers by the 'Troika' of the IMF/ECB/Commission will help stimulate the European economy?

2. Does it agree that there is a double standard in Europe, with wages increased for German workers and wage cuts imposed on other workers?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

The measures which Portugal is currently adopting in the framework of the Economic Adjustment Programme are necessary to correct the external and internal imbalances that caused the loss of market access by the Portuguese sovereign. Wages in Portugal rose above productivity over an extended period of time, leading unit labour costs growing out of line with its partners in the euro area. Very high and chronic current account deficits and the accumulation of excessive external indebtedness were the consequence. In order to reverse this loss in competitiveness, wages in Portugal will have to rise below productivity for a certain period of time. In addition, wage moderation has to be accompanied by structural reform so as to raise productivity growth in the medium term. This is the only way how Portuguese wages can be brought back to healthy and sustainable growth in the future.

The situation in Germany is quite different as this country has seen its unit labour cost falling relative to all other euro area countries since the start of the single currency. As a result, its competitive position has continuously improved as reflected by high current account surpluses over many years. Given also productivity increases that have been almost consistently above the euro area average, Germany can afford higher wage increases than most other countries without an immediate risk of losing its favourable competitive position.

Wage moderation in Portugal and wage increases in Germany are like two sides of the same coin and both will help to correct the imbalances that had built up in the euro area. They are an essential part of the crisis solution and not evidence of a double standard.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008416/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Consequências da reprogramação do QREN para a Associação Beira Serra (Covilhã)

A Associação Beira Serra, sediada no concelho da Covilhã, é uma associação vocacionada para a intervenção comunitária, realizando projetos de luta contra a pobreza, para a inclusão social e escolar, para a prevenção de comportamentos de risco, para a promoção da conciliação entre a vida familiar e profissional, contando com vários sócios institucionais pertencentes à área de intervenção.

A decisão sobre a rescisão ou reprogramação financeira das operações no âmbito do Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional (QREN), em Portugal, e consubstanciado na Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.° 33/2012, publicada em Diário da República, 1.ª série, n.° 54, de 15 de março de 2012, determinou a suspensão de projetos em curso, incluindo projetos desta Associação.

Tendo em conta que a Comissão Europeia aprovou a reprogramação do QREN no passado mês de julho, perguntamos à Comissão o seguinte:

1. Tem informação acerca do número de projetos desta Associação que foram suspensos no quadro da reprogramação do QREN?

2. Desses projetos suspensos, tem informação acerca do número de projetos admitidos e revogados, na reprogramação aprovada pela Comissão?

3. Para além do Programa Operacional Potencial Humano (POPH), a que fundos comunitários poderá esta associação concorrer para financiar o seu trabalho?

**Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão**
*(7 de novembro de 2012)*

As autoridades portuguesas apresentaram um pedido de reprogramação do Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional em 13 de julho de 2012. Este pedido está atualmente a ser analisado pela Comissão. No que diz respeito aos projetos específicos suspensos relativos a ONG a que fazem referência os Senhores Deputados, devido ao princípio da gestão partilhada utilizado para a administração da política de coesão, a seleção e a execução dos projetos é da responsabilidade das autoridades nacionais e regionais. Assim, para mais informações, a Comissão sugere ao Senhor Deputado que contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão do programa FEDER «Centro».

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*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008416/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Consequences of the NSRF reorganisation for the NGO Beira Serra (Covilhã)

The numerous institutional partners of the NGO Beira Serra, based in the municipality of Covilhã, work in the community with projects to combat poverty, encourage social inclusion and school attendance, prevent risk behaviour and promote a healthy work-life balance.

The decision has been made to scrap or financially reorganise operations falling under the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) in Portugal, by way of the Resolution of the Council of Ministers No 33/2012, published in the Official Gazette of the Portuguese Republic, 1st series, No 54, 15 March 2012, which suspended projects underway, including those of this NGO.

Since the European Commission approved the reorganisation of the NSRF in July, can the Commission state:

1. Does it have information about how many of this NGO's projects have been suspended as part of the NSRF reorganisation?

2. Of those suspended projects, does it have information about the number accepted and then scrapped in the Commission-approved reorganisation?

3. Apart from Operational Programme Human Potential, for which EU funds can this NGO apply to finance its work?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

The Portuguese authorities submitted a request for reprogramming the National Strategic Reference Framework on 13 July 2012. This request is currently being analysed by the Commission. With regards to the specific suspended projects concerning the NGO mentioned by the Honourable Member, due to the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national and regional authorities. For more information, the Commission therefore suggests the Honourable Member contacts directly the managing authority of the 'Centro' ERDF programme.

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*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008417/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Consequências da reprogramação do QREN para organizações portuguesas de mulheres

A decisão sobre a rescisão ou reprogramação financeira das operações no âmbito do Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional (QREN), em Portugal, consubstanciado na Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.° 33/2012, publicada em Diário da República, 1.ª série, n.° 54, de 15 de março de 2012, determinou a suspensão de projetos em curso, dos quais 15 projetos de 12 ONG que integram o Conselho Consultivo da Comissão para a Cidadania e Igualdade de Género, ou seja, projetos que têm como vocação promover atividades de sensibilização, consciencialização e intervenção concreta junto da sociedade e que assumem um papel determinante no que diz respeito às matérias da igualdade entre homens e mulheres. Esta decisão afetou o funcionamento e prestígio de diversas organizações de mulheres, as quais têm contribuído decisivamente para a execução dos vários Planos Nacionais para a Igualdade e que se viram na impossibilidade de cumprir os seus compromissos com trabalhadores e colaboradores afetos aos projetos suspensos.

Tendo em conta que a Comissão Europeia aprovou a reprogramação do QREN no passado mês de julho, pergunto à Comissão o seguinte:

1. Tem informação acerca do número de projetos suspensos relativos ao Eixo 7 — 7.3 (Igualdade de Género — Apoio Técnico e Financeiro às ONG) que foram agora autorizados com esta reprogramação?

2. Em relação ao mesmo universo, quais as medidas imediatas que estão a ser tomadas para ressarcir as associações dos danos causados pela impossibilidade de estas pagarem despesas fixas já contraídas e relacionadas com os projetos suspensos?

3. Tem informação acerca do número de projetos revogados relativos ao Eixo 7 — 7.3 (Igualdade de Género — Apoio Técnico e Financeiro às ONG)?

4. Sabe se, nos casos referidos em último lugar, e tratando-se de situações em que comprovadamente os fundos foram corretamente utilizados, está a ser pedida a devolução dos apoios já recebidos?

**Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão**
*(21 de novembro de 2012)*

As autoridades portuguesas apresentaram um pedido de reprogramação do QREN em 13 de julho de 2012. O pedido foi cuidadosamente analisado pela Comissão, tendo esta concluído que a reafetação estava em conformidade com a realização dos objetivos da estratégia «Europa 2020» nos domínios do emprego, da educação e da inclusão social/redução da pobreza. Foi dedicada particular atenção à necessidade de aumentar o financiamento das medidas que abordam o desemprego dos jovens. Este pedido está atualmente na sua fase final de processamento, no sentido da adoção de uma decisão final da Comissão nas próximas semanas.

No que se refere à questão dos projetos suspensos, a Comissão recebeu informações dos Estados-Membros segundo as quais não tinha sido suspenso nenhum dos 15 projetos aprovados relativos a 12 ONG, ao abrigo do «Eixo prioritário 7 — 7.3 tipologia de intervenção Igualdade de Género — apoio técnico e financeiro às ONG». Uma proposta de suspensão de projetos com baixa execução financeira foi feita às ONG pelo organismo intermédio responsável pela execução da referida tipologia mas, na sequência dos argumentos apresentados pelas ONG, a proposta foi retirada.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008417/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Consequences of the NSRF reorganisation for Portuguese women's organisations

The decision has been made to scrap or financially reorganise operations falling under the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) in Portugal, by way of the Resolution of the Council of Ministers No 33/2012, published in the Official Gazette of the Portuguese Republic, 1st series, No 54, 15 March 2012, which suspended the projects underway. Those suspended include 15 projects by 12 NGO members of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality Advisory Council. These suspended projects aimed to promote public awareness activities and specific interventions in society, and play a key role in gender-equality issues. This decision has affected the operations and prestige of women's organisations that had been making a decisive contribution toward the implementation of various national equality plans and have since found it impossible to meet their commitments to workers and colleagues involved in the suspended projects.

Since the European Commission approved the reorganisation of the NSRF in July, can the Commission state:

1. Does it have information about the number of suspended projects relating to No 7 — 7.3 (Gender Equality — Technical and financial Support to NGOs) that have now been authorised with this reorganisation?

2. In the same regard, what immediate measures are being taken to compensate NGOs for the damages incurred by their inability to pay fixed costs already contracted and related to the suspended projects?

3. Does it have information about the number of cancelled projects relating to No 7 — 7.3 (Gender Equality — Technical and financial Support to NGOs)?

4. In relation to the latter case, and as regards situations in which it can be shown that the funds were put to the proper use, does it know whether demands have been made for the return of funds already received?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(21 November 2012)*

The Portuguese authorities submitted a request for reprogramming of the NSRF on 13 July 2012. The request was carefully analysed by the Commission and concluded that the reallocation is in line with the attainment of EU2020 targets in the fields of employment, education and social inclusion/poverty reduction. Particular attention has been given to increasing the funding for measures addressing youth unemployment. This request is currently in its final stages of processing in view of a final Commission decision being adopted within the coming weeks.

With regard to the issue of suspended projects, the Commission has received information from the Member State that out of the 15 projects approved for 12 NGOs under 'Priority Axis 7 — Intervention typology 7.3 Gender Equality — Technical and financial Support to NGOs', none of them was suspended. A proposal to suspend projects with low financial implementation was made by the Intermediate Body responsible for the implementation of the abovementioned typology to the NGOs but following the arguments presented by the NGO, the proposal was withdrawn.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008419/12**
**à la Commission**
**Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Réévaluation des risques associés au bisphénol A

En février 2012, suite à un examen approfondi de nouvelles études scientifiques publiées, le groupe scientifique CEF de l'EFSA a décidé d'entreprendre une réévaluation complète des risques pour l'homme associés à l'exposition au bisphénol A (BPA) par l'intermédiaire du régime alimentaire, en tenant compte également de la contribution de sources non alimentaires à l'exposition globale au BPA.

Ce nouvel avis aura pour objet de passer en revue toutes les données et études scientifiques disponibles sur l'exposition alimentaire publiées depuis l'avis émis en 2006 par l'EFSA.

Le groupe CEF évaluera en outre les incertitudes relatives à la pertinence possible pour la santé humaine de certains effets liés au BPA observés chez des rongeurs à de faibles doses.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer précisément la date de publication de cette réévaluation?

**Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission**
*(7 novembre 2012)*

L'adoption de l'avis de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments sur le bisphénol A est prévue en mai 2013.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008419/12**
**to the Commission**
**Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Bisphenol risk reassessment

In February 2012, following a detailed assessment of new published scientific studies, the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings and Processing Aids (CEF) decided to fully reassess the risk to human beings associated with bisphenol A (BPA) exposure through diet, also taking into account non-food sources' contribution to overall exposure to BPA.

The aim of this new opinion will be to review all available scientific data and studies on dietary exposure published since the EFSA's opinion was delivered in 2006.

The CEF Panel will further evaluate uncertainties about the possible relevance to human health of some BPA-related effects observed in rodents at low-dose levels.

Can the Commission confirm the precise publication date of this reassessment?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

The adoption of the opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on Bisphenol A is foreseen by May 2013.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008420/12**
**à la Commission**
**Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Traitement des allégations de santé relatives aux plantes

Le 17 septembre, la Commission a débattu avec les autorités nationales compétentes des États membres du traitement des allégations de santé relatives aux plantes, dans le cadre du règlement (CE) n° 1924/2006.

Dans la perspective de cette réunion, la Commission avait transmis un document de travail aux États membres dans lequel deux possibilités étaient proposées:

— première option: l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) effectue l'évaluation des allégations selon les mêmes critères que ceux qu'elle a suivis pour le traitement des allégations relatives aux vitamines et minéraux;

— deuxième option: révision de la réglementation relative aux plantes, reconnaissant leur particularité.

La Commission pourrait-elle indiquer quelle option a été retenue lors de cette réunion?

**Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission**
*(7 novembre 2012)*

La réunion du 17 septembre 2012 participe de la réflexion que mène actuellement la Commission sur le traitement qu'il conviendra de réserver, à l'avenir, aux allégations de santé relatives aux plantes utilisées dans les denrées alimentaires dans le cadre du règlement (CE) n° 1924/2006 ([1]), et a été organisée dans l'optique d'un échange de vues avec les États membres sur la base du document de travail diffusé avant la réunion.

Elle n'a débouché sur aucune décision de la Commission, et les observations des États membres n'ont pas encore toutes été recueillies.

([1]) JO C 404 du 30.12.2006, p. 9.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008420/12**
**to the Commission**
**Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Treatment of health claims relating to plants

On 17 September, the Commission and the Member States' competent national authorities discussed the treatment of health claims relating to plants, within the framework of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006.

Ahead of this meeting, the Commission had sent out a working document to the Member States in which two alternatives were proposed:

— option one: the European Food Safety Authority carries out an assessment of claims according to the same criteria as those that it has followed for the treatment of claims relating to vitamins and minerals;

— option two: review of regulations relating to plants, recognising their particular features.

Can the Commission confirm which option was chosen at this meeting?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

The meeting held on 17 September 2012 was organised in the context of the Commission's ongoing reflection on the future treatment of health claims on botanicals used in foods within the framework of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 ([1]) and aimed at exchanging views with the Member States on the basis of the discussion paper circulated ahead of this meeting.

The meeting did not result in any decision being taken by the Commission and comments by Member States are still being collected.

([1]) OJ L 404/9 30.12.2006.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008421/12**
**aan de Raad**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(25 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Grensoverschrijdende misdaad (vervolgvraag II)

In vraag E-003601/12 schreef ik: „De georganiseerde criminaliteit stijgt in West-Europa en daalt fors in Midden- en Oost-Europa. Die trend is zichtbaar sinds de verruiming van het interne Europese handelsverkeer en de uitbreiding van de Europese Unie. „We exporteren niet alleen goederen, maar ook onze misdaad", zegt Agata Tonder-Nowak, hoofdonderzoekster georganiseerde misdaad van de landelijke politie in Warschau." In zijn antwoord op de vraag is de Raad niet op deze constatering ingegaan.

In vraag E-005999/12 heb ik de constatering van Agata Tonder-Nowak opnieuw aangehaald. In zijn antwoord d.d. 18 september 2012 schrijft de Raad daartoe: „Wat betreft de „verplaatsing van de criminaliteit", waaraan het geachte Parlementslid in zijn tweede vraag refereert, zij opgemerkt dat daar in bovengenoemd verslag geen gewag van wordt gemaakt; evenmin is daar melding van gemaakt door leden van de Raad of door de betrokken EU agentschappen."

Deelt de Raad de mening dat de constatering van Agata Tonder-Nowak van belang is voor een correcte evaluatie van de gevolgen van de opengrenzenpolitiek van de EU? Is de Raad er derhalve toe bereid haar constatering nader te onderzoeken? Zo ja, wanneer kan ik daar het resultaat van verwachten?

**Antwoord**
*(19 november 2012)*

De analyse van de gegevens betreffende de zware of georganiseerde criminaliteit en beoordelingen van de situatie in de EU met betrekking tot de georganiseerde misdaad worden door Europol uitgevoerd op basis van bijdragen van de lidstaten. De Raad ontvangt een aantal van deze verslagen en analyses. Zoals echter vermeld in het antwoord van de Raad op vraag E-005999/2012 is de opmerking van mevrouw Agata Tonder-Nowak noch door zijn leden, noch door de betrokken agentschappen, aan de Raad medegedeeld, en heeft de Raad hierover derhalve niet beraadslaagd.

De Raad wijst er verder op dat het niet aan de Raad is om te reageren op, of conclusies te trekken aangaande, de verklaringen en meningen in de pers waarnaar in de schriftelijke vraag wordt verwezen.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008421/12**
**to the Council**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Cross-border crime (follow-up question II)

In Question E-003601/2012, I stated that 'Organised crime is rising in Western Europe and falling dramatically in central and eastern Europe. This trend has been noticeable since the enlargement of the European internal market and of the European Union. "We not only export goods, but also our crime," says Agata Tonder-Nowak, Head Investigator of Organised Crime from the national police in Warsaw.' In its reply to the question, the Council did not respond to this statement.

In Question E-005999/2012, I quoted Agata Tonder-Nowak's observation once more. In its answer of 18 September 2012, the Council writes in this connection: 'As regards the "shift in crime" pointed out in the Honourable Member's second question, it has neither been mentioned in the aforementioned report nor has it been referred to the Council, either by its members or by the relevant EU agencies.'

Does the Council agree that Agata Tonder-Nowak's observation helps to correctly evaluate the consequences of the EU's open-borders politics? Will the Council therefore investigate her observation further? If so, when will the results be available?

**Reply**
*(19 November 2012)*

The analysis of data regarding serious and organised crime and assessments of the situation in the EU regarding organised crime are carried out by Europol on the basis of Member States' contributions. The Council receives some of these reports and analyses. However, as stated in the Council's reply to Question E-005999/2012, the observation made by Mrs Agata Tonder-Nowak has not been referred to the Council, either by its members or by the relevant agencies, and was therefore not the subject of Council deliberations.

The Council would also like to point out that it is not for the Council to comment on, or draw conclusions regarding, the statements and opinions appearing in the press referred to in the written question.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008422/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Revisione della normativa sugli OGM

Si è recentemente riaperto il problema delle colture OGM sul territorio degli Stati membri. Una recente sentenza della Corte europea ha ribadito che uno Stato membro non può non autorizzare la coltivazione di organismi OGM nel caso in cui questi siano già autorizzati a livello europeo.

Il dibattito sul problema vede, da un lato, l'opinione pubblica contraria alle coltivazioni transgeniche e, dall'altro, il problema della coesistenza tra colture tradizionali e transgeniche con il conseguente rischio di contaminazione delle colture organiche da quelle transgeniche nelle vicinanze. Nel caso di contaminazione, anche accidentale, i produttori dovrebbero indicare sull'etichetta la presenza di OGM, mentre la predisposizione dei metodi per minimizzare la stessa è rimessa ai singoli Stati.

A innescare le più recenti polemiche ha contribuito il caso dello studio francese sugli OGM pubblicato nei giorni scorsi. L'analisi è consistita nel trattare cavie con alcuni OGM di mais NK 603 (che in Europa può solo essere importato ma non prodotto) e dell'erbicida Rondup: in seguito all'esperimento le cavie hanno riportato enormi masse tumorali.

È palese, ora, la necessità che l'Unione europea faccia chiarezza sul punto a causa dell'assenza di una normativa chiara in relazione ai piani di coesistenza.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali sono gli studi in materia presenti nell'Unione europea?

2. Intende l'Unione adottare una normativa dettagliata ed esaustiva in relazione agli OGM?

3. Come intende la Commissione procedere in seguito alla pubblicazione delle valutazioni dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) incaricata di valutare le risultanze dello studio francese?

**Risposta di Maroš Šefčovič a nome della Commissione**
*(26 novembre 2012)*

1. Una rassegna del 2011 effettuata da Domingo e Giné Bordonaba ([1]) elenca gli studi sperimentali eseguiti a livello internazionale in materia di somministrazione alimentare di piante GM a diverse specie animali. Un ulteriore ampio esame di 12 studi di lungo periodo sui mangimi OGM (più di 90 giorni, fino a due anni di durata) e 12 studi multigenerazione (da due a cinque generazioni) eseguiti a livello internazionale sono stati pubblicati da Snell et al ([2]). L'UE ha finanziato i progetti GMSAFOOD ([3]) e GRACE ([4]) che trattano anch'essi di studi di lungo periodo su piante GM.

2. Un quadro giuridico dettagliato e estensivo è già in atto per assicurare la sicurezza nell'UE degli OGM nell'ottica della salute umana e animale e dell'ambiente. I suoi principali componenti sono la direttiva 2001/18/CE sull'emissione deliberata nell'ambiente di OGM ([5]) e il regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003 relativo agli alimenti e ai mangimi geneticamente modificati ([6]). Le misure di coesistenza volte a evitare una presenza involontaria di OGM nelle colture convenzionali e biologiche sono trattate in una raccomandazione della Commissione pubblicata nel 2010 ([7]). Inoltre, il Parlamento e il Consiglio stanno discutendo una proposta della Commissione in merito a un regolamento che dà la possibilità agli Stati membri di limitare o vietare la coltivazione di OGM sul loro territorio per motivi non correlati a rischi per la salute o per l'ambiente.

([1]) «A literature review on the safety assessment of genetically modified (GM) plants». Environment International 37(2011)734-742.
([2]) Assessment of the health impact of GM plant diets in long-term and multigenerational animal feeding trials: A literature review. Food and Chemical Toxicology 50(2012)1134 — 1148.
([3]) http://www.gmsafoodprGUect.eu/.
([4]) http://www.icgeb.org/tl_files/News_2012/News_2012pdf/Press_release_GRACE.pdf
([5]) GU L 106 del 17.4.2001.
([6]) GU L 268 del 18.10.2003.
([7]) GU 2010/C 200/01.

3. La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta alle interrogazioni scritte E-008278/2012 e E-008334/2012 ([8]) che tratta i risultati dello studio di Séralini et al e le misure di follow up da parte della Commissione.

([8]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008422/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Revision of the Law on genetically modified organisms (GMOs)

The problem of cultivating GMO crops in the Member States has recently resurfaced. A recent European Court ruling confirmed that a Member State cannot not authorise the cultivation of GMOs when these are already authorised at European level.

The debate on the problem sees, on the one hand, public opinion against transgenic crops and, on the other, the problem of the coexistence of traditional and transgenic crops, with the consequent risk of organic crops being contaminated by transgenic crops nearby. In the event of contamination, including accidental contamination, producers should indicate the presence of GMOs on the label, while the planning of ways to minimise such contamination is left to the individual Member States.

It was the case of the recently published French study on GMOs that triggered the latest arguments. The analysis consisted of treating guinea pigs with NK603 GMO corn (which can only be imported but not grown in Europe) and the herbicide Roundup: following the experiment the guinea pigs had enormous cancerous growths.

There is now a clear need for the EU to clarify the issue, given the absence of a clear regulation on coexistence plans.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What relevant studies are there in the European Union?

2. Will the EU adopt a detailed and comprehensive law regarding GMOs?

3. How will the Commission proceed following the publication of the assessments by the European Food Safety Authority, which was charged with assessing the results of the French study?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

1. A review from 2011 by Domingo and Giné Bordonaba ([1]) lists experimental studies performed at international level on dietary administration of GM plants to various animal species. A further comprehensive review of 12 long-term GMO feeding studies (more than 90 days, up to two years in duration) and 12 multi-generation studies (from two to five generations) performed at international level has been published by Snell et al. ([2]). The EU funded projects GMSAFOOD ([3]) and GRACE ([4]) also address long term feeding studies on GM plants.

2. A detailed and comprehensive legal framework is already in place for ensuring the safety of GMOs in the EU for human and animal health and for the environment. Its main components are Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment ([5]) and Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed ([6]). Co-existence measures to avoid unintended presence of GMOs in conventional and organic crops are addressed in a Commission Recommendation published in 2010 ([7]). In addition, the Parliament and the Council are discussing a Commission proposal for a regulation granting possibilities for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory for grounds not related to risks on health or the environment.

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-008278/2012 and E-008334/2012 ([8]), which addresses the results of the study by Séralini et al. and follow up measures by the Commission.

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([1]) 'A literature review on the safety assessment of genetically modified (GM) plants'. *Environment International* 37 (2011) 734-742.
([2]) Assessment of the health impact of GM plant diets in long-term and multigenerational animal feeding trials: A literature review. *Food and Chemical Toxicology* 50 (2012) 1134-1148.
([3]) http://www.gmsafoodproject.eu/
([4]) http://www.icgeb.org/tl_files/News_2012/News_2012pdf/Press_release_GRACE.pdf
([5]) OJ L 106, 17.4.2001.
([6]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([7]) OJ 2010/C 200/01.
([8]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008423/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Risultati della consultazione pubblica «Promuovere sistemi educativi aperti»

La DG Istruzione e cultura della Commissione europea ha lanciato la consultazione pubblica dal titolo «Promuovere sistemi educativi aperti — proposta di iniziativa europea per migliorare l'istruzione e sviluppare le competenze attraverso le nuove tecnologie».

La consultazione è rivolta a tutti i cittadini interessati, organizzazioni e autorità pubbliche, in particolare a tutti gli stakeholders coinvolti nel settore dell'istruzione e nel sistema educativo a tutti i livelli.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, si prega la Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può essa fornire maggiori informazioni circa la consultazione pubblica «Promuovere sistemi educativi aperti — proposta di iniziativa europea per migliorare l'istruzione e sviluppare le competenze attraverso le nuove tecnologie»?

2. Può inoltre fornire i risultati di tale progetto?

**Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione**
*(28 novembre 2012)*

La prossima iniziativa della Commissione volta a promuovere un sistema d'istruzione aperto può aiutare gli Stati membri a sfruttare pienamente le tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione (TIC) per modernizzare l'istruzione e la formazione e fornire sistemi d'istruzione accessibili e di alta qualità. L'iniziativa poggerà su quattro gruppi di elementi fondamentali: i) accesso, uso, inclusione ed equità; ii) qualità, efficienza e internazionalizzazione; iii) sistemi e pratiche d'insegnamento e valutazione; iv) sviluppo delle politiche in questo campo. Attualmente è in corso una valutazione d'impatto affinché gli interventi proposti rispondano alle problematiche operative nel modo più efficace possibile.

La consultazione pubblica che cita l'onorevole parlamentare, svoltasi tra il 13 agosto e il 13 novembre 2012, è parte della valutazione d'impatto e concorrerà allo sviluppo delle politiche possibili in questo campo. I risultati saranno pubblicati a breve.

L'iniziativa volta a promuovere un sistema d'istruzione aperto coinvolge la direzione generale dell'Istruzione e della cultura e la direzione generale delle Reti di comunicazione, dei contenuti e delle tecnologie.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008423/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Results of the public consultation on 'Opening Up Education'

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture has launched a public consultation entitled 'Opening Up Education — a proposal for a European Initiative to enhance education and skills development through new technologies'.

The consultation is aimed at all interested citizens, organisations and public authorities, and in particular all the stakeholders involved in the education sector and in the education system at all levels.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Can it provide more information about the public consultation on 'Opening Up Education — a proposal for a European Initiative to enhance education and skills development through new technologies'?

2. Can it also make available the results of this project?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

The Commission's forthcoming initiative on 'Opening Up Education' would help Member States to fully exploit the potential of Information and Communication Technologies as a means for modernising education and training and providing high-quality and accessible education systems. It would comprise four main building blocks: i) access, use, inclusion and equity; ii) quality, efficiency and internationalisation; iii) teaching, educational practices and assessment; iv) policy development. An impact assessment is currently being carried out so that the proposed actions can respond to the policy challenges as effectively as possible.

The public consultation mentioned by the Honourable Member contributes to the impact assessment and will feed into the development of possible policy options. The consultation was launched on 13 August 2012 and remained open until 13 November 2012.The results of the consultation will be made public shortly.

The 'Opening Up Education' initiative is being developed jointly by the Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture and the Directorate-General for Communication Networks, Content and Technology.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008424/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Incidenti ferroviari in Puglia, intervento dell'organismo investigativo

Il 24 settembre un Eurostar Freccia Argento, treno 9351, partito da Roma e diretto a Lecce, all'altezza di Cisternino, in provincia di Brindisi, ha investito un autoarticolato fermo sui binari. Tra le persone a bordo del treno si registrano una vittima e almeno quattro feriti a seguito dell'impatto con un altro mezzo, un camion. Lo scontro è avvenuto a un passaggio a livello tra Pozzo Faceto e Torre Canne, alla periferia di Cisternino, con un tir che ha superato le sbarre di sicurezza mentre erano in chiusura, rimanendo bloccato sulle rotaie: il conducente, sembra un cittadino straniero, è riuscito ad allontanarsi in tempo dal mezzo e verrà a breve interrogato. La vittima, invece, è il macchinista dell'Eurostar che non ha potuto fare nulla per evitare l'impatto.

Non si tratta dell'unico incidente ferroviario avvenuto in Puglia in questi giorni. Soltanto pochi giorni prima a Bari, frazione Palese, in prossimità di un passaggio a livello un treno si era scontrato con un pullman, fortunatamente senza provocare vittime.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. Se è informata sugli ultimi incidenti avvenuti in Puglia che hanno visto coinvolti treni e mezzi pesanti in prossimità di passaggi a livello.

2. Se per far luce su questi incidenti può richiedere che venga attivato l'organismo investigativo italiano, di cui alla direttiva 2004/99/CE e al testo che la modifica 2008/110/CE?

**Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione**
*(31 ottobre 2012)*

1. Il 2 ottobre 2012 le autorità italiane hanno notificato all'Agenzia ferroviaria europea (ERA) la decisione di avviare un'indagine sulle cause dell'incidente a cui si fa riferimento nell'interrogazione. La notifica conteneva tutte le informazioni pertinenti relative all'incidente.

2. Ai sensi dell'articolo 19, paragrafo 1, della direttiva 2004/49/CE ([1]), gli Stati membri provvedono affinché, a seguito di incidenti ferroviari gravi, vengano svolte delle indagini. In questo caso specifico, la relativa decisione è stata presa dalle autorità italiane il giorno stesso dell'incidente (24 settembre).

La Commissione europea è a conoscenza del fatto che i passaggi a livello costituiscono una delle principali cause di morte negli incidenti ferroviari. Nel 2010 gli incidenti ai passaggi a livello hanno rappresentato il 27 % degli incidenti ferroviari gravi e il 28 % dei decessi avvenuti sulle linee ferroviarie, escludendo i suicidi. La Commissione è membro del Forum europeo dei passaggi a livello (ELCF) che riunisce esperti da tutta Europa e ha finanziato il progetto di ricerca SELCAT, finalizzato a raccogliere, analizzare e diffondere a livello mondiale i risultati delle ricerche e a promuovere lo scambio di nuove conoscenze.

([1]) GU L 164 del 30.4.2004, pag. 44.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008424/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Rail accidents in Puglia, intervention of the investigating body

On 24 September 2012, a Eurostar Freccia Argento train, No 9351, travelling directly from Rome to Lecce, hit an articulated lorry stationary on the tracks at Cisternino, in the province of Brindisi. One train passenger died and at least four were injured following the impact with another vehicle, a lorry. The collision took place at a level-crossing between Pozzo Faceto and Torre Canne, on the outskirts of Cisternino, with an international heavy goods vehicle which had driven through the safety barriers as they were coming down and stalled on the tracks. The driver, who is apparently not Italian, managed to get away from the vehicle in time and will soon be questioned. The victim, on the other hand, is the Eurostar train driver who could do nothing to avoid the impact.

It is not the only recent rail accident in Puglia. Just a few days earlier in Bari, in the little suburb of Palese, a train struck a coach near a level-crossing, fortunately without causing any injuries.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it has been informed about the recent accidents in Puglia involving trains and heavy good vehicles near level-crossings?

2. Whether, to shed light on these accidents, it can ask for the Italian investigating body to intervene, as set out in Directive 2004/99/EC and in amending Directive 2008/110/EC?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

1. On 2 October 2012 the Italian Authorities notified to the European Railway Agency (ERA) the decision to open an investigation on the causes of the accident mentioned above. The notification contained all relevant information related to the accident.

2. According to Article 19 (1) of Directive 2004/49/EC ([1]), Member States shall ensure that an investigation is carried out after serious railway accidents. In this specific occurrence the decision has been taken by the Italian Authorities on the same day of the accident (24 September).

The European Commission is aware that level crossing is one of the most important cause for fatalities in railway accidents. In 2010 level crossing accidents represented 27 % of all significant railway accidents and 28 % of all fatalities on railway, suicides excluded. This Comission is a member of European Level Crossing Forum (ELCF) which gathers expert from Europe and financed the SELCAT research project aimed at collecting, analysing and disseminating worldwide research results and stimulating new knowledge exchange.

([1]) OJ L164 30.4.2004, p.44.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008425/12**
**à Comissão**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Cidadãos habilitados para votar nas eleições nos Estados-Membros

1. Dispõe a Comissão de informação sobre quais os cidadãos habilitados para votar nas diferentes eleições (nacionais, locais e europeias) em cada um dos 27 Estados-Membros?

2. Ademais, dispõe a Comissão de informação sobre a forma como se comprova a qualidade de cidadão nacional em cada um dos Estados-Membros (cartão de identidade ou outra)?

**Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão**
*(26 de novembro de 2012)*

A Comissão Europeia não tem competência geral em matéria de eleições.

A organização das eleições para os parlamentos nacionais é uma competência exclusivamente nacional.

No que diz respeito às eleições autárquica e para o Parlamento Europeu, a legislação europeia garante aos cidadãos da UE o direito de participar em eleições no Estado-Membro em que residem nas mesmas condições que os nacionais desse Estado, mesmo não tendo a nacionalidade do país ([1]). Além disso, a legislação da UE estabelece princípios gerais relativos às eleições para o Parlamento Europeu, que são comuns a todos os Estados-Membros. Estes princípios estão definidos no Ato de 1976 relativo à eleição dos representantes ao Parlamento Europeu ([2]) que prevê, nomeadamente, que as eleições sejam realizadas por sufrágio universal direto, livre e secreto.

Todos os restantes aspetos relacionados com a organização de eleições autárquicas e para o Parlamento Europeu e com a participação dos cidadãos nacionais nessas eleições estão fora do âmbito de aplicação da legislação da UE, incluindo as condições em que os cidadãos dos Estados-Membros são autorizados a votar ou os meios através dos quais podem provar a sua nacionalidade para efeitos de voto. As disposições pertinentes são, portanto, reguladas exclusivamente pelo direito nacional dos Estados-Membros e a Comissão não dispõe de quaisquer informações sobre o assunto.

([1]) Artigo 22.° do TFUE e Diretivas 94/80/CE e 93/109/CE, respetivamente.
([2]) JO L 278 de 8.10.1976, p. 5. com a última redação que lhe foi dada pela Decisão 2002/772/CE, Euratom de 25.6 e 23.9 2002.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008425/12**
**to the Commission**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Citizens eligible to vote in elections in the Member States

1. Does the Commission have information on which citizens are eligible to vote in the various elections — national, local and European — in each of the 27 Member States?

2. Does the Commission also have information on how the status of national citizen is proven in each of the Member States, for example using an identity card?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

The European Commission has no general power in the field of elections.

As regards elections to national parliaments, their organisation falls exclusively within national competence.

As regards municipal and European Parliament elections, EC law grants EU citizens the right to participate in these elections in the Member State in which they reside without holding the nationality under the same conditions as nationals of that State ([1]). Moreover, EC law provides for general principles concerning the European Parliament elections, common to all Member States: these are laid down in the 1976 Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament ([2]) which provides, e.g. for elections to be held by direct universal suffrage, freely and in secret.

All other aspects related to the organisation of municipal and European Parliament elections and the participation of national citizens in these elections, including the conditions under which Member States' own nationals are eligible to vote or the means by which these can prove their nationality for the purposes of voting, fall outside the scope of EC law. Relevant arrangements are therefore regulated exclusively under the national law of the Member States and the Commission does not dispose of any relevant information.

([1]) Article 22 TFEU and Directives 94/80/EC and 93/109/EC respectively.
([2]) OJ L 278, 8.10.1976, p. 5. last amended by Decision 2002/772/EC, Euratom of 25.06 and 23.09 2002.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008426/12**
**à Comissão**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Avaliação dos impactos da abolição das quotas de açúcar

Em resposta à pergunta escrita E-001977/2012, sobre a «recuperação da produção de açúcar de beterraba em Portugal», no passado mês de março, a Comissão afirmou que estava «a efetuar uma análise mais aprofundada para avaliar os impactos regionais da abolição das quotas».

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Já concluiu esta avaliação?

2. Quais as suas conclusões?

3. Para além dos impactos regionais, avaliou ou tenciona avaliar os impactos nacionais da abolição das quotas?

**Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão**
*(7 de novembro de 2012)*

1. Tal como indicado na resposta à pergunta escrita E-001977/2012 ([1]), a análise complementar está a decorrer. Em julho realizou-se uma reunião com as partes interessadas, para conhecimento dos pareceres sobre a primeira avaliação de impacto e para os poder ter em consideração na análise aprofundada. O objetivo é finalizá-la com a máxima brevidade possível.

2. Os resultados finais ainda não são conhecidos.

3. A Comissão pretende avaliar os impactos nacionais.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008426/12**
**to the Commission**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Assessing the impacts of sugar-quota abolition

In March, in its response to Written Question E-001977/2012 on 'restarting beet sugar production in Portugal', the Commission stated that it was 'conducting additional analysis assessing the regional impacts of quota abolition'.

I would like the Commission to provide the following information:

1. Is this analysis finished yet?

2. What were its findings?

3. Apart from the regional impact, has it evaluated or does it intend to evaluate the national impacts of quota abolition?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

1. The additional analysis, as indicated in the reply to Written Question E-001977/2012 ([1]), is in progress. A stakeholder meeting was held in July in order to hear the opinions on the first impact assessment and to take these comments into account in the revised analysis. The aim is to finish the analysis as soon as possible.

2. No final results are known yet.

3. The Commission does intend to evaluate the national impacts.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008427/12**
**à Comissão**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Financiamento dos partidos políticos europeus e das fundações políticas europeias

Relativamente ao financiamento dos partidos políticos europeus e das fundações políticas europeias, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que partidos políticos europeus e que fundações políticas europeias receberam até hoje financiamento do orçamento comunitário?

2. Quais os montantes em causa em cada caso?

**Resposta dada por José Manuel Durão Barroso em nome da Comissão**
*(12 de novembro de 2012)*

O Parlamento Europeu é a instituição responsável pela aplicação do Regulamento (CE) n.° 2004/2003, relativo ao estatuto e ao financiamento dos partidos políticos a nível europeu ([1]). A este respeito e conforme o artigo 9.°A do referido regulamento, compete-lhe publicar no seu sítio Internet um relatório anual que inclua o montante das subvenções concedidas em cada exercício a cada partido político e a cada fundação política a nível europeu ([2]).

Para obter informações mais precisas, a Comissão convida os senhores deputados a dirigirem as suas questões ao Parlamento.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 2004/2003 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 4 de novembro de 2003, relativo ao estatuto e ao financiamento dos partidos políticos a nível europeu, JO L 297 de 15.11.2003.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/fr/00264f77f5/Subventions-accordées-aux-partis-et-aux-fondations-politiques.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008427/12**
**to the Commission**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Funding of European political parties and European political foundations

In relation to funding for European political parties and European political foundations, can the Commission give us information about the following:

1. Which European political parties and European political foundations have received funding from the EU budget to date?

2. What are the sums in question in each case?

*(Version française)*

**Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission**
*(12 novembre 2012)*

Le Parlement européen est chargé de la mise en œuvre du règlement (CE) n° 2004/2003 relatif au statut et au financement des partis politiques européens ([1]). À ce titre, et conformément à l'article 9bis du règlement, il lui incombe de publier sur son site internet un rapport annuel reprenant le montant des subventions octroyées, pour chaque exercice, à chaque parti politique et à chaque fondation politique au niveau européen ([2]).

Pour de plus amples précisions, la Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à s'adresser au Parlement.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 2004/2003 du Parlement et du Conseil du 4 novembre 2003 relatif au statut et au financement des partis politiques au niveau européen, JO L 297, 15.11.2003.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/fr/00264f77f5/Subventions-accordées-aux-partis-et-aux-fondations-politiques.html

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008428/12**
**à Comissão**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 de setembro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Paraísos fiscais e fraude e evasão fiscal

Na carta que recentemente dirigiu ao Presidente do Parlamento Europeu, o Presidente da Comissão Europeia aborda alguns exemplos de medidas futuras a estabelecer por parte da Comissão. Entre estas, contam-se um «plano de ação para combater a fraude a evasão fiscal» e «propostas para fazer face aos paraísos fiscais e ao planeamento fiscal agressivo de certas empresas».

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. O que entende exatamente por «fazer face aos paraísos fiscais»? As propostas em causa passam pelo fim dos paraísos fiscais ou pela sua continuidade?

2. Desde 2008 até hoje, que medidas concretas foram implementadas relativamente aos paraísos fiscais e ao que considera ser «o planeamento fiscal agressivo de certas empresas»? Que avaliação faz dos resultados dessas medidas?

3. Que medidas concretas foram implementadas, até à data, relativamente ao combate à fraude e à evasão fiscal? Que avaliação faz dos resultados dessas medidas?

**Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão**
*(22 de novembro de 2012)*

1. A Comissão prevê adotar, em dezembro de 2012, um plano de ação destinado a apoiar a consolidação de uma abordagem compartilhada pelos Estados-Membros no que respeita à definição dos chamados «paraísos fiscais» e de métodos coordenados para lidar com esta realidade. A Comissão espera que, em consequência das medidas que previsivelmente os Estados-Membros tomarão no seguimento da sua iniciativa, os países terceiros em causa reformem os seus sistemas fiscais de modo a deixarem de ser considerados paraísos fiscais.

2. A política fiscal da UE pauta-se pela boa governação ([1]) (maior transparência dos sistemas fiscais, intercâmbio de informações e concorrência fiscal equitativa), não se limitando aos paraísos fiscais. Visa melhorar a governação no domínio fiscal em todos os países. Esta política está plasmada em diversos atos legislativos da UE (por exemplo, a Diretiva Cooperação Administrativa ([2]) e a Diretiva Poupança ([3])). Complementam-na os compromissos políticos assumidos pelos Estados-Membros (por exemplo, o código de conduta no domínio da fiscalidade das empresas ([4])). No que respeita aos países terceiros, as cláusulas fiscais dos acordos com eles celebrados asseguram o empenho dos países na boa governação em matéria fiscal. Está disponível na Internet uma avaliação pormenorizada da eficácia da Diretiva Poupança ([5]).

3. No que respeita a medidas concretas tomadas para combater a fraude e a evasão fiscais, a Comissão remete a Senhora Deputada e o Senhor Deputado para a Comunicação ([6]) que analisa a situação atual e propõe novas etapas concretas. Estas serão explicadas com maior pormenor no plano de ação acima referido.

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([1]) COM(2009) 201, de 28.4.2009, e COM(2010) 163, de 21.4.2010.
([2]) Diretiva 2011/16/UE, de 15.2.2011.
([3]) Diretiva 2003/48/CE, de 3.6.2003.
([4]) Conclusões do Conselho 98/C 2/01, de 1.2.1997.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/personal_tax/savings_tax/savings_directive_review/sec(2008)2767_en.pdf .
([6]) COM(2012) 351 final, de 27.6.2012.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008428/12**
**to the Commission**
**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Tax havens, tax fraud and tax evasion

In his recent letter to the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission gives some examples of measures the Commission is planning to implement in the future. These include an 'action plan to combat tax fraud and tax evasion' and 'proposals dealing with tax havens and aggressive tax planning by companies'.

Can the Commission state:

1. What exactly does it understand by 'dealing with tax havens'? Do the proposals involve an end to tax havens or their continued existence?

2. From 2008 to date, what concrete measures have been implemented in relation to tax havens and to what it considers 'aggressive tax planning by companies'? What is its assessment of these measures?

3. What concrete measures have been implemented to date in relation to combating tax fraud and evasion? What is its assessment of these measures?

**Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

1. The Commission plans to issue an Action Plan in December 2012 which will support the development of an approach shared by all Member States in terms of defining so-called 'tax havens' and coordinated ways of dealing with them. The Commission hopes that, as a consequence of the measures Member States are expected to take following its initiative, the third countries concerned will reform their tax systems in such a way that they would no longer be considered as tax havens.

2. The EU has an established policy on good governance in tax matters ([1]) (greater transparency of tax systems, exchange of information and fair tax competition). It is not limited to 'tax havens' per se, but aims at improving good governance in the tax area in all countries. This policy has found its expression in a number of pieces of EU legislation (e.g. the directive on Administrative Cooperation ([2]) and the Savings Taxation Directive ([3])). It is compounded by political commitments taken by Member States (e.g. the Code of Conduct for Business Taxation ([4])). As regards third countries, tax clauses in relevant agreements with them ensure their commitment to good governance in the tax area. A detailed assessment of the effectiveness of the Savings Taxation Directive has been carried out and is available online ([5]).

3. With regard to concrete measures implemented in relation to combating tax fraud and evasion, the Commission refers to its communication ([6]) which analyses the existing situation and proposes concrete ways forward which will be further detailed in the abovementioned Action Plan.

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([1]) COM(2009) 201, 28/04/2009 and COM(2010) 163, 21/04/2010.
([2]) 2011/16/EU, 15/02/2011.
([3]) 2003/48/EC, 3/06/2003.
([4]) Council Conclusion 98/ C, 2/01, 1/12/1997.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/personal_tax/savings_tax/savings_directive_review/sec(2008)2767_en.pdf .
([6]) COM(2012) Final, 27/06/2012.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008429/12**
**à la Commission**
**Robert Goebbels (S&D)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Surcharge carburant appliquée par les compagnies aériennes

Afin de tenir compte de l'augmentation du prix du pétrole et du kérosène de ces dernières années, de nombreuses compagnies aériennes ont introduit une surcharge carburant, facturée à leurs passagers.

Cependant, le calcul et l'application de cette surcharge carburant, loin d'être toujours cohérents, sont même parfois contradictoires. Dans plusieurs cas, la surcharge carburant qu'applique une compagnie aérienne varie de manière ambiguë selon la distance de vol. Ainsi, la surcharge carburant appliquée par une même compagnie est parfois plus élevée pour un vol à courte distance que pour un vol à longue distance.

Mieux, il arrive même dans certains cas que les recettes issues de la surcharge carburant prélevée sur un vol soient plus élevées que le coût total du kérosène de ce même vol.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant de ces incohérences considérables concernant la surcharge carburant appliquée par les compagnies aériennes?

2. La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que ces surcharges sont trompeuses pour les passagers?

3. Les compagnies aériennes ont-elles le droit de prélever une surcharge carburant qui, à elle seule, couvre plus que le coût du kérosène?

4. La Commission entend-elle contrecarrer de telles pratiques?

**Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission**
*(8 novembre 2012)*

La Commission est au courant de la pratique des surcharges carburant intégrées par plusieurs compagnies aériennes au prix définitif de leurs billets d'avion et du fait que le niveau de ces surcharges carburant varie.

Le règlement (CE) n° 1008/2008 ([1]) contient des dispositions relatives à la transparence des prix. Son article 23, paragraphe 1, indique clairement que les compagnies aériennes sont en droit de prélever des surcharges carburant. Les compagnies aériennes sont néanmoins tenues de communiquer le montant de la surcharge carburant qu'elles appliquent de manière claire, transparente et non ambiguë au début et tout au long de tout processus de réservation.

La directive 2005/29/CE ([2]) contient des dispositions pour déterminer si une pratique commerciale appliquée par certaines entreprises est à considérer comme déloyale.

Il est de la responsabilité des États membres de faire appliquer ces dispositions, sous le contrôle de la Commission en tant que gardienne du traité. Il appartient dès lors aux États membres de déterminer si les surcharges carburant sont communiquées dans le respect du règlement ou sont de nature à tromper les passagers et de prendre les mesures qui s'imposent s'ils devaient établir qu'elles sont illicites.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 1008/2008 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 24 septembre 2008 établissant des règles communes pour l'exploitation de services aériens dans la Communauté, JO L 293 du 31.10.2008, p. 3.

([2]) Directive 2005/29/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 11 mai 2005 relative aux pratiques commerciales déloyales des entreprises vis-à-vis des consommateurs dans le marché intérieur, JO L 149 du 11.6.2005, p. 22.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008429/12**
**to the Commission**
**Robert Goebbels (S&D)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Fuel surcharge applied by airlines

In order to accommodate oil and kerosene price increases in recent years, many airlines have introduced a fuel surcharge, which is charged to their passengers.

However, the fuel surcharge's calculation and implementation is not always consistent, and is often contradictory. In many cases, an airline's fuel surcharge varies depending on flight distance. Thus, the fuel surcharge applied is sometimes higher for a short-haul flight than for a long-haul flight.

Furthermore, in some cases, the revenue from the fuel surcharge may exceed the total kerosene cost for that flight.

1. Is the Commission aware of these significant inconsistencies in airline fuel surcharges?

2. Does the Commission believe that these surcharges are misleading for passengers?

3. Do airlines have the right to levy a fuel surcharge, which exceeds the cost of the kerosene used?

4. Will the Commission deter such practices?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 November 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the practice of fuel surcharges applied by several airlines as part of the final price of air ticket and that its level varies.

Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 ([1]) contains price transparency provisions which clearly indicates in its Article 23, paragraph 1 that airlines have right to collect fuel surcharge. They shall communicate the amount of fuel surcharge in a clear, transparent and unambiguous way at the start of and throughout any booking process.

Directive No 2005/29/EC ([2]) contains provisions whether a commercial practice applied by commercial partners shall be considered unfair.

Since the Member States are in charge of the enforcement of these provisions, under the control of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty, it is therefore up to the Member States to determine whether the fuel surcharge is displayed according to the regulation and if its level is misleading for passengers and take appropriate action may it be found unlawful.

([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. 3-20.

([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, OJ L 149, 11.06.2005, p.22-39.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008430/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Vorteile des Freihandelsabkommens mit Japan für die Wirtschaft in der EU

In ihrer Pressemitteilung IP/12/810 vom 18.7.2012 berichtet die Kommission, ein Handelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Japan „würde das BIP der EU um beinahe ein Prozent erhöhen".

Exporte in den Bereichen Maschinen und Fahrzeuge (16,3 Mrd. EUR) und chemische Erzeugnisse (13 Mrd. EUR) machten gemeinsam circa 60 % der EU-Exporte nach Japan aus. Außerdem entfielen circa 76,5 % der EU-Importe aus Japan auf diese Bereiche.

1. Wird sich das von der Kommission prognostizierte Wachstum des BIP der EU auf die Bereiche Maschinen und Fahrzeuge sowie chemische und landwirtschaftliche Erzeugnisse beschränken?

2. Welcher Anteil des BIP-Wachstums wird der Kommission zufolge auf a) kleine und b) mittelständische Betriebe entfallen?

Die EU war im Jahr 2011 für Japan sowohl bei Importen als auch bei Exporten nur der drittwichtigste Handelspartner hinter der Volksrepublik China und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika.

3. Erwartet die Kommission, dass die EU durch den Abschluss eines Handelsabkommens für den japanischen Handel an Bedeutung gewinnt?

**Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission**
*(5. November 2012)*

1. Laut Folgenabschätzung über die Handelsbeziehungen EU-Japan ([1]) dürften Wirtschaftszweige wie die Agrar- und Ernährungswirtschaft, die Kraftfahrzeugindustrie sowie die Pharma- und Medizinproduktebranche, für die derzeit in Japan erhebliche nichttarifäre Hemmnisse bestehen, von einem Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der Europäischen Union und Japan am meisten profitieren. Dies bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass ein solches Freihandelsabkommen nicht auch anderen Wirtschaftszweigen zugutekommen würde. Praktisch die gesamte Bandbreite der EU-Wirtschaftsakteure, die Waren und Dienstleistungen nach Japan ausführen, dürfte von einem künftigen Freihandelsabkommen profitieren, da Zölle und nichttarifäre Handelshemmnisse für verschiedene Wirtschaftszweigen auslaufen werden.

2. Die bislang von der Kommission durchgeführten oder in Auftrag gegebenen Studien enthalten keine Angaben darüber, welcher Anteil des sich aus einem Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der Europäischen Union und Japan ergebenden Zuwachses des Bruttoinlandsprodukts (BIP) auf kleine und mittlere Unternehmen (KMU) entfallen wird. Generell wird bei optimistischer Schätzung davon ausgegangen, dass das BIP der EU durch ein Freihandelsabkommen um 0,8 % ansteigen wird. Nach der Folgenabschätzung dürften die KMU auf verschiedenen Ebenen von einem Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Japan profitieren. Japan ist der viertgrößte Zielmarkt für international tätige europäische KMU und gilt für sie auch als wichtiges Sprungbrett und Testgelände für die Bearbeitung des asiatischen Markts. Ein Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Japan würde eine Gelegenheit bieten, die bestehenden Kooperations- und Förderprogramme auszubauen und neue Exportförderprogramme vor allem für KMU aufzulegen.

3. Der Abschluss eines Freihandelsabkommens geht in der Regel mit einer Zunahme des bilateralen Handels einher, was auch für das Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Japan erwartet wird.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/july/tradoc_149809.pdf

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008430/12**
**to the Commission**
**Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* The advantages of the free trade agreement with Japan for business in the European Union

In Press Release IP/12/810 from 18 July 2012, the Commission reports that a trade deal between the EU and Japan 'could boost the EU's GDP by almost one per cent'.

Exports in the areas of machinery and motor vehicles (EUR 16.3 billion) and chemical products (EUR 13 billion) jointly accounted for approx. 60 % of EU exports to Japan. Furthermore, approx. 76.5 % of the EU's imports from Japan were also in these areas.

1. Will the growth in the EU's GDP predicted by the Commission be limited to the areas of machinery and motor vehicles, as well as chemical and agricultural products?

2. According to the Commission, what proportion of GDP growth will affect (a) small and (b) medium-sized enterprises?

In 2011, the EU was only the third most important trading partner for Japan in terms of both imports and exports, behind China and the United States of America.

3. Does the Commission expect that the conclusion of a trade agreement will mean that the EU will gain further importance for Japanese trade?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 November 2012)*

1. According to the impact assessment Report on EU-Japan trade relations ([1]), sectors such as agro-food, automotive, pharmaceutical and medical devices, that are currently subject to significant non-tariff barriers (NTBs) in Japan, are likely to benefit the most from any EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA). However, this does not imply that other sectors will not benefit. In fact, EU exporters of goods and services to Japan are likely to see the benefits from any future FTA across the board, as tariffs and NTBs affecting various sectors will be phased out.

2. The studies conducted or commissioned by the Commission to date have not provided the figure of the proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) growth that will affect small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as a result of any EU-Japan FTA. Overall, the expected impact of a FTA on the GDP of the EU under the ambitious scenarios is predicted to reach 0.8%. According to the impact assessment, SMEs should gain from an EU-Japan FTA on a number of levels. Japan is the fourth target market for European internationalised SMEs which also consider Japan as a strong launch pad and testing ground for the Asian market. An EU-Japan FTA would be an opportunity to strengthen existing cooperation and support programmes and create new programmes that focus on helping SMEs to increase their exports.

3. The completion of a FTA implies a general increase in bilateral trade exchanges. The same is expected from the completion of an EU-Japan FTA.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/july/tradoc_149809.pdf

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008431/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Seventh 'Article 8' dialogue between The Gambia and the EU

The recent 'Article 8' political dialogue between The Gambia and the EU was held on 6 June 2012 to discuss the political dimension of the Cotonou Agreement. During the consultations, focal issues included human rights, the rule of law, democracy, regional issues and development cooperation.

Can the Commission provide further information on the conclusions reached at the Article 8 dialogue, and especially regarding discussions about the judiciary, rule of law, and human rights? Additionally, Article 19.2 of the Cotonou Agreement requires signatories to put in place 'qualitative and quantitative' indicators of progress. Could the Commission therefore provide an assessment of the current democratic environment in The Gambia, particularly in light of the recent political decision by the President to resume executions of prisoners on death row, and the subsequent execution of nine inmates in August 2012?

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

Governance, the rule of law and human rights, the freedom of the media, the death penalty, access to prisons or non-discrimination are regularly discussed in the article 8 political dialogue with the Gambia. However, progress in delivering on commitments from the Gambian side in the current format of this dialogue has proven unsatisfactory.

The nine executions carried out in August 2012 reversed a de facto moratorium on the death penalty in place for 27 years and go against the country's constitutional and international commitments. It is estimated that 38 persons remain on death row. International pressure, including a statement by the HR/VP and meetings of EU Heads of Mission with the Gambian authorities together with appeals from African leaders and civil society resulted in the reinstatement of a moratorium, conditional on the decline of violent crime in the country.

Despite this moratorium, the country's human rights situation remains of serious concern. Disappearances of journalists are still unexplained, politically motivated arrests and reports of torture remain commonplace. The closure of an independent radio station and more recently of two newspapers for their coverage of the death penalty issue, as well as the arrest and charges laid against journalists requesting a permit to peacefully demonstrate against the executions are more recent examples.

Against this background and the lack of progress on these issues, the EU intends to intensify its political dialogue with the Gambia and introduce concrete benchmarks and timelines for progress. Discussions will also be held with the African Union, which has undertaken to pursue the issue of the death penalty in the Gambia and, more generally, across Africa.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008432/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(25 september 2012)*

*Betreft:* Bericht van vrede en tolerantie

Uit het „bericht van vrede en tolerantie" van 20 september 2012 van mevrouw Ashton maak ik op dat zij zich sterk maakt voor de vrijheid van meningsuiting. Ook maak ik op dat zij religieuze haatzaaierij die leidt tot vijandigheid en geweld, veroordeelt. Zij concludeert dat het enige antwoord op de duisternis van intolerantie en onwetendheid, het licht van wederzijds respect, tolerantie en dialoog is.

Deze opstelling van mevrouw Ashton brengt mij tot de volgende vier vragen aan de Commissie.

1. Welke initiatieven onderneemt de Commissie om de regeringen van onder andere Egypte en Libië te bewegen maatregelen te nemen tegen degenen die in hun naties oproepen tot vijandigheid of religieus geweld tegen westerse instituties en bedrijven?

2. Op welke wijze wil de Commissie bewerkstelligen dat met de genoemde landen consensus wordt bereikt over tolerantie en respect voor alle religies?

Ik zet vraagtekens bij de bijzin van mevrouw Ashtons pleidooi voor vrijheid van meningsuiting, namelijk: „het tonen van respect voor alle profeten ongeacht hun religie". Een wezenlijk onderdeel van de vrijheid van meningsuiting is het ter discussie kunnen stellen van alles.

3. Veroordeelt de Commissie, in het licht van de bijzin van mevrouw Ashton, nu ook dragers van de westerse cultuur, zoals Spino.a. Erasmus, Dante en Rushdie voor het zich kritisch uitlaten over de islam?

Ieder mens is de baas van zijn eigen emoties. Emoties worden niet door anderen opgelegd, die roept iemand zelf op. Dat geldt ook voor het gevoel beledigd te zijn (onrespectvol behandeld). Niet de boodschapper beledigt, de ontvanger van de boodschap voelt zich al dan niet beledigd.

4. Ongeacht of de Commissie de in vraag drie genoemde kunstenaars, schrijvers en/of filosofen veroordeelt, waar ligt volgens de Commissie de grens tussen het uiten van kritiek en het al dan niet tonen van respect (beledigen), zeker als men bedenkt dat het zich al dan niet beledigd voelen een expliciete keuze is van de ontvanger van kritiek?

**Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie**
*(4 december 2012)*

Staten die partij zijn bij het Internationaal Verdrag inzake burgerrechten en politieke rechten, zoals Egypte en Libië, zijn op grond van artikel 20 van dit verdrag verplicht het propageren van op godsdienst gebaseerde haatgevoelens die aanzetten tot discriminatie, vijandigheid of geweld, bij wet te verbieden. De Europese Unie benut elke gelegenheid om deze staten aan hun internationale verplichtingen te herinneren.

De EU steunt de follow-up die wordt gegeven aan resolutie 16/18 van de Mensenrechtenraad van de VN, die in maart 2011 bij consensus werd aangenomen na nauwe samenwerking met de Organisatie van Islamitische Samenwerking. In deze resolutie wordt met name „het propageren van op godsdienst gebaseerde haat tegen individuen die aanzet tot discriminatie, vijandigheid of geweld" veroordeeld en worden staten opgeroepen doeltreffende maatregelen voor de bestrijding van incidenten te nemen.

De EU hecht veel belang aan kritisch denken. De vrijheid van meningsuiting is immers cruciaal in de ontwikkeling van het Europese gedachtegoed. Bovendien is de vrijheid van meningsuiting onlosmakelijk verbonden met andere mensenrechten en fundamentele vrijheden, die samen bijdragen tot de ontwikkeling van pluralistische en democratische samenlevingen.

De vrijheid van meningsuiting heeft echter algemeen erkende beperkingen, zoals het aanzetten tot haat. Deze beperkingen zijn vastgesteld in artikelen 19 en 20 van het Internationaal Verdrag inzake burgerrechten en politieke rechten. Overeenkomstig artikel 19 kan het recht op vrijheid van meningsuiting aan bij wet voorziene beperkingen worden gebonden in het belang van de rechten of de goede naam van anderen of in het belang van de nationale veiligheid, de openbare orde, de volksgezondheid of de goede zeden.

In plaats van af te tasten waar de grenzen van dit recht precies liggen, streeft de EU in haar omgang met derde landen en regionale organisaties een respectvol contact na waarbij alle partijen hun grieven kunnen uiten.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008432/12**
**to the Commission**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Message of peace and tolerance

I conclude from Baroness Ashton's 'message of peace and tolerance' of 20 September 2012 that she is strongly committed to freedom of expression. I also conclude that she condemns religious hatred that incites hostility and violence. She says at the end of her message that 'the only answer to the darkness of intolerance and ignorance is the light of mutual respect, tolerance and dialogue'.

Baroness Ashton's stance has prompted me to put the following four questions to the Commission.

1. What initiatives will the Commission introduce to induce governments, including those of Egypt and Libya, to take measures against persons in their countries who incite hatred or religious violence against Western institutions and companies?

2. How does the Commission propose to achieve consensus with the aforesaid countries on tolerance and respect for other religions?

I have some doubts as to the following part of Baroness Ashton's appeal for freedom of expression: 'respecting all prophets, regardless of which religion they belong to'. An essential part of freedom of expression is the freedom to call anything into question.

3. Does the Commission, in light of Baroness Ashton's words, also condemn such pillars of Western culture as Spinoza, Erasmus, Dante and Rushdie for their critical statements on Islam?

Every person is the master of his or her emotions. Emotions are not imposed on us by other people, their source lies within us. This is also true of our perception of insult (or disrespect). The insult does not come from the messenger. It is the receiver of the message that feels insulted or not.

4. Irrespective of whether or not the Commission condemns the artists, writers and/or philosophers named in question three, where does the Commission draw the line between the voicing of criticism and being disrespectful (insulting), especially if one believes that feeling insulted is the explicit choice of those who receive that criticism?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(4 December 2012)*

State parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), such as Egypt and Libya, have an obligation to prohibit advocacy of religious hatred constituting incitement of discrimination, hostility or violence according to the article 20 of the ICCPR. The EU takes every opportunity to recall their international obligations.

The EU supports the follow up work to UN Human Rights Resolution 16/18, consensually adopted in March 2011, after close cooperation with the Organisation of Islamic Conference. It notably condemns 'any advocacy of religious hatred against individuals that constitute incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence' and it urges states to take effective measures to combat such incidents.

The EU is a firm believer in critical thinking. Indeed, freedom of expression has fundamental value in the development of European ideas. Herein, it is also important to note that freedom of expression is intrinsically linked to other human rights and freedoms, which all contribute to the building of pluralist and democratic societies.

Freedom of expression has some well recognised limitations, such as incitement to hatred. That line is defined in Article 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). According to the article 19 of ICCPR, the right to freedom of expression can be legitimately restricted by law to safeguard the rights or reputation of others, or for the protection of national security, of public order, or public health or morals.

The EU, rather than testing where those precise lines run, strives in its relations with third countries and regional organisations to engage in respectful exchange which allows for all to express their grievance.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008433/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)**
*(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Αύξηση τροχαίων ατυχημάτων

Σύμφωνα με απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην ερώτηση H-0462/2010 ([1]), «ο ετήσιος αριθμός θανάτων από τροχαία ατυχήματα σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ παραμένει απαράδεκτα υψηλός». Στην Ελλάδα, σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που έδωσε στη δημοσιότητα η Γενική Αστυνομική Διεύθυνση Αττικής, μόνο τον Αύγουστο 2012 κατεγράφησαν 21 τροχαία δυστυχήματα και 400 ατυχήματα, ενώ επισημαίνεται ότι κυριότερα αίτια των ατυχημάτων αυτών ήταν η απρόσεκτη και επικίνδυνη οδήγηση, η παραβίαση προτεραιότητας, η παραβίαση ερυθρού σηματοδότη και σε πολλές περιπτώσεις η μη χρήση προστατευτικού κράνους από τους οδηγούς και επιβάτες των δικύκλων. Επιπλέον, τραγικά τροχαία ατυχήματα σε μεγάλους ευρωπαϊκούς οδικούς άξονες, όπως αυτό με το βελγικό σχολικό λεωφορείο στην Ελβετία τον περασμένο Μάρτιο, έχουν καταστήσει σαφή την ανάγκη λήψης πρόσθετων και αποτελεσματικότερων μέτρων για την προστασία των πολιτών στους δρόμους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχουν ολοκληρωθεί οι χρηματοδοτούμενες δραστηριότητες στον τομέα των τραυματισμών σε τροχαία και στην παροχή πρώτων βοηθειών (χρηματοδότηση του 2011); Αν ναι, είναι διαθέσιμος ο απολογισμός;

2. Υπήρχαν οφέλη και ποια από τη χρήση νέων τεχνολογιών (όπως τα ευφυή συστήματα μεταφορών) στη μείωση των τροχαίων ατυχημάτων;

3. Ποιες δυνατότητες και τί είδους βοήθεια παρέχει σε κράτη μέλη, όπου η οδική ασφάλεια παραμένει σχετικά ελλιπής ώστε να βελτιώσουν την κατάσταση των οδικών τους αρτηριών;

4. Τί περιμένει από τη φετινή χρηματοδότηση ενός Φόρουμ νεολαίας για την οδική ασφάλεια (Youth Forum for Road Safety);

**Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(8 Νοεμβρίου 2012)*

Οι δραστηριότητες που αντιστοιχούν στις πέντε πρωτοβουλίες που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τον προϋπολογισμό του 2011, δηλαδή όσες επελέγησαν βάσει της πρόσκλησης υποβολής προτάσεων του 2011, έχουν μόλις ξεκινήσει. Τα αποτελέσματα των έργων θα καταστούν διαθέσιμα μόλις αυτά ολοκληρωθούν. Μετά την ολοκλήρωσή τους, θα είναι διαθέσιμη μία τελική έκθεση για κάθε ένα από αυτά. Ο κατάλογος δράσεων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται βάσει των προσκλήσεων υποβολής προτάσεων σχετικά με την οδική ασφάλεια και έχουν ήδη ολοκληρωθεί έχει δημοσιευτεί στον ιστότοπο περί μεταφορών της Επιτροπής μαζί με τις εκθέσεις των έργων ([2]).

Σύμφωνα με υπάρχουσες μελέτες και έρευνες, κάποια προηγμένα συστήματα υποβοήθησης του οδηγού (ADAS) ίσως έχουν τη δυνατότητα να μειώσουν τον αριθμό των οδικών ατυχημάτων και των ανθρώπινων απωλειών. Η Επιτροπή θα αξιολογήσει αυτές τις δυνατότητες προκειμένου να αποφανθεί περί της εφαρμογής τους.

Η οδηγία 2008/96/ΕΚ για τη διαχείριση της ασφάλειας των οδικών υποδομών υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να θέσουν σε εφαρμογή διαδικασίες ασφάλειας στο διευρωπαϊκό οδικό δίκτυο (TERN). Τα μέτρα που μπορούν να ληφθούν συμπεριλαμβάνονται συχνά στις εθνικές κατευθυντήριες γραμμές που προβλέπονται από το άρθρο 8 της οδηγίας και σύντομα θα είναι διαθέσιμα στον ιστότοπο της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για την οδική ασφάλεια. (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/index_el.htm)

Το αποτέλεσμα που αναμένεται από το Φόρουμ Νεότητας για την οδική ασφάλεια είναι η δημιουργία ενός δικτύου οργανώσεων νέων σε ολόκληρη την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, του οποίου το ενδιαφέρον για την οδική ασφάλεια μπορεί να συνεισφέρει στην επιστράτευση των νέων για την καταπολέμηση των αιτίων των ατυχημάτων.

([1]) Προφορική απάντηση στις 19.10.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/projects/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008433/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Increase in road accidents

In reply to Question H-0462/2012 ([1]) the Commission indicated that the number of road accidents in the EU as a whole remains unacceptably high. In Greece, according to the Attiki police general directorate in August 2012 alone 400 collisions and 21 serious road accidents were reported for which the principal reasons were driving without due care and attention, reckless driving, failure to respect priority, failure to stop at a red light and in many cases failure by drivers and passengers of two-wheeled vehicles to wear helmets. Following a number of tragic road accidents on European motorways involving, for example, a Belgian coach travelling with school children through Switzerland last March, it is clear that more effective measures must be taken to protect road users.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission indicate whether the funded initiatives to assist road casualties and provide first aid (2011 budget) have been carried out? If so, has the report been drawn up?

2. What, if any, are the advantages of new technological applications (for example smart transport systems) in reducing road accidents?

3. What measures are being taken by Member States and what assistance provided to improve the situation on road arteries where road safety standards are still inadequate?

4. What results is it expecting from the funding being provided this year for a Youth Forum for Road Safety?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 November 2012)*

The activities corresponding to the five initiatives co-financed under the 2011 budget, i.e. selected following the 2011 call for proposals, have recently started. The results of these projects will not be available until they are finalised. After their conclusion, a final report will be available for each one of them. The list of actions co-financed under the calls for proposals related to road safety that are already finalised is published in the Commission's transport website, together with the project reports ([2]).

According to existing studies and research some Advanced Driver Assistance Systems have potential to reduce the number of road accidents and fatalities. The Commission is going to assess this potential in order to decide on its implementation.

Directive 2008/96/EC on road infrastructure safety management obliges Member States to put in place safety procedures applying to the Trans European Road Network. The measures that can be taken are often included on the national guidelines foreseen by Article 8 of the directive, and will soon be available on the European Commission's road safety website (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/index_en.htm).

The result expected from the Youth Forum for Road Safety is the setup of a European Union wide network of youth organisations with an interest in road safety that can contribute to involve youngsters in the fight against the causes of accidents.

([1]) Oral reply of 19 October 2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/projects/index_en.htm

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008434/12**
**à la Commission**
**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)**
*(25 septembre 2012)*

*Objet:* Durée des études en matière d'autorisation d'OGM sur le marché européen

Suite à la publication, le 19 septembre dernier dans la revue «*Food and Chemical toxicology*», de l'étude du professeur Gilles Séralini sur les effets du maïs NK 603 et du Roundup, produits par Monsanto et importés dans l'Union européenne, le débat sur les OGM est relancé. La Commission a saisi l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) pour analyser les résultats de cette étude portant sur 200 rats nourris au maïs NK 603 pendant deux ans et atteints de tumeurs.

Alors que, depuis sa publication, l'étude fait l'objet de critiques virulentes mettant en cause son caractère scientifique, des questions fondamentales se posent déjà, avant même le rendu des avis des autorités sanitaires nationales et européennes:

1. Pourquoi la Commission n'a-t-elle jamais exigé, aussi bien des industriels que de l'EFSA, des études de longue durée — allant au-delà de 3 mois, la norme actuelle — pour vérifier la dangerosité ou prouver l'innocuité des OGM? Pourquoi, alors que les effets des OGM ne sont connus que sur le long terme, aucune étude de ce type n'a jamais été réalisée?

2. Comment la Commission s'explique-t-elle le fait que ce soit une étude non gouvernementale qui ait été la première à réaliser une analyse de cette envergure?

3. Enfin, comment expliquer à nos concitoyens que nous avons laissé entrer des produits OGM dans l'Union européenne sans avoir pris la peine d'étudier pleinement leurs conséquences environnementales et sanitaires?

**Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission**
*(26 novembre 2012)*

Dans son rapport de 2008 intitulé «Safety and nutritional assessment of GM plants and derived food: The role of animal feeding trials» (évaluation de la sécurité et de la valeur nutritionnelle des plantes génétiquement modifiées et des denrées alimentaires qui en sont dérivées: le rôle des essais par administration à des animaux), l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a conclu que des études d'une durée de 90 jours sur des rongeurs sont normalement suffisantes pour détecter les effets toxicologiques généraux de composés qui seraient également visibles après une exposition chronique. Le groupe scientifique «OGM» de l'EFSA est parvenu à la conclusion qu'en général, on n'estimait pas que les essais de toxicité chronique, à long terme, des denrées alimentaires et aliments pour animaux GM complets étaient susceptibles de fournir plus d'informations que celles déjà obtenues à partir de l'analyse de séquençage, d'essais *in vitro* ou d'études subchroniques (administration orale sur 90 jours).

Les denrées alimentaires et aliments pour animaux génétiquement modifiés ne peuvent être mis sur le marché de l'Union européenne qu'après avoir été soumis, sous la responsabilité de l'EFSA, à une évaluation scientifique, menée sur la base des critères les plus rigoureux, de tous les risques qu'ils pourraient présenter pour la santé humaine et animale et l'environnement. Cette évaluation scientifique est suivie par une décision de gestion des risques adoptée par la Commission dans le cadre de la procédure d'examen prévue à l'article 5 du règlement n° 182/2011 ([1]), ce qui garantit une coopération étroite entre la Commission et les États membres.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 182/2011 établissant les règles et principes généraux relatifs aux modalités de contrôle par les États membres de l'exercice des compétences d'exécution par la Commission, JO L 55 du 28.2.2011, p. 13.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008434/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Duration of GMO authorisation studies on the European market

On 19 September 2012, Professor Gilles Séralini's study on the effects of Monsanto's NK603 maize and Roundup which are imported into the European Union, was published in the Food and Chemical Toxicology journal. It has relaunched the debate on GMOs. The Commission has asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to analyse the results of this study on 200 rats fed with NK603 maize for two years and showing tumours.

Although the study has been criticised since its publication, questioning its scientific nature, fundamental questions have already been raised before national and European health authorities have delivered their opinions:

1. Why has the Commission never asked the industry or the EFSA for long-term studies — beyond the current standard of three months — to check the hazardousness/harmlessness of GMOs? Given that the effects of GMOs will only be known in the long term, why has no study ever been carried out?

2. How does the Commission explain the fact that a non-governmental study was the first to carry out such an important analysis?

3. Finally, how do we explain to our fellow citizens that GM products have been allowed into the European Union without any efforts to fully study the impact of those products on health and the environment?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(26 November 2012)*

In its 2008 report 'Safety and nutritional assessment of GM plants and derived food: The role of animal feeding trials', the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) concluded that 90-day studies with rodents are normally of sufficient duration for the identification of general toxicological effects of compounds that would also be seen after chronic exposure. EFSA GMO panel also concluded that in general, long term, chronic toxicity testing of whole GM food and feed would not be expected to generate information additional to what is already known from sequencing analysis, *in vitro* testing and from sub-chronic testing (90 day feeding studies).

Genetically modified food and feed can only be authorised for placing on the EU market after a scientific evaluation of the highest possible standard, to be undertaken under the responsibility of EFSA, of any risks which they may present for human and animal health and for the environment. This scientific evaluation is followed by a risk management decision adopted by the Commission via the examination procedure foreseen in Article 5 of Regulation 182/2011 ([1]), thus ensuring close cooperation between the Commission and the Member States.

([1]) Regulation 182/2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers. OJ L55/13 of 28. 2.2011.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008435/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Emergenza smog in Italia

Dal Rapporto 2012 presentato dall'Agenzia UE per l'ambiente emerge che l'Italia sempre più spesso ha sforato il valore limite per il particolato, l'ozono, il monossido di carbonio, il nickel e il benzene. A ciò si aggiunge anche l'altissima concentrazione di polveri sottili e di ozono, in particolare in nord Italia, dove è stato sforato il limite di oltre due volte.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. Se l'UE non ritiene di dover intervenire per garantire la tutela della salute dei cittadini attraverso l'imposizione di sanzioni nel caso di mancato rispetto dei limiti previsti?

2. Come intende affrontare l'assenza di misure di sicurezza adeguate, come l'assenza di rilevatori del fumo, l'uso di combustibili solidi come fonte di energia e la scarsa ventilazione degli ambienti domestici, che sono solo alcuni dei fattori responsabili?

**Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(22 novembre 2012)*

Ai sensi dell'articolo 260 del trattato di Lisbona, le sanzioni per la non corretta applicazione della normativa dell'UE possono essere stabilite dopo che la Corte di giustizia abbia già constatato che uno Stato membro ha mancato ad uno degli obblighi ad esso incombenti e che lo Stato non ha preso i provvedimenti che l'esecuzione della sentenza comporta. Pertanto, è necessaria una successiva sentenza prima di irrogare una penalità o imporre il pagamento di una somma forfettaria allo Stato membro interessato. Va sottolineato che per i cosiddetti casi di «non-comunicazione», qualora uno Stato membro abbia mancato di attuare una direttiva, è prevista la possibilità di comminare una penalità sin dalla prima pronuncia della Corte di giustizia (Articolo 260, paragrafo 3, del TFUE).

La Commissione affronterà la questione dell'utilizzazione dei combustibili solidi nelle proposte elaborate conformemente alla direttiva 2009/125/CE sulla progettazione ecocompatibile dei prodotti connessi all'energia ([1]). Le misure proposte affronteranno la questione delle caldaie per il riscaldamento centrale alimentate con combustibile solido («Ecodesign ENER Lot 15») e degli apparecchi di riscaldamento dei locali («Ecodesign ENER Lot 20»). Nelle riunioni di consultazione con gli Stati membri e con le parti interessate, si è concordato sul fatto che dovrebbero essere stabilite specifiche di progettazione ecocompatibile per le emissioni più rilevanti provenienti da questi prodotti, inclusi particolati e monossido di carbonio, per migliorare la qualità dell'aria ambiente.

Esiste una normativa dell'UE concernente la qualità dei rivelatori di fumo per l'allarme antincendio ([2]), ma la qualità dell'aria in ambienti chiusi, la sicurezza antincendio e la qualità della ventilazione negli edifici rientrano nella competenza nazionale regolata ad esempio dalla normativa edilizia.

([1]) Direttiva 2009/125/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 ottobre 2009, relativa all'istituzione di un quadro per l'elaborazione di specifiche per la progettazione ecocompatibile dei prodotti connessi all'energia, GU L 285 del 31.10.2009.

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 305/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 9 marzo 2011, che fissa condizioni armonizzate per la commercializzazione dei prodotti da costruzione e che abroga la direttiva 89/106/CEE del Consiglio, GU L 305 del 4.4.2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008435/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Smog emergency in Italy

The 2012 Report presented by the European Environment Agency (EEA) shows that Italy has been exceeding the limit value for particulates, ozone, carbon monoxide, nickel and benzene with increasing regularity. To this may also be added the very high concentration of fine particulates and ozone, in particular in northern Italy, where the figure was more than double the limit value.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether the EU does not consider it necessary to intervene to guarantee the protection of citizens' health by imposing fines in the event of failure to respect the required limits?

2. How it will address the lack of adequate safety measures, such as the absence of smoke detectors, the use of solid fuels as an energy source and the limited ventilation of household environments, which are just some of the responsible factors?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

Under Article 260 of the Lisbon Treaty, the penalties for bad application of EC law can only be determined after the Court of Justice has already found that a Member State has failed to fulfil its obligations, and the State has not taken the necessary measures to comply with the judgment of the Court. A second judgment is therefore needed before imposing a penalty or lump sum payment on the Member State concerned. To be noted that for the so-called 'non-communication' cases, where a Member State has failed to transpose a directive, a penalty can already be envisaged with the first ruling of the Court of Justice (Article 260(3) TFEU).

The Commission will be addressing the use of solid fuels in proposals under Directive 2009/125/EC on ecodesign of energy-related products ([1]). The proposed measures will address solid fuel central heating boilers ('Ecodesign ENER Lot 15') as well as solid fuel local room heaters ('Ecodesign ENER Lot 20'). In consultation meetings with Member States and stakeholders, there is a consensus that there should be ecodesign requirements for the most relevant emissions from these products, including particulate matter and carbon monoxide, in order to improve ambient air quality.

There is EU legislation covering the quality of smoke detectors for fire alarm purposes ([2]), but indoor air quality, fire safety and the quality of ventilation in buildings are a matter of national competence regulated for example in building codes.

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([1]) Directive 2009/125/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products, OJ L 285, 31.10.2009.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 of the Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106/EEC, OJ L 305, 4.4.2011.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008436/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — 14 condanne a morte in Egitto

In Egitto un tribunale ha condannato alla pena capitale 14 militanti accusati di aver ucciso lo scorso anno diverse persone, tra cui alcuni poliziotti, in diversi attacchi. Gli uomini sono accusati di avere ucciso tre agenti di polizia, un militare e un civile sulla Penisola del Sinai fra giugno e luglio del 2011. Otto delle 14 condanne a morte sono state pronunciate in contumacia. I condannati hanno seguito il processo dietro a delle sbarre di ferro; dopo il verdetto hanno urlato parole di disprezzo nei confronti del presidente egiziano Morsi.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per sapere:

1. Se è a conoscenza della condanna inflitta ai 14 uomini,

2. Quali provvedimenti e azioni intende intraprendere per garantire ai detenuti egiziani il rispetto dei diritti civili e la possibilità di difendersi in tribunale.

**Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(20 novembre 2012)*

La Commissione è a conoscenza del verdetto cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare. L'Unione europea mantiene fermamente una posizione di principio contraria alla pena di morte la cui abolizione costituisce un obiettivo di primo piano per la politica dell'Unione in materia di diritti dell'uomo. La UE è in prima fila, come soggetto istituzionale, nella battaglia per l'abolizione della pena di morte e costituisce il principale donatore nell'ambito della lotta contro di essa. Il suo impegno è chiaramente illustrato negli orientamenti dell'Unione europea sulla pena di morte del 1998, i primi orientamenti in materia di diritti umani mai adottati dal Consiglio. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha fatto inoltre presente che l'abolizione della pena capitale in tutto il mondo costituisce per lei «una priorità personale». Pertanto, la questione viene regolarmente discussa in tutte le riunioni bilaterali pertinenti con il governo egiziano e segnatamente nel contesto del dialogo politico tra l'UE e l'Egitto. Iniziative a livello locale sono state prese dall'UE e/o dagli Stati membri in diverse occasioni (ed anche nel caso in esame) e un gruppo informale per i diritti dell'uomo monitora tutti i casi di pena di morte.

Il diritto a un giusto processo è un diritto umano fondamentale e l'UE si attende dalle autorità egiziane che si conformino ai loro impegni internazionali in materia.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008436/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — 14 death sentences in Egypt

In Egypt, a court has sentenced to death 14 militants accused of having killed a number of people last year, including some police officers, in various attacks. The men are accused of killing three police officers, a soldier and a civilian in the Sinai Peninsula between June and July 2011. Eight of the 14 death sentences were passed in the defendants' absence. The condemned men followed the proceedings from behind bars. After the verdict, they shouted disparaging comments about the Egyptian President, Mr Morsi.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative state:

1. Whether she is aware of the sentence imposed on the 14 men?

2. What provisions and initiatives she intends to adopt to guarantee the Egyptian prisoners respect of their civil rights and the possibility of defending themselves in court?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the sentence referred by the Honourable Member. The European Union holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty; its abolition is a key objective for the Union's human rights policy. The EU is the leading institutional actor and largest donor to the fight against the death penalty. This commitment is outlined clearly in the EU Guidelines on the death penalty, the first ever human rights guidelines adopted by Council, in 1998. The HR/VP has also indicated that abolishing capital punishment worldwide is a 'personal priority'. Accordingly, the abolition of the death penalty is raised in all relevant bilateral contacts with the Egyptian government, notably in the context of the EU-Egypt political dialogues. Local demarches by the EU and/or Member States have been carried out on several occasions (including on this case) and an Informal Group on Human Rights monitors all death penalty cases.

The right to fair trial is a basic human right and the EU expects the Egyptian authorities to comply with their international commitments in this regard.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008437/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Azioni in difesa dei due marò italiani

Lo scorso 15 febbraio Massimiliano Latorre e Salvatore Girone, militari italiani in forza al Battaglione San Marco, di stanza sulla petroliera italiana Enrica Lexie come nucleo militare di protezione nell'ambito delle missioni internazionali anti-pirateria nell'Oceano Indiano, sono stati posti in stato di fermo dalle autorità dello Stato indiano del Kerala ed accusati dell'omicidio di due pescatori indiani, scambiati per pirati. Dopo numerosi ed ingiustificati rinvii è attualmente pendente presso l'Alta Corte del Kerala il giudizio sulla giurisdizione.

Considerato che:

il Parlamento europeo, al paragrafo 30 della risoluzione P7_TA(2012)0203 ([1]) sulla pirateria marittima, approvata lo scorso 10 maggio, afferma che : «… in base al diritto internazionale, in alto mare si applica sempre alle navi e al personale militare a bordo — dunque anche nel caso di interventi di lotta alla pirateria — la giurisdizione nazionale dello Stato di bandiera; rileva inoltre che nessuna autorità diversa da quella dello Stato di bandiera può ordinare provvedimenti di arresto o di blocco di una nave, neanche se si tratta di misure investigative»;

la mancata soluzione positiva di questo caso rischia di compromettere le missioni internazionali anti-pirateria (tra le quali Atalanta), per l'Italia così come per altri paesi che considererebbero i propri militari troppo esposti;

i militari in questione sono militari qualificati come organi a pieno titolo dello Stato, il quale dovrebbe in ogni caso assumersi la responsabilità giuridica, per cui godono dello status di immunità funzionale secondo il quale gli organi dello Stato non possono essere sottoposti alla giurisdizione civile o penale di un altro Stato per atti compiuti nelle loro funzioni;

si interroga il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante dell'Unione per gli affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza per sapere:

1. quali azioni diplomatiche sono state finora intraprese e quali intende intraprendere per far sì che, nel rispetto del diritto internazionale, i due militari vengano riconsegnati all'Italia per essere sottoposti ad un equo procedimento giudiziario?

2. quali strumenti di pressione sono esercitabili dall'UE nei confronti dell'India nel caso in cui il giudizio sulla giurisdizione fosse sfavorevole all'Italia, in palese violazione del diritto internazionale?

**Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(7 gennaio 2013)*

A Bruxelles come a Nuova Delhi, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e il SEAE si sono adoperati sostenendo il governo italiano nel suo impegno per risolvere il caso dei due militari in stato di fermo, Massimiliano Latorre e Salvatore Girone, anche in riferimento alle norme internazionali che disciplinano situazioni del genere. La delegazione dell'UE in India ha avviato iniziative diplomatiche presso le competenti autorità indiane, chiedendo il loro contributo. Si spera che una soluzione possa essere trovata quanto prima. Nell'ambito del dialogo con la sua controparte indiana, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente continuerà ad accordare la più alta priorità alla questione ed è fiduciosa che questo complesso caso sarà presto risolto in modo soddisfacente, nel rispetto del diritto internazionale e sulla base delle norme internazionali concordate e riconosciute.

La questione relativa alla giurisdizione indiana è attualmente pendente presso la Corte suprema dell'India e bisognerà attendere il termine del procedimento giudiziario.

Nell'ambito del dialogo con le autorità indiane, l'UE continuerà ad accordare la massima importanza alla questione.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0203+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008437/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Measures to protect two Italian marines

On 15 February 2012, Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone, Italian soldiers from the San Marco battalion, stationed on the Italian oil tanker *Enrica Lexie* as a military protection corps forming part of international anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean, were taken into custody by the authorities of the Indian state of Kerala and charged with having murdered two Indian fishermen, mistaken for pirates. Following many unjustified delays, the decision on jurisdiction is currently pending before the High Court of Kerala.

Given that:

In paragraph 30 of Resolution P7_TA(2012)0203 ([1]) on maritime piracy, adopted on 10 May 2012, the European Parliament states that: '… on the high seas, according to international law, in all cases, including actions taken in the fight against piracy, the national jurisdiction of the flag state applies on the ships concerned, as well as to the military staff deployed on board; notes, moreover, that no arrest or detention of a ship may be ordered, even as a measure of investigation, by any authorities other than those of the flag state';

If the outcome of this case is not positive, it is likely to compromise international anti-piracy operations (including Atalanta), both for Italy and for other countries, who may consider their soldiers to be too exposed;

The soldiers in question are qualified soldiers and fully represent the state, which should in all cases assume legal responsibility; the soldiers enjoy functional immunity, under which representatives of the state cannot be subject to the civil or criminal jurisdiction of another state for acts performed in the course of their duties;

Can the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy say:

1. What diplomatic action has so far been taken and what action is planned to ensure that the two soldiers are returned to Italy to undergo fair legal proceedings, in compliance with international law?

2. What sort of pressure can the EU exert on India should the decision on jurisdiction go against Italy, which would be a clear breach of international law?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 January 2013)*

The HR/VP and the EEAS have been undertaking many efforts, both in Brussels and in New Delhi, in supporting of the Italian government's efforts to resolve the case of the two detained marines, Mr Massimiliano Latorre and Mr Salvatore Girone, including in relation to the international rules governing such situations. The EU Delegation in India has made demarches to the competent Indian authorities to request their contribution in resolving the case of the two Italian marines. It is hoped that a swift solution may be found soon. The HR/VP will continue to give this issue the highest priority in its contacts with its Indian counterparts and is confident that a satisfactory solution to this complex case consistent with international law will soon be found, based on agreed and recognised international norms.

The issue of Indian Jurisdiction in the case is now before the Supreme Court of India. The judicial procedures need to run their course.

We will of course continue giving this issue the highest priority in our contacts with our Indian counterparts.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0203+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008438/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Research by scientists at CRIIGEN in France

1. Research by scientists at CRIIGEN (Committee for Research and Independent Information on Genetic Engineering) in France has highlighted that a GM maize which has already been approved in Europe for use in food and feed, and Roundup (the weedkiller used with it), can cause tumours, premature death and organ damage at levels claimed to be safe by EU regulatory authorities. Is the Commission aware of these findings?

2. In light of CRIIGEN's research, does the Commission have any plans to freeze the progress of the new draft GM food and feed regulation (for authorisation of genetically modified food and feed) that is going through the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCFCAH)?

3. The not-for-profit group Earth Open Source states that if adopted the new regulation will confirm many of the weaknesses of the existing GMO risk assessment and further weaken it in ways that undermine existing EU GMO legislation and rigorous scientific principles, putting public and animal health at risk. Does the Commission agree with this assessment?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

1 & 2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-008278/2012 and E-008334/2012 ([1]), which address the findings of the study published by Séralini et al and follow up measures by the Commission.

3. The draft Regulation on applications for authorisation of GM food and feed will further define the requirements for GMOs risk assessment set in Regulation (EC) No 641/2004. Its adoption will therefore contribute to strengthen the protection of human and animal health and the environment in the EU. The drafting of the regulation included an extensive consultation with Member States, Members of the Parliament and stakeholders during the course of 2011 and 2012.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008439/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(25 de septiembre de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Posible conflicto de intereses en el banco malo de España

Siguiendo las recomendaciones señaladas en el MoU para el rescate del sector bancario español, el Gobierno central está trabajando para aprobar la legislación necesaria para poner en marcha un banco malo, o Asset Management Company (AMC), tal y como es nombrado en inglés. Esta AMC, tiene como objetivo ser un repositorio de activos tóxicos o de muy dudosa calidad provenientes de las entidades bancarias del Estado, y así sanear sus cuentas, dar credibilidad al sector y al Estado ante los inversores internacionales y disminuir las tensiones sobre la deuda pública. Además, con tal de disminuir la carga de los ciudadanos españoles, parece que se apuesta por un modelo según el cual los inversores privados ostenten más del 50 % de las acciones del AMC. Por otro lado, el MoU no incluye ninguna provisión en la que se defina condición alguna para los tenedores de acciones del AMC, ni su identidad ni si su carácter debe ser público o privado. En estos momentos también se está decidiendo qué clase de activos podrán ser vendidos al AMC y qué descuento se les aplicará. Decisiones ambas que tendrán gran repercusión en las cuentas de las entidades bancarias.

Por último, parece que el más probable accionista mayoritario del AMC será la misma banca española, que podría llegar a ostentar ella sola más del 50 % de las participaciones ([1]). De ser así, podría existir un conflicto de intereses en la dirección del AMC entre el interés público y el de las entidades bancarias accionistas. La existencia de conflictos de intereses es rechazada en el MoU en la condición 27 del anexo, en la que se pide que los banqueros en activo no puedan participar en el consejo de gobierno del FROB.

A la luz de todo lo anterior,

1. ¿Qué opina la Comisión sobre la posibilidad de que las mismas entidades bancarias que deben vender activos dudosos o tóxicos al AMC sean también sus accionistas mayoritarios? ¿Opina la Comisión que puede existir un conflicto de intereses?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que un AMC participado en su mayoría por entidades bancarias españolas será capaz de defender el interés público de los ciudadanos y no el interés corporativo de los mismos bancos?

3. ¿Qué clases de activos cree la Comisión que deberían ser incluidos en el AMC?

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

La Comisión ha trabajado intensamente con las autoridades españolas y los demás socios internacionales para definir los diferentes elementos de la sociedad de gestión de activos (SGA) que recibirá y gestionará los activos que se segreguen de los bancos que reciban ayudas estatales.

El principal objetivo de la SGA será gestionar los activos recibidos a fin de maximizar su valor. Este principio general no solo redunda en interés de los accionistas de la SGA, sino también en el más amplio de los ciudadanos.

Las autoridades españolas, junto con sus socios internacionales, están definiendo las características de la nueva SGA, incluidos los tipos de activos que se transferirán a ese vehículo. Estas características se hará públican en las próximas semanas.

Uno de los principales objetivos de este trabajo es garantizar que la SGA sea un vehículo privado y no forme parte del sector público. Por esta razón, la participación en el capital social de la SGA estará abierta a los inversores privados nacionales e internacionales. Los bancos que vendan activos a la SGA no se convertirán necesariamente en accionistas de la SGA.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/empresas/14395-la-gran-banca-rescata-a-guindos-ante-la-falta-de-inversores-para-el-banco-malo

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008439/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Possible conflict of interest in Spain's bad bank

Following the recommendations set out in the memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the rescue of the Spanish banking sector, Spain's central government is working to adopt the legislation needed to set up a 'bad bank', or Asset Management Company (AMC). The aim of the AMC is to be a repository for toxic assets or assets of very doubtful quality from the State's banking entities, and thus to put its accounts on a sound footing, give credibility to the sector and the State as far as international investors are concerned and reduce tensions about public debt. In addition, with the aim of reducing the burden on Spanish citizens, it seems that the government is opting for a model in which private investors will own over 50 % of the AMC's shares. On the other hand, the MoU does not include any provision laying down any condition for holders of shares in the AMC, either with regard to their identity or whether they should be public or private. A decision is also currently being taken as to what class of assets can be sold to the AMC and what discount will apply to them. Both these decisions will have a significant impact on the accounts of the banking entities.

Finally, it seems that the most likely majority shareholder of the AMC will be the Spanish bank itself, which could end up holding over 50 % of the shares ([1]). If this comes about, there could be a conflict of interests within the management of the AMC between the public interest and that of the banking entities holding shares. The existence of conflicts of interest is rejected in condition 27 of the annex to the MoU, where it is urged that active bankers should not be able to be members of the board of governors of the Spanish banking restructuring fund (FROB).

In view of the above:

1. What does the Commission think about the possibility that the same banking entities which have to sell doubtful or toxic assets to the AMC should also be its majority shareholders? Does the Commission think that there might be a conflict of interest?

2. Does the Commission believe that an AMC in which the majority of its shares are held by Spanish banking entities will be able to protect the public interest of the citizens and not the corporate interest of the banks?

3. What asset classes does the Commission believe should be included in the AMC?

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

The Commission has been working intensely with the Spanish authorities and the other international partners to define all the different elements of the Asset Management Company (AMC) that will receive and manage the assets segregated from banks receiving state aid.

The main purpose of the AMC will be to manage the assets received with the view to maximising their value. This overarching principle serves not only the interest of the shareholders of the AMC but also the wider public interest of citizens.

The Spanish authorities, together with their international partners, are in the process of defining the features of the new AMC, including the types of assets that will be transferred to this vehicle. These features will be made public in the coming weeks.

One of the main objectives of this work is to ensure that the AMC will be a private vehicle and not part of the State sector. For this reason, equity ownership of the AMC will be open to private national and international investors. The banks which sell assets to the AMC will not necessarily become the shareholders of the AMC.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/empresas/14395-la-gran-banca-rescata-a-guindos-ante-la-falta-de-inversores-para-el-banco-malo

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008441/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* VP/HR — Νέο σύνταγμα της Τυνησίας

Το κεφάλαιο 27 του νέου σχεδίου συντάγματος της Τυνησίας περιλαμβάνει τη διατύπωση: «Όλες οι μορφές ομαλοποίησης των σχέσεων με τον Σιωνισμό και τη σιωνιστική οντότητα [αποτελούν] έγκλημα που τιμωρείται από τον νόμο».

Διαχρονικά, ο εβραϊκός πληθυσμός στην Τυνησία έχει υποστεί εκτεταμένες θρησκευτικές διώξεις, με αποκορύφωμα τη βομβιστική επίθεση στη συναγωγή Ghriba στις 22 Απριλίου 2003, στην οποία έχασαν τη ζωή τους 21 άτομα.

Η εν λόγω ανησυχητική διάταξη αντικατοπτρίζει το μίσος που τρέφει για το Ισραήλ η παρούσα κυβέρνηση της Τυνησίας. Αν εγκριθεί αυτό το σχέδιο συντάγματος, ο εβραϊκός πληθυσμός της Τυνησίας αντιμετωπίζει κίνδυνο μαζικών διώξεων από την κυβέρνηση.

Οι ευρύτερες επιπτώσεις της διάταξης αυτής, σε περίπτωση που εγκριθούν παρόμοιες διατάξεις από άλλες χώρες στις οποίες είναι ισχυρός ο αντισιωνισμός, είναι ιδιαίτερα απειλητικές για το Ισραήλ.

Υπό το πρίσμα του εν λόγω σχεδίου συντάγματος, θα ήθελα να θέσω στην Αντιπρόεδρο/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπο τα ακόλουθα ερωτήματα:

1. Γνώριζε η Επιτροπή το εν λόγω κεφάλαιο του σχεδίου συντάγματος;

2. Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή κάποιο προγραμματισμένο σχέδιο δράσης για την αντιμετώπιση των ζητημάτων που συνεπάγεται η διατύπωση του εν λόγω κεφαλαίου; Αν ναι, ποιο;

3. Παρέχει η Επιτροπή οικονομική βοήθεια στην Τυνησία;

**Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(20 Νοεμβρίου 2012)*

Το σχέδιο συντάγματος της Τυνησίας αποτελεί επί του παρόντος αντικείμενο εκτεταμένου δημόσιου διαλόγου στην Τυνησία και τη Συντακτική Συνέλευση της χώρας.

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής είναι ενήμερη για το σχέδιο άρθρου 27 που περιλαμβάνεται στο ανεπίσημο σχέδιο του συντάγματος, καθώς και για διάφορες άλλες διατάξεις που προκαλούν ανησυχία. Οι διατάξεις αυτές συζητούνται ακόμη και η τελική μορφή του σχεδίου που θα υποβληθεί στη Συντακτική Συνέλευση για ψηφοφορία δεν έχει ακόμη καθοριστεί.

Σεβόμενη πλήρως τη κυριαρχία της Τυνησίας ως προς το θέμα αυτό, η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής αναμένει από την Τυνησία να θεσπίσει ένα σύνταγμα που θα αντικατοπτρίζει την προσήλωσή της στις αξίες που ενέπνευσαν την τυνησιακή επανάσταση, και ιδιαίτερα τη δικαιοσύνη, την ανεκτικότητα και τον σεβασμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων. Όλα αυτά τα θέματα συζητήθηκαν κατά τη διάρκεια του τακτικού πολιτικού διαλόγου μεταξύ της ΕΕ και της Τυνησίας.

Η ΕΕ παρέχει στην Τυνησία εκτενή χρηματοδοτική και τεχνική βοήθεια. Η συνολική στήριξη από τον ευρωπαϊκό μηχανισμό γειτονίας και εταιρικής σχέσης (ΕΜΓΕΣ) αυξήθηκε μετά την επανάσταση από 80 εκατ. ευρώ σε 150 εκατ. ευρώ το 2011 και θα φθάσει τα 390 εκατ. ευρώ κατά την περίοδο 2011-2013. Η στήριξη επικεντρώνεται στις πολιτικές και κοινωνικοοικονομικές μεταρρυθμίσεις που έχει αναλάβει η τυνησιακή κυβέρνηση. Για περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με τη στήριξη της ΕΕ, το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου καλείται να συμβουλευθεί τον ιστότοπο:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/tunisia/tunisia_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008441/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — New Tunisian constitution

Chapter 27 of the new Tunisian draft constitution states: 'All forms of normalisation with Zionism and the Zionist entity [shall be] a crime punishable by law'.

Over the years, the Jewish population in Tunisia has been subject to widespread religious persecution, culminating in the bombing of the Ghriba synagogue on 22 April 2003 when 21 people were killed.

This disturbing provision reflects the hatred for Israel that the current Tunisian Government nurtures. If the draft is put into effect, the Jewish population in Tunisia risks facing massive persecution by the Government.

The broader implications of this provision, should similar provisions be adopted by other countries where anti-Zionist sentiment is strong, are extremely threatening to Israel.

In the light of this draft constitution, I would like to ask the Vice-President/High Representative the following:

1. Was the Commission aware of this chapter in the draft?

2. Does the Commission have a planned course of action to address the issues that the wording of this chapter raises? If so, what?

3. Is the Commission helping Tunisia financially?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

The draft Tunisian constitution is currently the subject of extensive public debate in Tunisia and in the Tunisian Constituent Assembly.

The HR/VP is aware of draft Article 27 contained in the unofficial draft of the Constitution as well as a number of other provisions which raise concerns. These provisions are still being discussed and the final form of the draft to be submitted to the Constituent Assembly for vote has yet to be determined.

While fully respecting Tunisian sovereignty in this issue, the HR/VP looks to Tunisia to adopt a Constitution which reflects the commitment to the values that inspired the Tunisian Revolution including justice, tolerance and respect for human rights. All of these issues have been discussed in the course of the regular political dialogue between the EU and Tunisia.

The EU is providing extensive financial and technical assistance to Tunisia. Overall European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) support has risen since the revolution from EUR 80 million to EUR 150 million in 2011, and will reach EUR 390 million over the period 2011-2013. Support is focused on political and socioeconomic reforms undertaken by the Tunisian Government. For more details of EU support, the Honourable Member is kindly invited to consult:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/tunisia/tunisia_en.htm

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008442/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 settembre 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Attacco kamikaze in Nigeria contro chiesa cattolica

Un kamikaze si è fatto esplodere domenica nei pressi di una chiesa della città di Bauchi, nel nord della Nigeria. Secondo l'ultimo bilancio della polizia ci sarebbero «almeno tre morti» e diversi feriti. Tra le vittime una donna con un bambino. L'attentatore ha azionato il congegno di innesco dell'esplosivo, che portava addosso, all'ingresso della chiesa cattolica di San Giovanni, a Wunti, nella regione di Bauchi, dove si stava per celebrare una funzione. Secondo le prime notizie, l'attentato avrebbe fatto delle vittime e molti feriti, ma non si conosce ancora il bilancio della strage. La regione di Bauchi è di frequente attaccata dalla setta radicale islamica Boko Haram.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere:

1. Se è a conoscenza dell'attacco kamikaze in Nigeria?

2. Quali provvedimenti e azioni intende intraprendere per garantire il diritto di culto ai cattolici in Nigeria?

**Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(25 gennaio 2013)*

I recenti attentati dei militanti islamici in Nigeria hanno preso di mira, oltre alle chiese, edifici governativi e dei servizi di sicurezza, mercati, scuole e civili innocenti, sia musulmani che cristiani. L'Unione europea condanna questi attentati che rappresentano veri e propri atti criminali. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha rilasciato dichiarazioni in tal senso.

L'UE collabora con la Nigeria, sia direttamente sia tramite l'ECOWAS a livello regionale, per sostenerla nel difficile tentativo di creare condizioni di sicurezza durature e di affrontare i molteplici fattori socioeconomici e politici che conducono alla radicalizzazione. L'Unione ha già reindirizzato parti del programma di cooperazione con la Nigeria verso il nord del paese in modo da velocizzare le iniziative per la lotta alla povertà e alle privazioni nella regione.

Inoltre, nel luglio 2012, l'UE ha appoggiato lo sviluppo delle capacità di mediazione in una delle aree più a rischio avvalendosi dei fondi provenienti dal progetto per il sostegno alla mediazione (EEAS BL 2238), un'iniziativa del Parlamento europeo.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008442/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Suicide attack in Nigeria against the Catholic church

A suicide bomber blew himself up on Sunday close to a church in the city of Bauchi, in northern Nigeria. According to the most recent police statement 'at least three people were killed' and many were injured. The victims included a woman with a child. The bomber detonated the explosive device, which he was wearing on his back, at the entrance to St John's Catholic church, in Wunti, Bauchi region, where a service was about to be held. According to initial reports, the attack resulted in deaths and many injuries, but at this stage the massacre's final tally is not known. The Bauchi region is frequently attacked by the radical Islamic sect Boko Haram.

In view of this, can the Vice-President/High Representative say:

1. Whether she is aware of the suicide attack in Nigeria?

2. What steps and actions she intends to take to protect the religious rights of Catholics in Nigeria?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(25 January 2013)*

The recent attacks by militant islamists in Nigeria have targeted government and security buildings, markets, schools and innocent civilians both Muslims and Christians, as well as churches. All such attacks are criminal activities and have been condemned as such by the EU. HR/VP has made statements to that effect.

The EU is working together with Nigeria, both directly and with Ecowas on a regional basis, to help it tackle the challenges of creating durable security and dealing with multiple socioeconomic and political factors conducive to radicalisation. The EU has already reoriented parts of its cooperation programme in Nigeria to the North of the country to accelerate action against poverty and deprivation there.

In addition, in July 2012 the EU provided capacity building for mediation in one of the most fragile areas making use of funds from the mediation support project (EEAS BL 2238), an initiative by the European Parliament.

*(Slovenska različica)*

**Vprašanje za pisni odgovor P-008443/12**
**za Komisijo**
**Romana Jordan (PPE)**
*(25. september 2012)*

*Zadeva:* Določitev jedrnih omrežij v prometnih koridorjih

Evropska komisija je konec junija 2011 v svojem dokumentu, MFF KOM(2011)0500, naslovljenem „A Budget For Europe 2020 – Part II – Policy Fiches" priložila preliminarni seznam projektov koridorjev mobilnosti in projektov jedrnih omrežij (stran 58). Na tem seznamu je v baltsko-jadranskem koridorju določena veja, ki poteka na relaciji Gradec-Maribor–Ljubljana-Koper. S tem je povzela potek tovornega železniškega koridorja iz priloge uredbe o železniškem omrežju za konkurenčen tovorni promet ((EU) št. 913/2010).

V oktobru 2011 pa Evropska komisija v svoj predlog uredbe o instrumentu za povezovanje Evrope, KOM(2011)0665, te veje infrastrukturnih projektov ni vključila, ampak je v njem obdržala le prometno vejo Gradec-Beljak–Videm.

Zato Komisijo sprašujem:

1. Na podlagi katerih argumentov, podatkov in študij se je odločila za izključitev veje Gradec-Maribor–Ljubljana-Koper, vključno s pristaniščem Koper, iz dokumenta KOM(2011)0665?

2. Kakšna je z vidika metodologije za pripravo jedrnega omrežja utemeljitev vključitve nove prometne veje na relaciji Gradec-Celovec–Videm, med drugim z vidika stroškovno učinkovitega povezovanja tako imenovanih jedrnih vozlišč?

3. Na kakšen način Komisija preprečuje konflikt interesov pri določanju projektov jedrnih omrežij v prometnih koridorjih?

**Odgovor komisarja Kallasa v imenu Komisije**
*(17. oktober 2012)*

Koridorji osrednjega omrežja so bili zasnovani kot instrumenti za nemoteno izvajanje osrednjega omrežja pod nadzorom evropskega koordinatorja. Najbolj kompleksni odseki Trst/Koper-Divača-Ljubljana in nato med Pragerskim in Madžarsko so del Sredozemskega koridorja. Komisija se je s predlogom uredbe o vzpostavitvi instrumenta za povezovanje Evrope ([1]) želela izogniti čezmernemu prekrivanju koridorskih odsekov.

Metodologija zahteva, da so vsa mestna osrednja vozlišča po ustreznih prometnih tokovih povezana s sosednjimi mestnimi osrednjimi vozlišči. Benetke štejejo za sosednje Dunaju, saj trenutno skoraj 100 % cestnih in železniških prometnih tokov poteka neposredno in ne prek Ljubljane, enako pa bo tudi v prihodnje po izgradnji železniške proge Koralm. Navedeni projekt v izgradnji bo začel delovati leta 2024. Dosledna uporaba metodologije je najtrdnejša podlaga za preprečevanje navzkrižij interesov pri določanju projektov osrednjih omrežij.

([1]) COM(2011) 0665 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-008443/12**
**to the Commission**
**Romana Jordan (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Decision on core networks in transport corridors

In a document published in late June 2011 entitled 'A Budget For Europe 2020 — Part II — Policy Fiches' (MFF COM(2011) 0500), the Commission submitted a preliminary list of mobility corridors and core network projects (on page 58). That list included in the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor a branch linking Graz, Maribor, Ljubljana and Koper. It therefore follows the route of the rail freight corridor under the annex to Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight.

However, in October 2011, in its proposal for a regulation on an instrument for connecting Europe (COM(2011) 0665), the Commission did not include this branch in the infrastructure projects, but retained only the Graz-Villach–Udine transport link.

In light of the above, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What arguments, data and studies were used as a basis on which to exclude from document COM(2011) 0665 the Graz-Maribor–Ljubljana-Koper (including the Port of Koper) branch?

2. In terms of the methodology used to prepare the core network, what was the justification for including the new Graz-Klagenfurt–Udine branch, including from the point of view of the cost-effective connection of the so-called core hubs?

3. How did the Commission prevent any conflict of interests in determining the core network projects in the transport corridors?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(17 October 2012)*

Core network corridors have been conceived as instruments for smooth core network implementation, under the supervision of a European Coordinator. The most complex sections Trieste/Koper — Divaca — Ljubljana and further on to Pragersko and Hungary are part of the Mediterranean Corridor. It was the intention of the Commission in its proposal for a regulation establishing the Connecting Europe Facility ([1]), to avoid excessive overlapping of corridor sections.

The methodology requires that all urban core nodes be connected with their neighbouring urban core nodes, following the relevant traffic flows. Venice was considered as neighbouring to Vienna, because almost 100% of traffic flows take a direct way, not via Ljubljana, both on road and on rail, presently and with the future Koralm railway. This latter project is under construction and will be operational in 2024. Strictly applying the methodology is the strongest support to avoid conflicts of interest in determining core network projects.

([1]) COM(2011) 0665 final.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008444/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Klaus-Heiner Lehne (PPE)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Kfz-Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung

Die bisherige Kfz-Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung (Kfz-GVO) (EG) Nr. 1400/2002 läuft zum 31. Mai 2013 aus. Danach gilt die allgemeine Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung für den Automobilhandel (GVO) (EG) Nr. 800/2008. Vorschriften, die die Besonderheiten des Automobilhandels berücksichtigen, entfallen damit ersatzlos. Dazu zählen u. a. die zweijährige Mindestkündigungsfrist und die Möglichkeit zum Verkauf des Händlervertrages ohne Zustimmung des Automobilherstellers. Diese Regelungen waren erst im Jahre 2002 eingeführt worden. Ziel war es, die Abhängigkeit der kleinen und mittelständischen Händler von den Automobilherstellern zu verringern.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Marktsituation, die sich durch die Veränderungen ab Juli 2013 ergibt?

2. Viele europäische Unternehmen klagen über unfaire Praktiken bei ihren geschäftlichen Transaktionen. Solche Fälle hat die Europäische Kommission in ihrem Bericht 2010 zum Retail Market Monitoring Report selbst festgestellt. Im Rahmen eines weiteren Berichtes, der am 15.2.2012 veröffentlicht wurde, hat die Kommission darüber hinaus festgestellt, dass insbesondere im Automobilhandel häufig unfaire Handelspraktiken bestehen. Was gedenkt die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang zu unternehmen?

3. Wird dabei auch in Erwägung gezogen, die derzeit gültige Handelsvertreterrichtlinie 86/853/EWG zu ändern?

4. Wenn ja, mit welchem Inhalt?

5. Wann ist mit konkreten Vorschlägen der Kommission zu rechnen?

**Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission**
*(16. November 2012)*

1. Die Kommission geht nicht davon aus, dass die Anwendung des allgemeinen Wettbewerbsrechts (und besonders der Verordnung 330/2010 ([1])) ab dem 1. Juni 2013 zu erheblichen Veränderungen auf den Märkten für den Verkauf von Neuwagen führen wird. Nach Auffassung der Kommission liegen keine erheblichen Wettbewerbsbeeinträchtigungen vor, die diese Märkte von anderen Branchen unterscheiden würden. Die Marktverhältnisse werden durch wirtschaftliche Faktoren wie die vorhandenen Kapazitäten, die Intensität des Wettbewerbs zwischen Fahrzeugherstellern und die wirtschaftliche Lage in Europa insgesamt bestimmt.

2. Die Kommission leitete 2011 über das European Business Test Panel (Testgruppe europäischer Unternehmen) eine Konsultation zu unlauteren Handelspraktiken ein. Zahlreiche Kfz-Händler haben daran teilgenommen, was jedoch nicht bedeutet, dass festgestellt wurde, dass unlautere Handelspraktiken in der Kfz-Branche besonders häufig wären. Die Kommission beabsichtigt, in den kommenden Monaten eine Initiative zur Bekämpfung unlauterer Handelspraktiken in der Einzelhandelsabsatzkette einzuleiten. Über einen horizontalen Ansatz soll sie alle Wirtschaftszweige abdecken. Was den Kfz-Einzelhandel angeht, setzt sich die Kommission dafür ein, dass alle Beteiligten gemeinsame Grundsätze für bewährte Verfahren verabschieden. Dieses Ziel wurde auch im Abschlussbericht der Gruppe CARS 21 unterstützt ([2]). Die entsprechenden Arbeiten werden im vierten Quartal 2012 aufgenommen.

3. Die Ausweitung der Handelsvertreterrichtlinie 86/653/EWG ([3]) dürfte kein geeignetes Mittel sein, da die von dieser Richtlinie abgedeckten Gegebenheiten auf Kfz-Händler nicht zutreffen. Während Handelsvertreter den Verkauf oder den Ankauf von Waren für eine andere Person oder in deren Namen und für deren Rechnung vermitteln, handeln Kfz-Händler beim Ankauf von Fahrzeugen von den Herstellern und beim Weiterverkauf der Fahrzeuge an die Kunden im eigenen Namen.

4. Siehe Antwort der Kommission auf Frage 3.

5. Siehe Antwort der Kommission auf Frage 2.

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([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 330/2010 der Kommission vom 20. April 2010 über die Anwendung von Artikel 101 Absatz 3 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union auf Gruppen von vertikalen Vereinbarungen und abgestimmten Verhaltensweisen (ABl. L 102 vom 23.4.2010, S. 1).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/files/pagesbackground/competitiveness/cars21finalreport_en.pdf
([3]) Richtlinie 86/653/EWG des Rates vom 18. Dezember 1986 zur Koordinierung der Rechtsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten betreffend die selbstständigen Handelsvertreter.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008444/12**
**to the Commission**
**Klaus-Heiner Lehne (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation

The current Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation (EC) No 1400/2002 expires on 31 May 2013. After this, General Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 shall apply. This means that the provisions that take account of the special characteristics of the motor trade shall be removed and not replaced. These include the two-year minimum notice period for terminating a contract and the possibility of selling the dealer contract without the agreement of the car manufacturer. These provisions were first introduced in 2002. The aim was to reduce the dependency of small and medium-sized dealers on car manufacturers.

1. What is the Commission's view on the market situation that will result from the changes in July 2013?

2. Many European enterprises are complaining of unfair practices in their business transactions. The Commission itself identified cases of this kind in its Retail Market Monitoring Report in 2010. As part of another report published on 15 February 2012, the Commission also found that unfair trade practices are found particularly frequently in the motor trade. What does the Commission intend to do in connection with this?

3. Have any changes been considered to the current Directive for Commercial Agents 86/853/ECG?

4. If so, what is the nature of these changes?

5. When can we expect specific proposals from the Commission?

**Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 November 2012)*

1. The Commission does not expect that the application of the general competition regime (namely Regulation 330/2010 ([1])) as from 1 June 2013 will result in significant changes on the markets for new car sales. The Commission considers that there are no significant competition shortcomings which would distinguish these markets from other economic sectors. Conditions are determined by economic factors such as the existing capacities, the degree of competition between vehicle manufacturers and the prevailing conditions in the European economy as a whole.

2. In 2011, the Commission launched a consultation via the European Business Test Panel on unfair trading practices ('UTPs'). Many automotive retailers participated, but this does not imply that UTPs have been found to be particularly frequent in the motor trade. The Commission intends to launch an initiative to combat UTPs in the retail supply chain in the coming months. This initiative will address all economic sectors, with a horizontal approach. As regards the automotive retail sector, the Commission is committed to promoting the adoption of common principles of good practice by all stakeholders. This objective has been endorsed by the CARS 21 Final Report ([2]). Work will be launched in the last quarter of 2012.

3. Extending Directive 86/653/EEC on commercial agents ([3]) does not appear to be a viable option, given that it concerns situations that are entirely different from those of car dealers. Whereas a commercial agent negotiates the sale or purchase of goods for another person or in the name and on behalf of the latter, car dealers act in their own name when purchasing cars from manufacturers and when selling them on to customers.

4. Please see reply to Question No 3.

5. Please see reply to Question No 2.

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([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 330/2010 of 20 April 2010 on the application of Article 101(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to categories of vertical agreements and concerted practices, OJ L 102, 23.4.2010, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/files/pagesbackground/competitiveness/cars21finalreport_en.pdf
([3]) Council Directive 86/653/EEC of 18 December 1986 on the coordination of the laws of the Member States relating to self-employed commercial agents.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008445/12**
**an den Rat**
**Thomas Ulmer (PPE)**
*(25. September 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Einheitliche Anwendung des Arzneimittelrechts für pflanzliche Arzneimittel

Betreffend die einheitliche Anwendung des Arzneimittelrechts für pflanzliche Arzneimittel für alle Mitgliedstaaten wurde 2004 ein „vereinfachtes Registrierungsverfahren" für pflanzliche Arzneimittel durch die Richtlinie 2001/83/EG eingeführt.

Um eine Ausweitung dieses Verfahrens zu ermöglichen, wurde dem Rat und dem Europäischen Parlament im September 2008 ein Bericht der Kommission vorgelegt, um sicherzustellen, dass beide Organe das Vorhaben befürworten.

Laut der Antwort auf eine Anfrage an die Kommission über den Stand der Dinge benötigt die Kommission eine Reaktion des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, bevor sie weitere Schritte unternehmen kann (s. Antwort von Herrn Dalli vom 14.8.2012, E-006032/2012).

Ich bitte um eine kurze Stellungnahme des Rates zu diesem Thema.

**Antwort**
*(30. Januar 2013)*

Gemäß Artikel 16i der Richtlinie 2001/83/EG ([1]) legt die Kommission dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat einen Bericht über die Anwendung der Bestimmungen des Kapitels 2a („Besondere auf traditionelle pflanzliche Arzneimittel anzuwendende Bestimmungen") der genannten Richtlinie vor. Die Kommission hat im September 2008 einen entsprechenden Bericht in Form einer Mitteilung an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat ([2]) vorgelegt.

Der Rat hat keinen Standpunkt zu der betreffenden Mitteilung der Kommission festgelegt und beabsichtigt auch nicht, dies zu tun.

Es ist daran zu erinnern, dass die Kommission das alleinige Initiativrecht in Bezug auf Rechtsvorschriften hat, die den Binnenmarkt betreffen. Daher ist es nicht erforderlich, dass der Rat auf die betreffende Mitteilung der Kommission reagiert, damit die Kommission entsprechende Rechtsetzungsvorschläge, die sie in Bezug auf pflanzliche Arzneimittel für angezeigt hält, ausarbeitet und vorlegt. Sollte die Kommission beschließen, entsprechende Vorschläge vorzulegen, wird der Rat sie prüfen.

([1]) Artikel 16i wurde durch die Richtlinie 2004/24/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 31. März 2004 zur Änderung der Richtlinie 2001/83/EG zur Schaffung eines Gemein-schafts-kodexes für Humanarzneimittel hinsichtlich traditioneller pflanzlicher Arzneimittel (ABl. L 136 vom 30.4.2004, S. 85) eingefügt.
([2]) Dok. 13768/08.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008445/12**
**to the Council**
**Thomas Ulmer (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Uniform application of pharmaceuticals law for herbal medicinal products

In 2004, Directive 2001/83/EC introduced a 'simplified registration procedure' for the uniform application of pharmaceuticals law for herbal medicinal products in all Member States.

With the aim of opening up the process, the Commission submitted a report to the Council and the European Parliament in September 2008 to ensure that both institutions supported the project.

According to an answer to a question to the Commission on the status of the issue, the Commission requires a response from the European Parliament and the Council before it can proceed further (see the answer from Mr Dalli of 14 August 2012, E-006032/2012).

I would ask the Council briefly to state its position on this matter.

**Reply**
*(30 January 2013)*

Article 16i of Directive 2001/83/EC ([1]) requires the Commission to submit a report to the European Parliament and to the Council concerning the application of the provisions of Chapter 2a ('Specific provisions applicable to traditional herbal medicinal products') of that directive. In September 2008, the Commission presented that report in the form of a communication ([2]) to the Council and the European Parliament.

The Council has not established a position on the Commission Communication in question and does not intend to do so.

It should be borne in mind that the Commission has the sole right of initiative as regards internal market legislation. Therefore it is not necessary for the Council to reply to the Commission Communication in question in order for the Commission to prepare and present such legislative proposals as it deems appropriate concerning herbal medicinal products. Should the Commission decide to present such proposals, the Council will examine them.

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([1]) Article 16i was introduced by Directive 2004/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 amending, as regards traditional herbal medicinal products, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use (OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 85).

([2]) 13768/08.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008446/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Πώληση της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς

Στις 27.7.2012 έλαβε χώρα η πώληση της ΑΤΕ στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς.

Είναι διάχυτη η εντύπωση στην ελληνική κοινωνία, και υπήρξαν και οι αντίστοιχες καταγγελίες στο Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο, ότι όλα έγιναν σε καθεστώς πλήρους αδιαφάνειας, κυρίως με το επιχείρημα ότι, αφ' ενός ο αγοραστής, η Τράπεζα Πειραιώς, δεν θα ήταν σε θέση να αγοράσει, αφού προκειμένου για την επιβίωσή του είχε δεχθεί και θα δεχθεί κεφάλαια στήριξης εκ μέρους του Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας και, αφ' ετέρου, ότι το τίμημα απόκτησης της ΑΤΕ ήταν προκλητικά χαμηλό.

Ανεξάρτητα από την άποψη που μπορεί να έχει για την ιδιωτικοποίηση τραπεζών και ιδιαίτερα της συγκεκριμένης, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με βάση ποιόν νομικό κανόνα της ΕΕ έγινε η συγκεκριμένη πώληση; Ποιές ήταν οι εγγυήσεις διαφάνειας; Πόσοι και ποιοι συμμετείχαν με δεσμευτικές προσφορές τους στην απόκτηση περιουσιακών στοιχείων της ΑΤΕ ΑΕ;

2. Μπορεί να βεβαιώσει ότι ικανοποιήθηκε ο όρος για «τουλάχιστον 115 εκατ. ευρώ από επενδυτές της αγοράς, με πλήρη εγγύηση από κοινοπραξία τραπεζών» σύμφωνα με την έγκριση του Προγράμματος Αναδιάρθρωσης της ΑΤΕ την 23/5/2011 (IP/11/626);

3. Δεν είναι σκανδαλώδης παροχή υπέρ του αγοραστή, το ελληνικό δημόσιο να καταβάλει μέσω του Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας τουλάχιστον 6,7 δις ευρώ στην ΑΤΕ και η συγκεκριμένη Τράπεζα να αγοράζεται από την Τράπεζα Πειραιώς με 95 εκατομμύρια ευρώ;

4. Κατά τη συγκεκριμένη συναλλαγή, πώς προστατεύθηκαν τα συμφέροντα των μικρομετόχων στο ελληνικό χρηματιστήριο; Σε περίπτωση πώλησης και άλλων μεριδίων του δημοσίου σε εισηγμένες εταιρίες στο Χρηματιστήριο Αθηνών, είναι ενδεχόμενο να ακολουθηθούν οι ίδιες πρακτικές έναντι των μικρομετόχων;

**Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(28 Νοεμβρίου 2012)*

Η ΑΤΕ έχει αξιολογηθεί ως μη βιώσιμη από την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος. Επί σειρά ετών υπήρξε ζημιογόνος και έχει ανακεφαλαιοποιηθεί επανειλημμένα από την κυβέρνηση. Μετά τη συμμετοχή της στο πρόγραμμα PSI ([1]) η ΑΤΕ εμφάνισε μεγάλα αρνητικά ίδια κεφάλαια.

Το σχέδιο αναδιάρθρωσης της ΑΤΕ εγκρίθηκε από την Επιτροπή, βάσει των κανόνων για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις ([2]), πριν τη συμμετοχή της τράπεζας στο πρόγραμμα PSI το οποίο οργάνωσαν οι ελληνικές αρχές. Μετά την εφαρμογή του PSI, η ΑΤΕ χρειάστηκε πρόσθετη κρατική ενίσχυση η οποία δεν αποτελούσε μέρος του εγκεκριμένου σχεδίου αναδιάρθρωσης. Μία εκ των προϋποθέσεων του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα ([3]) ήταν η εκπόνηση μελέτης για τον τρόπο εξυγίανσης της ΑΤΕ.

Η εξυγίανση της ΑΤΕ πραγματοποιήθηκε βάσει των τροποποιημένων διατάξεων του άρθρου 63 του ελληνικού τραπεζικού νόμου ([4]). Η μεταβίβαση στον αγοραστή πραγματοποιήθηκε κατόπιν περιορισμένων προσφορών σε έναν αριθμό ελληνικών τραπεζών.

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([1]) Συμμετοχή ιδιωτικού τομέα.
([2]) Απόφαση για την αναδιάρθρωση της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας της Ελλάδος, ΕΕ C 317 της 29.10.2011, σ. 5.
([3]) Η έκθεση είναι διαθέσιμη στον ακόλουθο εξωτερικό σύνδεσμο (σ. 142): http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp94_en.pdf
([4]) Νόμος 4021/2011 για την τροποποίηση του νόμου 3601/2007.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008446/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Purchase of the Agricultural Bank (ATEbank) by the Bank of Piraeus

On 27 July 2012, ATEbank was purchased by the Bank of Piraeus.

This led to questions in the Greek Parliament, reflecting widespread public concern at the total lack of transparency regarding the deal. On the one hand it would appear that the Bank of Piraeus simply could not afford it, since, in order to survive, it had been accepting and would continue to accept support from the Financial Stability Fund, while on the other hand the ATEbank purchase price was suspiciously low.

Aside from the merits or otherwise of bank privatisation, particularly in this case, can the Commission answer the following:

1. On the basis of what EU legislation did this sale take place? What guarantees of transparency were provided? How many firm offers were made for ATEbank assets and by whom?

2. Can the Commission confirm that EUR 115m came from market investors with the full backing of a consortium of banks, as required under the ATEbank restructuring plan adopted on 23 May 2011 (IP/11/626)?

3. Given that the Greek Government, through the Financial Stability Fund, is providing at least EUR 6.7 billion for ATEbank, is the Bank of Piraeus, which is purchasing it for just EUR 95 million, not being offered unacceptably favourable terms?

4. What measures have been taken to protect the interests of small shareholders in Greece in connection with this transaction? If other public assets are sold to companies listed on the Athens Stock Exchange, is it fair on small shareholders to proceed in the same way?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

ATE has been assessed as non-viable by the Bank of Greece. It has been loss-making over the years and had been recapitalised by the government on several occasions. Following its participation in the PSI ([1]) operation, the bank had large negative equity.

The ATE restructuring plan was approved by the Commission under the state aid rules ([2]) before the bank's participation in the PSI operation organised by the Greek authorities. Following PSI, ATE needed additional state aid which was not part of the approved restructuring plan. It was part of the conditionality of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece ([3]) to provide a study on how to resolve ATE.

ATE's resolution has been executed based on the amended provisions of Art 63 of the Greek Banking Law ([4]). The transfer to the acquirer has been taken place after a limited offering to a number of Greek banks.

([1]) Private sector involvement.
([2]) Decision on Restructuring of Agricultural Bank of Greece, OJ C 317,29.10.2011, p. 5.
([3]) The report can be found on the following external link (pg. 142): http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp94_en.pdf
([4]) Law 4021/2011 amending Law 3601/2007.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008447/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)**
*(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Αγοραστική δύναμη και κατανάλωση Ελλήνων καταναλωτών εν μέσω οικονομική κρίσης

Σε πρόσφατη έρευνα που πραγματοποιήθηκε σε 16 χώρες, μεταξύ των οποίων και της Ελλάδας, έδειξε ότι σε αυτή τη δύσκολη οικονομική συγκυρία που διανύει η Ελλάδα τα τελευταία χρόνια, το 70% των ερωτηθέντων Ελλήνων αισθάνεται έντονη οικονομική και εργασιακή ανασφάλεια. Παράλληλα, από την εν λόγω έρευνα προκύπτει ότι σχεδόν όλοι οι Έλληνες έχουν επηρεαστεί προσωπικά από την οικονομική κρίση, ενώ εξαιτίας της ακρίβειας και της συνεχούς συρρίκνωσης των εισοδημάτων τους αισθάνονται χαμηλή αυτοπεποίθηση και έχουν μειώσει σημαντικά τις αγορές τους σε σχέση με προηγούμενα χρόνια, με το 68% να δηλώνει ότι θα μειώσει κι άλλο τις αγορές, το 28% θα παραμείνει στα ίδια επίπεδα και μόνο το 4% σκοπεύει να αυξήσει τις αγορές.

Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας, οι καταναλωτές στην Ευρώπη δήλωσαν ότι θα είναι πιο προσεχτικοί, όταν ξοδεύουν χρήματα σε προϊόντα για τα οποία δεν έχουν συστάσεις από έγκυρη πηγή, δείχνοντας εμπιστοσύνη περισσότερο στους ανθρώπους που γνωρίζουν, παρά στις ιστοσελίδες των προϊόντων ή τις διαφημίσεις.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που διαθέτει, υπάρχουν δομικές αλλαγές στις καταναλωτικές συνήθειες των Ελλήνων, οι οποίες θα μπορούσαν να δημιουργήσουν ένα νέο επιχειρηματικό πεδίο, με πολλές ευκαιρίες για τις επιχειρήσεις, που θα προσαρμοστούν στις νέες αυτές τάσεις;

2. Ποιές οι εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής για τα επίπεδα στα οποία θα κυμανθεί η αγοραστική δύναμη των Ελλήνων καταναλωτών δεδομένου ότι στην Ελλάδα το χάσμα μεταξύ επιπέδου μισθών και τιμών συνεχώς μεγαλώνει; Σε τί επίπεδα κυμαίνεται η αγοραστική δύναμη των καταναλωτών σε κάθε κράτος μέλος ξεχωριστά;

3. Σε τί επίπεδα κυμαίνεται η κατανάλωση των Ελλήνων μέσω Διαδικτύου σε σύγκριση με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

**Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(28 Νοεμβρίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή ενημερώνει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου ότι η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις επιπτώσεις τις οποίες έχει η οικονομική κρίση στην αγοραστική δύναμη του Έλληνα καταναλωτή και παρακολουθεί στενά την εξέλιξη των ιδιωτικών καταναλωτικών δαπανών καθώς και τις έρευνες που αφορούν στην εμπιστοσύνη των καταναλωτών. Με βάση οικονομικούς κυκλικούς παράγοντες και την αύξηση του ανταγωνισμού μέσω διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων στις αγορές προϊόντων, η Επιτροπή αναμένει μείωση των τιμών. Ως εκ τούτου, η διαφορά μεταξύ αμοιβών και τιμών αναμένεται ότι θα μετριαστεί, γεγονός που πιθανόν να έχει ως αποτέλεσμα οι έλληνες καταναλωτές να λαμβάνουν αποφάσεις για τις αγορές τους που θα παραμείνουν σε σχετικά σταθερό επίπεδο.

Το ηλεκτρονικό εμπόριο είναι λιγότερο ανεπτυγμένο στην Ελλάδα σε σχέση με την ΕΕ στο σύνολό της. Το 2011, το ποσοστό των ενηλίκων που δήλωσαν ότι έχουν πραγματοποιήσει αγορές μέσω του Διαδικτύου κατά τη διάρκεια του προηγηθέντος τριμήνου ήταν 13% στην Ελλάδα (20ή θέση μεταξύ των 27 ΚΜ) και 34% στην ΕΕ στο σύνολο της ([1]). Παρόμοια διαφορά παρατηρείται και σε ό,τι αφορά τις επιχειρήσεις: το 2011, ο κύκλος εργασιών από το ηλεκτρονικό εμπόριο αντιπροσώπευε στην Ελλάδα το 14% του συνόλου του κύκλου εργασιών των επιχειρήσεων στην ΕΕ και το 4% (22η θέση μεταξύ των 25 ΚΜ για τα οποία υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα στοιχεία) ([2]).

([1]) Πηγή: Κοινοτική έρευνα σχετικά με τη χρήση του Διαδικτύου από τα νοικοκυριά και τους ιδιώτες (έκδοση 2011). Ο δείκτης που χρησιμοποιήθηκε είναι: άτομα που παρήγγειλαν/αγόρασαν μέσω του Διαδικτύου προϊόντα ή υπηρεσίες για ιδιωτική χρήση κατά το τελευταίο τρίμηνο.

([2]) Πηγή: Κοινοτική έρευνα σχετικά με τη χρήση του Διαδικτύου από τις επιχειρήσεις (έκδοση 2011). Ο δείκτης αφορά το συνολικό ηλεκτρονικό εμπόριο (το 2010), δηλαδή τις αγορές μέσω δικτύου ηλεκτρονικών υπολογιστών (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των αγορών μεταξύ επιχειρήσεων και καταναλωτών και των αγορών μεταξύ επιχειρήσεων). Δεν συμπεριλαμβάνεται ο χρηματοπιστωτικός τομέας.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008447/12**
**to the Commission**
**Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Purchasing power of Greek consumers and consumption trends during the economic crisis

A recent survey of 16 countries including Greece has revealed that, in the context of the economic crisis which has been affecting Greece over the past few years, 70% of Greeks questioned feel extremely insecure regarding their financial situation and employment prospects. Furthermore, almost all Greeks have been personally affected by the economic crisis, while the high cost of living, coupled with the constant erosion of their earnings, has left their confidence at a low ebb and they have drastically cut their purchasing levels compared with previous years, 68% of them indicating that they would purchase still less in future, 28% planning to keep their purchasing at the same level, and only 4% planning to increase it.

It also emerges that consumers in Europe intend to be more cautious about spending money on products which have not been reliably recommended, tending to trust people they know rather than product websites or advertisements.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission have information indicating structural changes in Greek purchasing habits, which could create numerous business opportunities for undertakings adapting to these new trends?

2. What are the Commission's estimates regarding the future purchasing power of Greek consumers, in view of the constantly widening gap between earnings and prices in Greece? What is the situation regarding the purchasing power of consumers in each Member State?

3. How does the volume of online purchasing in Greece compare with that of other Member States?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 November 2012)*

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member of Parliament that it is aware of an impact of economc crisis on purchasing power of Greek consumer and follows closely the evolution of private consumption spending as well as consumer sentiment surveys. Based on economic cyclical factors and greater competition through structural product market reforms, the Commission expects a reduction in prices. Therefore, the gap between earnings and prices should moderate, which is likely to allow Greek consumers to conduct the purchasing decisions at relatively stable levels.

e-Commerce is less developed in Greece than in the EU as a whole. In 2011, the percentage of the adult population who declared to have bought online in the previous 3 months was equal to 13% in Greece (20th position among 27 MS) and to 34% in the EU as a whole ([1]). A similar gap can be seen from the business side: in 2010, the turnover from e-commerce represented the 14% of total enterprises' turnover in the EU and the 4% (22nd position among 25 MS for which data are available) in Greece ([2]).

([1]) *Source:* Community survey on the use of Internet by households and individuals (2011 edition). The indicator used is: individuals having ordered/bought goods or services for private use over the Internet in the last three months.

([2]) *Source:* Community survey on the use of Internet by enterprises (2011 edition). The indicator refers to total e-commerce (in 2010), meaning trading over computer networks (including business to consumer and business to business). The financial sector is excluded.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008448/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Technical and safety tests for tractors

The Commission is planning to introduce new technical and safety tests for tractors. Could the Commission provide data on the number of deaths and accidents caused by tractors, in view of its proposals in the Roadworthiness Package to test tractors with a maximum speed exceeding 40km/h? How would the Commission ensure that the cost to farmers of such a test is kept under control? What, if any, alternatives were explored before making this particular proposal?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 November 2012)*

Tractors with a maximum speed exceeding 40 km/h are not primarily suitable for agricultural work on loose grounds but for regular use on public roads. Although these fast tractors represent less than 8 % of the annual sales of tractors and thus only a small part of the whole tractor fleet, they are increasingly used to replace trucks by providing local transport services. Their potential risk is comparable to that of trucks and therefore this vehicle category should be treated in the same way as trucks regarding roadworthiness testing.

Costs for roadworthiness tests for such high-speed tractors are comparable to those for heavy duty vehicles which are estimated at EUR 75 as established in the Commission's Impact Assessment ([1]) which provides further details on the cost-benefit and alternatives that have been explored.

The Commission would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the publicly available EU-wide database CARE on road traffic accidents ([2]). In 2011, 450 fatalities, representing 1.5 % of all road fatalities, were linked to tractors.

([1]) SWD(2012) 206 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/index_en.htm

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008449/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Is-saħħa mentali

Is-saħħa mentali għandha rwol imprtanti fit-tkabbir ekonomiku u l-iżvilupp soċjali. Fir-rapport tagħha tal-2010 "Il-Promozzjoni tas-Saħħa Mentali fiż-Żgħażagħ — Investiment għall-Futur", l-Organizzazzjoni Dinjija tas-Saħħa tindika li s-saħħa mentali ta' persuna matul l-adoloxxenza hija kritika għas-saħħa mentali tagħha meta ssir adulta. Ir-rapport jenfasizza wkoll li l-kwistjonijiet ta' saħħa mentali għandhom sehem dejjem jikber fil-problemi ta' saħħa fost iż-żgħażagħ fl-Ewropa, iżda jindika wkoll ċerta riluttanza min-naħa taż-żgħażagħ li jfittxu għajnuna professjonali meta jesperjenzaw mard mentali. Din it-tendenza hija prevalenti b'mod partikolari fost il-ġuvintur.

Il-Patt Ewropew għas-Saħħa u l-Benesseri Mentali jirrikonoxxi b'mod ugwali r-rwol tas-saħħa mentali għaċ-ċittadini li qed isiru adulti u l-importanza tal-ġlieda kontra l-istigmatizzazzjoni u l-esklużjoni soċjali. Jenfasizza l-fatt li r-rwol tal-UE huwa li "tinforma, tippromwovi l-aħjar prattika u tinkoraġġixxi azzjonijiet mill-Istati Membri u l-Partijiet Interessati".

B'kunsiderazzjoni ta' dan ta' hawn fuq, il-Kummissjoni tista' tirrapporta dwar xi progress li sar mill-istabbiliment ta' dan il-patt fir-rigward tal-indirizzar ta' kwistjonijiet ta' saħħa mentali u l-prevenzjoni ta' mard mentali fost iż-żgħażagħ? Ħarġu xi eżempji tal-aħjar prattika mill-Istati Membri?

Minħabba li l-ġuvintur jidhru partikolarment riluttanti li jfittxu għajnuna professjonali f'każijiet ta' mard mentali, il-Kummissjoni introduċiet xi inizjattivi mmirati speċifikament biex jindirizzaw l-istigma apparenti marbuta ma' dawn il-kundizzjonijiet?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šefčovič f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(7 ta' Novembru 2012)*

Fl-2009, il-Kummissjoni b'mod konġunt mal-Ministeru Svediż tas-Saħħa u l-Affarijiet Soċjali organizzat konferenza tematika taħt il-Patt Ewropew għas-Saħħa u l-Benesseri Mentali dwar il-promozzjoni tas-saħħa u l-benesseri mentali tat-tfal u ż-żgħażagħ ([1]). Il-prattiċi tajbin identifikati matul dan l-avveniment iddaħħlu fil-bażi tad-dejta "Kumpass tal-UE għal Azzjoni dwar is-Saħħa u l-Benesseri Mentali" ([2]). Mill-2011, il-Konklużjonijiet tal-Kunsill dwar il-Patt Ewropew għas-Saħħa u l-Benesseri Mentali identifikaw is-saħħa mentali taż-żgħażagħ bħala prijorità u enfasizzaw fuq ir-rwol tal-istituzzjonijiet edukattivi f'dan il-kuntest. Bħala segwitu, qed titħejja Azzjoni Konġunta bejn l-Istati Membri li se tkun kofinanzjata mill-Programm tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa kif previst fid-Deċiżjoni ta' Implimentazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni tal-1 ta' Diċembru 2011 ([3]). Din l-Azzjoni Konġunta tinkludi koperazzjoni bejn is-sistemi tas-saħħa u l-iskejjel dwar kwistjonijiet tas-saħħa mentali.

Barra minn hekk, il-proġett "ProYouth" (2011-2014, li jiffoka fuq id-disordnijiet alimentari) huwa eżempju ta' azzjoni finanzjata mill-Programm attwali tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa, li jindirizza s-saħħa mentali taż-żgħażagħ.

Dawn l-attivitajiet kollha jagħtu sehemhom biex titnehħa l-istigma minn dawn il-kwistjonijiet tas-saħħa mentali.

([1]) Aktar tagħrif jista' jinstab fuq: http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20090929_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/eu_compass/index_en.htm
([3]) Id-Deċiżjoni ta' Implimentazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni 2011/C 358/06.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008449/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Mental health

Mental health plays an important role when it comes to economic growth and social development. In its 2010 report 'Mental Health Promotion in Young People — an Investment for the Future', the World Health Organisation points to the fact that a person's mental health during adolescence is critical for their mental health during adulthood. The report further highlights that mental health issues account for an increasing share of health problems among young people in Europe, but points also to a certain reluctance on the part of young people to seek professional help when experiencing mental disorders. This tendency is said to be particularly prevalent among young men.

The European Pact for Mental Health and Well-Being recognises in equal measure the role of mental health for citizens who are transitioning into adulthood and the importance of combating stigmatisation and social exclusion. It highlights the fact that the EU's role is to 'inform, promote best practice and encourage actions by Member States and Stakeholders'.

In view of the above, can the Commission report on any progress made since the establishment of this pact with regard to addressing mental health issues and preventing mental disorders among young people? Have any best-practice examples emerged from the Member States?

Given that young men seem particularly reluctant to seek professional help in cases of mental disorders, has the Commission introduced any initiatives aimed specifically at tackling the apparent stigma attached to these conditions?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

In 2009, the Commission organised jointly with the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs a thematic conference under the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being on the promotion of the mental health and well-being of children and young people ([1]). The good practices identified through this event were entered into the database 'EU-Compass for Action on Mental Health and Well-being' ([2]). Council Conclusions on the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being from 2011 highlighted the mental health of young people as a priority and also stressed the role of educational institutions in this context. As a follow-up, a Joint Action between Member States, to be co-financed from the EU-Health Programme as foreseen in the Commission Implementing Decision of 1 December 2011 ([3]), is under preparation. This Joint Action includes cooperation between health systems and schools on mental health issues.

In addition, the project 'ProYouth' (2011-2014, focus on eating disorders) is an example of action financed under the current EU-Health-Programme addressing the mental health of young people.

All these activities contribute to removing the stigma around mental health issues.

([1]) Further information is available under: http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20090929_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/eu_compass/index_en.htm
([3]) Commission Implementing Decision 2011/C 358/06.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008450/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* L-għarfien ta' lingwa barranija

Mid-dikjarazzjoni ta' Barċellona tal-2002, l-Unjoni Ewropea bdiet issegwi l-mira li ċ-ċittadini tagħha jkunu jistgħu jitkellmu mill-anqas żewġ lingwi barranin minbarra l-lingwa nattiva tagħhom.

Stħarriġ riċenti tal-Ewrobarometru jindika li ħafna ċittadini fl-UE (72%) jaqblu ma' din il-mira, u jiddikjaraw li l-persuni fl-UE għandhom ikunu kapaċi jitkellmu aktar minn lingwa barranija waħda. Madankollu, l-istħarriġ wera b'mod ugwali li perċentwali żgħira biss ta' ċittadini huma kapaċi jagħmlu dan. Dan jindika li jridu jsiru aktar sforzi sabiex jitħeġġeġ it-tagħlim tal-lingwi fl-UE.

68% tal-Ewropej iddikjaraw li kisbu l-għarfien tagħhom ta' lingwa barranija permezz ta' lezzjonijiet fl-iskola. Dan jindika li huwa anqas probabbli li ċ-ċittadini jiksbu kompetenzi fil-lingwi wara l-età ta' tluq mill-iskola. B'kunsiderazzjoni ta' dan, il-Kummissjoni qieset xi inizjattivi li jimmiraw b'mod partikolari biex jiffaċilitaw u jinkoraġġixxu l-aċċess għat-tagħlim ta' lingwi barranin għal ċittadini li jkunu spiċċaw l-edukazzjoni skolastika tagħhom?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(9 ta' Novembru 2012)*

Il-Kummissjoni taqbel mal-Onorevoli Membru li l-promozzjoni tal-kompetenzi lingwistiċi taċ-ċittadini kollha tal-UE, tkun xi tkun l-età tagħhom, hija tassew importanti. Ħiliet aħjar fil-lingwi huma essenzjali biex jitgawdew bis-sħiħ il-benefiċċji tal-integrazzjoni Ewropea.

Madanakollu l-progress lejn l-għan tal-Unjoni Ewropea ta' "lsien pajjiżek u tnejn oħra miegħu" huwa limitat, kif juri l-Ewrobarometru riċenti u l-ewwel Stħarriġ Ewropew dwar il-Kompetenzi Lingwistiċi, li eżaminaw il-ħiliet lingwistiċi ta' studenti ta' 15-il sena f'14-il pajjiż Ewropew. Fil-passat, il-klassijiet tal-lingwa fl-iskejjel kienu l-unika opportunità għal bosta Ewropej biex jiskopru lingwi barranin.

L-attivitajiet appoġġati mill-Kummissjoni Ewropea għall-promozzjoni tat-tagħlim tal-lingwi u d-diversità lingwistika jmorru ferm lil hinn mill-edukazzjoni formali. Li jitħeġġeġ it-tagħlim tal-lingwi barranin moderni huwa wieħed mill-għanijiet operattivi tal-komponent ta' Leonardo da Vinci fil-Programm ta' Tagħlim Tul il-Ħajja għall-2007-2013, filwaqt li jingħata appoġġ lil attivitajiet ta' taħriġ vokazzjonali. Bl-istess mod, il-komponent Grundtvig fil-Programm ta' Tagħlim Tul il-Ħajja, maħsub għall-edukazzjoni tal-adulti, jinkludi dispożizzjonijiet għat-tħejjija lingwistika tal-parteċipanti. Barra minn hekk, it-tagħlim tal-lingwi jingħata promozzjoni għal limitu sinifikanti permezz tal-attivitajiet tal-mobbiltà tat-tagħlim li huma parti tant vitali tal-Programm ta' Tagħlim Tul il-Ħajja.

It-tagħlim tal-lingwi (u l-promozzjoni tal-mobilità tat-tagħlim) se jkun ukoll wieħed mill-prijoritajiet tal-programm il-ġdid tal-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ għall-2014-2020, proposta li issa qed titqies mill-Parlament Ewropew.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008450/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Foreign language knowledge

Since the 2002 Barcelona declaration, the European Union has been pursuing the goal of enabling its citizens to speak at least two foreign languages in addition to their native tongue.

A recent Eurobarometer survey points to the fact that most citizens in the EU (72 %) agree with this goal, stating that people in the EU should be able to speak more than one foreign language. However, the survey equally revealed that only a small percentage of citizens are able to do so. This indicates that further efforts need to be made in order to encourage language learning in the EU.

68 % of Europeans stated that they acquired their foreign language knowledge through lessons at school. This would indicate that citizens are less likely to acquire language competences once they pass the school-leaving age. With this in mind, has the Commission considered any initiatives that particularly aim to facilitate and encourage access to foreign language learning for citizens who have completed their school education?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 November 2012)*

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that promoting the language competences of all EU citizens, whatever their age, is of great importance. Better language skills are essential in order to fully enjoy the benefits of European integration.

Progress towards the European Union's objective of 'mother tongue plus two' is however limited, as shown by the recent Eurobarometer and the first European Survey on Language Competences, which tested the language skills of 15 year old students in 14 European countries. In the past, language classes at school were the only opportunity for many Europeans to discover foreign languages.

The activities supported by the European Commission for the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity go well beyond formal education. Encouraging the learning of modern foreign languages is one of the operational objectives of the Leonardo da Vinci component of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) for 2007-2013, along with supporting vocational training activities. Similarly, the Grundtvig component of the LLP, devoted to adult education, includes provisions for the linguistic preparation of participants. Furthermore, language learning is promoted to a significant extent via the learning mobility activities which are such a vital part of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Language learning (and the promotion of learning mobility) will also be one of the priorities of the new education and training programme for 2014-2020, a proposal which is now under consideration by the European Parliament.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008451/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Iċ-Ċiberkriminalità

Stħarriġ riċenti tal-Ewrobarometru (Ewrobarometru 390) dwar iċ-ċiberksigurtà wera li aktar minn nofs l-utenti tal-internet (53%) fl-UE jixtru oġġetti u servizzi onlajn, filwaqt li 52% jaċċessaw siti ta' netwerking soċjali u 48% jużaw l-internet biex iwettqu tranżazzjonijiet bankarji onlajn.

Minkejja dan l-użu wiesa' ta' servizzi onlajn, ħafna ċittadini fl-UE (59%) iddikjaraw li ma jħossuhomx informati tajjeb dwar iċ-ċiberkriminalità u r-riskji assoċjati magħha. Dan in-nuqqas ta' informazzjoni dwar il-perikli taċ-ċiberkriminalità aktarx li jillimita l-kapaċità taċ-ċittadini li jipproteġu ruħhom minn xi attakk ċibernetiku u jista' jimmina kwalunkwe sforzi li l-Unjoni Ewropea tagħmel biex tiġġieled iċ-ċiberkriminalità.

Fid-dawl ta' din l-istatistika, il-Kummissjoni tipprevedi xi miżuri futuri mmirati biex joħolqu kuxjenza dwar iċ-ċiberkriminalità fost iċ-ċittadini u jipprovduhom bl-informazzjoni neċessarja dwar iċ-ċibersigurtà, sabiex jagħtu s-setgħa liċ-ċittadini li jassumu responsabbiltà għas-sigurtà tagħhom onlajn meta jużaw servizzi bbażati fuq l-internet?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(19 ta' Novembru 2012)*

Il-Kummissjoni tikkondividi għal kollox it-tħassib li għadd pjuttost għoli ta' nies ma jafdawx l-għodod diġitali u li l-inċidenti tas-sigurtà ċibernetika qed jiżdiedu. Biex jindirizzaw dawn il-kwistjonijiet, is-servizzi tal-Kummissjoni, flimkien mas-Servizz Ewropew tal-Azzjoni Esterna, bħalissa qed jaħdmu fuq strateġija Ewropea komuni dwar is-sigurtà ċibernetika bil-għan li jiżguraw ambjent diġitali sikur u reżiljenti u effettivament iwaqqfu ċ-ċiberkriminalità, fir-rispett tad-drittijiet fundamentali u l-valuri Ewropej.

L-Istrateġija timmira li tippreżenta sett komprensiv ta' azzjonijiet: trawwem il-preparazzjoni, ir-rispons u l-kooperazzjoni għall-prevenzjoni u r-reazzjoni għal riskji u theddidiet ċibernetiċi inkluża proposta leġiżlattiva possibbli dwar is-Sigurtà tan-Netwerks u l-Informazzjoni; tiżviluppa suq intern integrat tal-UE għall-prodotti/servizzi tas-sigurtà ċibernetika; tappoġġa aktar il-prevenzjoni u r-rispons fil-qasam taċ-ċiberkriminalità permezz ta' passi ulterjuri bħat-tnedija ta' Ċentru Ewropew taċ-Ċiberkriminalità fil-Europol fl-2013; tippromwovi kampanji ta' sensibilizzazzjoni u taħriġ dwar is-sigurtà ċibernetika; trawwem l-investimenti tar-R&Ż; tiżgura politika internazzjonali koerenti tas-sigurtà ċibernetika għall-UE; tiżviluppa l-kapaċitajiet tad-difiża ċibernetika fil-qafas ta' Politika tas-Sigurtà u d-Difiża Komuni u tippromwovi l-kapaċità u l-kooperazzjoni fis-sigurtà ċibernetika madwar id-dinja.

Bħala parti mill-azzjonijiet għall-promozzjoni ta' kampanji ta' sensibilizzazzjoni u taħriġ tas-sigurtà ċibernetika, il-Kummissjoni qed tikkunsidra t-tnedija ta' għadd ta' azzjonijiet immirati, li possibbilment jinkludu kampanji ta' sensibilizzazzjoni kkoordinati madwar l-UE kollha u l-promozzjoni ta' taħriġ tas-sigurtà adattat għall-iskejjel, l-istudenti fix-xjenzi tal-kompjuter u l-professjonisti.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008451/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Cybercrime

A recent Eurobarometer survey (Eurobarometer 390) on cybersecurity revealed that more than half of Internet users (53 %) in the EU buy goods or services online, whilst 52 % access social networking sites and 48 % use the Internet to carry out online bank transactions.

Despite this widespread use of online services, most citizens in the EU (59 %) stated that they do not feel well informed about cybercrime and its associated risks. This lack of information about the dangers of cybercrime is likely to restrict the ability of citizens to protect themselves from any potential cyberattacks and could undermine any efforts taken by the European Union to combat cybercrime.

In the light of these statistics, does the Commission envisage any future measures aiming to raise awareness of cybercrime amongst citizens and provide them with the necessary information about cybersecurity, in order to empower citizens to take responsibility for their own online security when using web-based services?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 November 2012)*

The Commission fully shares the concern that a rather high number of people do not trust digital tools and that cyber security incidents are on the rise. To address these issues, the Commission services, with the European External Action Service, are currently working on a joint European Strategy for Cyber Security aiming at ensuring a safe and resilient digital environment and effectively preventing cybercrime, in respect of fundamental rights and European values.

The strategy aims at putting forward a comprehensive set of actions: foster preparedness, response and cooperation to prevent and respond to cyber risks and threats including a possible legislative proposal on Network and Information Security; develop an integrated EU internal market for cyber security products/services; support further the prevention of and response to cybercrime through further steps as the launch of a European Cybercrime Centre in Europol in 2013; promote awareness raising campaigns and cyber security training; foster R R&D D investments; ensure a coherent international cyber security policy for the EU; develop cyber defence capabilities in the framework of Common Security and Defence Policy and advance cyber security capacity and cooperation globally.

As part of the actions to promote awareness raising campaigns and cyber security training, the Commission considers launching a number of targeted actions, possibly including EU-wide coordinated awareness raising campaigns and promoting adapted security trainings for schools, students in computer sciences and professionals.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008452/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Megatrakkijiet

Dan l-aħħar żdied id-daqs legali ta' vetturi biex jippermetti lill-megatrakkijiet jaqsmu l-fruntieri bejn l-Istati Membri tal-UE. Il-proponenti jargumentaw li dan se jirriżulta f'inqas karozzi fit-toroq, iżda oħrajn jirribattu li din il-bidla se tneħħi t-trasport tal-merkanzija mill-ferroviji, b'hekk jitbiegħdu l-objettivi tal-UE fil-qasam tat-tibdil fil-klima.

Il-Kummissjoni x'affermazzjoni tista' toffri biex tistqarr li din il-modifika tal-politika se jkollha effett pożittiv nett mil-lat ambjentali? Barra minn hekk, tista' l-Kummissjoni tiggarantixxi s-sikurezza ta' dawn il-megatrakkijiet?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Kallas f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(31 ta' Ottubru 2012)*

Id-Direttiva 96/53/KE ([1]) tistabbilixxi l-piżijiet u d-dimensjonijiet massimi għaċ-ċirkolazzjoni tal-vetturi tat-triq, li l-Istati Membri jistgħu jidderogaw minnha skont il-kundizzjonijiet stipulati fl-Art. (4) tad-Direttiva. Id-Direttiva tibqa' fis-seħħ u ma saret ebda bidla lid-daqs ammissibbli tal-vetturi. Xi Stati Membri użaw il-possibbiltà għal deroga li tippermetti vetturi modulari itwal fit-territorju tagħhom. F' ittra lill-President mill-Kumitat għat-Trasport tal-Parlament Ewropew tat-13 ta' Ġunju 2012, il-Kummissjoni ċċarat il-kundizzjonijiet stretti li taħthom vetturi li jaqbżu t-tul massimu jistgħu jaqsmu l-fruntieri bejn żewġ Stati Membri.

Bħala tali din l-ittra ma tbiddilx id-Direttiva u lanqas ma tagħmel l-użu ta' vetturi modulari obbligatorju għall-Istati Membri, li jistgħu jagħżlu li jawtorizzawhom fit-territorju tagħhom iżda mingħajr ebda obbligu li jagħmlu dan. Din l-ittra tiċċara d-dispożizzjonijiet eżistenti; se tiffaċilita l-applikazzjoni tad-Direttiva eżistenti iżda m'għandha jkollha l-ebda effett fuq l-ambjent jew fuq is-sikurezza fit-toroq. Dwar it-tema ġenerali tas-Sistema Modulari Ewropea, inklużi l-aspetti ambjentali u tas-sikurezza fit-toroq, għadd ta' studji jistgħu jinstabu fuq is-sit elettroniku tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/road/weights-and-dimensions_en.htm

Qiegħda titħejja reviżjoni tad-Direttiva 96/53/KE li, fost suġġetti oħra, se tindirizza l-kwistjonijiet tal-effiċjenza tal-użu tal-fjuwil tal-vetturi. It-titjib ajrudinamiku tat-trakkijiet, partikolarment il-forma tal-kabina, ukoll mistenni jtejjeb is-sikurezza fit-toroq. Wieħed jista' jistenna li jkun hemm proposta leġiżlattiva sal-aħħar tal-2012 jew fil-bidu tal-2013.

([1]) Id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 96/53/KE tal-25 ta' Lulju 1996 tistabbilixxi għal ċerti vetturi tat-triq li jiċċirkulaw fil-Komunità d-dimensjonijiet massimi awtorizzati fit-traffiku nazzjonali u internazzjonali u l-piżijiet massimi awtorizzati fit-traffiku internazzjonali (ĠU L 235, tas-17.9.1996. p. 59).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008452/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Mega-lorries

The legal vehicle size was recently increased to allow mega-lorries to cross borders between EU Member States. Proponents argue that this will result in fewer cars on the road, but others counter that it will shift freight transport away from railways, detracting from the EU's climate change objectives.

What affirmation can the Commission offer that this policy alteration will have a positive net environmental effect? Furthermore, can the Commission guarantee the safety of these mega-lorries?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

Directive 96/53/EC ([1]) sets maximum weights and dimensions for the circulation of road vehicles, which Member States can derogate from under the conditions laid out in Art. (4) of the directive. The directive remains in force and no change has been made to the admissible size of the vehicles. Some Member States have used the possibility for derogation to allow longer modular vehicles on their territory. In a letter to the Chairman of the Transport Committee of the European Parliament dated 13 June 2012, the Commission clarified the strict conditions under which vehicles exceeding the maximum length could cross borders between two Member States.

As such this letter does not change the directive nor does it make the use of modular vehicles mandatory for Member States, which may choose to authorise these on their territory but have no obligation to do so. The letter provides clarifications of existing provisions; it will facilitate the application of the existing Directive but should have no effect on the environment or on road safety. On the general topic of the European Modular System, including environmental and road safety aspects, a number of studies can be found on the European Commission's website: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/road/weights-and-dimensions_en.htm

A review of Directive 96/53/EC is under preparation which, amongst other topics, will address the issues of fuel efficiency of vehicles. Improving the aerodynamics of trucks, particularly the shape of the cabin, is also expected to increase road safety. A legislative proposal can be expected by the end of 2012 or early 2013.

([1]) Council Directive 96/53/EC of 25 July 1996 laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic (OJ L 235, 17.9.1996, p.59).

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008453/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni (Viċi President / Rappreżentant Għoli)**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* VP/HR — Ftehimiet kummerċjali mal-Amerika Latina

Dan l-aħħar il-Kummissjoni kkonkludiet ftehim kummerċjali mal-Kolombja u mal-Perù. Dan il-ftehim huwa ta' interess kbir għaż-żewġ partijiet u se jikkontribwixxi konsiderevolment għall-ekonomija tal-Unjoni Ewropea. Madankollu, jeżisti tħassib dwar l-għażla ta' dawn il-pajjiżi tal-Amerika Latina bħala sħab kummerċjali minħabba l-imgħoddi tagħhom f'dak li huwa ksur tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem.

Billi huwa ppjanat li dan il-ftehim kummerċjali jiġi implimentat, il-Viċi President/Rappreżentant Għoli tirrakkomanda xi mekkaniżmu ta' reazzjoni għall-Unjoni Ewropea fir-rigward tal-kummerċ mal-Amerika Latina f'każ ta' kwalunkwe ksur tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem min-naħa ta' tali pajjiżi tal-Amerika Latina?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(22 ta' Novembru 2012)*

Il-Kummissjoni tqis li d-dispożizzjonijiet dwar id-drittijiet tal-bniedem inklużi fil-Ftehim Kummerċjali jindirizzaw bis-sħiħ l-isfidi li qegħdin jiffaċċjaw il-Kolombja u l-Perù fir-rigward tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem. Il-klawżola tad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem skont l-Artikolu 1 tal-Ftehim u l-istatus tagħha bħala element essenzjali tal-Ftehim kif ukoll it-Titolu dwar il-Kummerċ u l-Iżvilupp Sostenibbli jindirizzaw speċifikament dan it-tħassib b'mod li huwa ambizzjuż, sod iżda wkoll li jista' jiġi infurzat.

Dawn l-impenji se jiġu mmonitorjati b'mod regolari permezz tal-mekkaniżmu ta' konsultazzjoni trasparenti u definit sewwa li huwa speċifikat fil-Ftehim. Dan il-mekkaniżmu jinkludi djalogu sistematiku mas-soċjetà ċivili, laqgħat regolari tas-sottokumitat dwar il-Kummerċ u l-Iżvilupp Sostenibbli kif ukoll il-possibbiltà ta' konsultazzjonijiet addizzjonali mal-awtoritajiet rilevanti dwar kwistjonijiet speċifiċi ta' tħassib. Barra minn hekk, kwalunkwe differenza li jista' jkun hemm tista' tiġi solvuta permezz ta' grupp ta' esperti indipendenti u imparzjali.

L-UE ssemmi wkoll kwistjonijiet relatati mad-drittijiet tal-bniedem b'mod regolari fid-djalogu tagħha maż-żewġ pajjiżi. Il-Ftehim għalhekk itejjeb aktar l-għodda tagħna ta' kooperazzjoni u koordinazzjoni għall-indirizzar ta' dawn il-kwistjonijiet.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008453/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Latin America trade deals

The Commission has recently concluded a trade deal with Colombia and Peru. The agreement is of great interest to both parties, and will contribute significantly to the EU economy. However, there is concern about the choice of these Latin American countries as trading partners given their pasts with regard to human rights violations.

As this trade deal is set for implementation, does the Vice-President/High Representative recommend any reaction mechanism for the European Union in relation to Latin American trade in the event of any human rights breaches by these Latin American countries?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 November 2012)*

The Commission considers that the human rights provisions included in the Trade Agreement are fully addressing the human rights challenges that Colombia and Peru are facing. The Human Rights clause under Article 1 of the agreement and its status as an essential element of the agreement as well as the Title on Trade and Sustainable Development specifically address these concerns in a way that is ambitious, robust but also enforceable.

These commitments will be regularly monitored through the transparent and well defined consultation mechanism that is specified in the Agreement. This mechanism includes systematic dialogue with the civil society, regular Trade and Sustainable Development sub-committee meetings as well as the possibility of additional consultations with the relevant authorities on specific issues of concern. In addition, any differences that might arise can be settled through an independent and impartial group of experts.

The EU also raises human rights-related issues regularly in its dialogue with both countries. The agreement thus further improves our cooperation and coordination toolbox for addressing these issues.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008454/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Reġistru tat-trasparenza

Ir-reġistru tat-trasparenza tal-UE nħoloq biex iċ-ċittadini jkunu jistgħu jafu aħjar bl-attivitajiet fi ħdan l-Unjoni Ewropea, li qed ikollhom importanza dejjem ikbar f'ħajjithom. Filwaqt li r-reġistru jiġi sostnut bħala kisba tal-UE fit-tiftix tat-trasparenza, tqajjem tħassib fir-rigward tal-informazzjoni insuffiċjenti u impreċiża mogħtija fir-reġistru.

Temmen il-Kummissjoni bl-eżistenza ta' tali difetti fir-reġistru tat-trasparenza attwali u, jekk iva, x'biħsiebha tagħmel biex ittejjeb is-sistema?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barroso f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(15 ta' Novembru 2012)*

Ir-Reġistru tat-Trasparenza huwa strument konġunt żviluppat mill-Parlament Ewropew u l-Kummissjoni Ewropea flimkien fuq il-bażi ta' ftehim interistituzzjonali li huwa soġġett għal proċess ta' reviżjoni li se jseħħ matul l-2014. Huwa f'dan il-kuntest u fuq il-bażi kemm ta' konsultazzjoni mal-partijiet interessati kif ukoll tal-ewwel rapport annwali tas-segretarjat konġunt, li se ssir analiżi dettaljata tal-valur u l-impatt ta' dan l-istrument u li kwalunkwe titjib possibbli jew neċessarju se jiġi vvalutat.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008454/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Transparency register

The EU's transparency register was created to enable citizens to have greater awareness of activities within the European Union, which are of ever-growing importance in their lives. While the register is championed as an achievement of the EU in its quest for transparency, concerns have been raised with regard to insufficient or inaccurate information provided in the register.

Does the Commission believe that such flaws are present in the current transparency register and, if so, what does it plan to do to improve the system?

**Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 November 2012)*

The Transparency register is a joint instrument developed together by the European Parliament and the European Commission on the basis of an interinstitutional agreement which is subject to a review process to take place in the course of 2014. It is in this context and on the basis of both stakeholder consultation and the first annual report of the joint secretariat, that a thorough analysis of the value and impact of this instrument will be made and that any possible or necessary improvement will be assessed.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008455/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Ikel organiku

F'dawn l-aħħar snin is-settur tal-produzzjoni organika rreġistrat rata għolja ta' tkabbir. Madankollu kien hemm bosta problemi ta' frodi. Fosthom insibu każijiet ta' traċċi ta' pestiċidi, antibijotiċi u aġenti ta' konservazzjoni misjuba f'ikel irreklamat bħala organiku.

Kif tivvaluta l-Kummissjoni l-kwalità tal-verifika fir-rigward tal-produzzjoni organika s'issa? Kif tipproponi li ttejjeb il-proċeduri implimentati mill-korpi inkarigati mill-kontroll fl-Istati Membri biex tiggarantixxi prattiki ġusti f'dan il-qasam?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Cioloş f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(14 ta' Novembru 2012)*

L-ewwel nett, il-Kummissjoni tisħaq li l-preżenza ta' traċċi ta' sustanzi mhux awtorizzati fil-prodotti organiċi mhix dejjem indikattiva ta' frodi; dan billi jista' jkun hemm kontaminazzjoni mhux intenzjonata. Fil-każ li jinstabu sustanzi mhux awtorizzati fil-prodotti organiċi, dawn jiġu deċertifikati skont is-sistemi ta' kontroll stabbiliti mill-Istati Membri skont it-Titolu V tar-Regolament (KE) Nru 834/2007 ([1]) u ma jkunux jistgħu jinbigħu aktar bħala prodotti organiċi. Fin-nuqqas ta' studju mifrux mal-UE speċifikament dwar il-preżenza ta' sustanzi mhux awtorizzati fil-prodotti organiċi, il-Kummissjoni tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għal rapport ([2]) maħruġ mil-Land Ġermaniż Baden-Württemberg dwar il-programm ta' monitoraġġ tiegħu ta' ikel prodott organikament li juri kif ir-riżultati tal-kontrolli evolvew tul l-aħħar 10 snin. Ir-rapport juri xi titjib sinifikanti maż-żmien, u jikkonkludi li, globalment, il-prodotti organiċi kisbu r-reputazzjoni tajba li tixirqilhom.

Madankollu l-Kummissjoni tagħraf il-bżonn li tissaħħaħ aktar is-sistema ta' kontroll, partikolarment billi tqis ir-rakkomandazzjonijiet magħmula mill-Qorti Ewropea tal-Awdituri ([3]). Il-Kummissjoni dan l-aħħar żiedet l-għadd ta' verifiki tas-sistemi ta' kontroll tal-biedja organika kemm fl-Istati Membri kif ukoll f' Pajjiżi Terzi b' mod sinifikanti, u qed tqis firxa ta' miżuri biex jissaħħu l-kontroll u s-superviżjoni b'reazzjoni għar-rakkomandazzjonijiet tal-Qorti.

Fl-aħħar nett, il-Kummissjoni inkludiet fil-programm ta' ħidma tagħha tal-2013, analiżi tal-qafas politiku u legali tal-EU dwar il-produzzjoni organika. F'dan il-kuntest, il-kwistjoni tat-tisħiħ tal-kontrolli se tiġi eżaminata bir-reqqa sabiex tkun żgurata protezzjoni aħjar tal-istandard organiku.

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([1]) Ir-Regolament tal-Kunsill (KE) Nru 834/2007 tat-28 ta' Ġunju 2007 dwar il-produzzjoni organika u t-tikkettar ta' prodotti organiċi u li jħassar ir-Regolament (KEE) Nru 2029/91 (ĠU L 189, 20.7.2007, p. 1.).

([2]) Ir-rapport huwa disponibbli fuq dan is-sit: http://oekomonitoring.cvuas.de/english.html

([3]) Qorti Ewropea tal-Awdituri, Ir-Rapport Speċjali Nru 9/2012: "Verifika tas-sistema ta' kontroll li tirregola l-produzzjoni, l-ipproċessar, id-distribuzzjoni u l-importazzjoni ta' prodotti organiċi".

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008455/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Organic foods

The organic production sector has experienced much growth in recent years. There have been many problems, however, with fraud. These include instances of traces of pesticides, antibiotics and conservation agents being found in food advertised as organic.

How does the Commission rate the quality of verification in relation to organic production up to this point? How does it propose to improve the procedures implemented by control bodies in Member States to ensure fair practices in this field?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 November 2012)*

First of all, the Commission would stress that the presence of traces of non-authorised substances on organic products is not always indicative of fraud; since unintended contamination can occur. In case non-authorised substances have been detected on organic products, these are decertified in accordance with the control systems set up by the Member States in accordance with Title V of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 ([1]) and can no longer be sold as organic. In the absence of an EU-wide study specifically on the presence of unauthorised substances in organic products, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to a report ([2]) produced by the German Land Baden-Württemberg on its monitoring programme of organically produced food which illustrates how control findings on organic products have evolved over the last 10 years. The report shows some significant improvements over time, concluding that, overall, organic products have a well deserved good reputation.

The Commission nevertheless recognises the need to further strengthen the control system, notably by taking account of the recommendations made by the European Court of Auditors ([3]). The Commission has recently increased the number of audits on the control systems in organic farming both in Member States and in Third Countries significantly and is considering a range of measures to reinforce control and supervision in response to the Court's recommendations.

Finally, the Commission has included in its Work Programme for 2013, a review of the EU political and legal framework on organic production. In this context, the issue of the reinforcement of controls will be examined in depth in order to ensure a better protection of the organic standard.

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([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91.(O.J. L 189 , 20/07/2007, p. 1).
([2]) The report is available on this site: http://oekomonitoring.cvuas.de/english.html
([3]) European Court of Auditors Special Report No 9 'Audit of the control system governing the production, processing, distribution and imports of organic products'.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008456/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Ftehim dwar il-Kummerċ Ħieles bejn l-UE u l-Indja

Wara s-Samit UE-Indja ta' Frar 2012, id-dettalji tal-ftehim ta' kummerċ ħieles (FTA) propost bejn l-UE u l-Indja ġew żviluppati aktar. Il-President tal-Kummissjoni, is-Sur Barroso, enfasizza l-kobor ta' dan l-FTA u l-impatt li potenzjalment ikollu fuq l-ekonomiji taż-żewġ partijiet, filwaqt li ddeskrivih bħala "l-akbar ftehim tal-kummerċ fid-dinja, li minnu jgawdu 1.7 biljun ruħ".

Madankollu, l-UE u l-Indja jħadmmu regoli kummerċjali differenti, pereżempju r-Regolament dwar ir-Reġistrazzjoni, l-Evalwazzjoni, l-Awtorizzazzjoni u r-Restrizzjoni ta' Sustanzi Kimiċi (REACH) li għandna fl-UE.

Il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha tiżgura li l-prodotti importati mill-Indja jkunu skont ir-regoli tal-UE, filwaqt li fl-istess ħin tħares sew relazzjonijiet pożittivi ta' kummerċ ħieles kif ukoll l-effiċjenza?

**EN Tweġiba mogħtija f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(7 ta' Novembru 2012)*

In-negozjati li għaddejjin għall-Ftehim ta' Kummerċ Ħieles bejn l-Indja u l-UE (FTA) ma jipprevedix konċessjonijiet li jimminaw il-konformità mal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE inġenerali, u b'mod aktar speċifiku mar-Regolament (KE) Nru 1907/2006 dwar ir-Reġistrazzjoni, il-Valutazzjoni, l-Awtorizzazzjoni u r-Restrizzjoni ta' Sustanzi Kimiċi (REACH). Għaldaqstant il-konklużjoni ta' FTA ma tbiddilx il-ħtieġa għal prodotturi Indjani tal-kimika li jixtiequ jesportaw lejn l-UE li jikkonformaw mal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008456/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* EU-India free trade agreement

Following the EU-India summit held in February 2012, the details of the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between the EU and India have been developed further. Commission President Barroso has emphasised the magnitude of this FTA and its potential impact on both countries' economies, describing it as the 'single biggest trade agreement in the world, benefiting 1.7 billion people'.

However, the EU and India operate different commercial regulations, one example being the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemical Substances (REACH) regulation that exists in the EU.

How does the Commission plan to ensure that products imported from India comply with EU rules, while simultaneously maintaining both positive free trade relations and efficiency?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 November 2012)*

The ongoing negotiations for the EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) do not foresee concessions which would undermine compliance with EU legislation in general, and more specifically for Regulation (EC) 1907/2006 on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemical Substances (REACH). The conclusion of an FTA therefore would not change the need for Indian chemical producers which wish to export to the EU to comply with EU legislation.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008457/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Is-sigurtà ċibernetika

L-Aġenzija Ewropea għas-Sigurtà tan-Netwerks u tal-Informazzjoni (ENISA) dan l-aħħar ippubblikat rapport bl-isem "Cyber Incident Reporting in the EU" (Ir-rappurtar ta' inċidenti ċibernetiċi fl-UE), li fih jixħtu dawl fuq inċidenti tal-kriminalità ċibernetika li kellhom effetti ħżiena sew fuq individwi kif ukoll fuq negozji. Biex il-kriminalità ċibernetika tkun tista' tiġi indirizzata, huwa essenzjali li n-negozji jirrappurtaw inċidenti li jinvolvu dan il-fenomenu, b'tali mod li min ifassal il-politika jkun jista' jdaħħal miżuri adegwati biex jilqgħu għal kwistjonijiet eżistenti tas-sigurtà ċibernetika. Madankollu, issemma tħassib dwar nuqqas ta' rappurtar min-naħa tal-impriżi, nuqqas li qiegħed ifixkel l-ilħiq ta' soluzzjoni effikaċi għal din il-problema.

Fid-dawl ta' dan kollu, il-Kummissjoni biħsiebha ddaħħal miżuri maħsuba biex jiksbu rappurtar aktar affidabbli min-naħa tan-negozji u biex itejbu l-mod kif jiġu indirizzati kwistjonijiet tas-sigurtà ċibernetika

**Tweġiba mogħtija minn Ms Kroeson f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(31 ta' Ottubru 2012)*

Il-Kummissjoni tikkondividi bis-sħiħ il-preokkupazzjonijiet dwar iż-żieda fl-inċidenti ċibernetiċi u rapportar insuffiċjenti min-negozji dwar dawn l-inċidenti. Inċidenti bħal dawn jistgħu jiġu kkawżati mill-kriminali iżda wkoll minn avvenimenti naturali, żbalji umani jew nuqqasijiet tekniċi. Biex tindirizza din il-kwistjoni, il-Kummissjoni bħalissa qed tħejji proposta leġiżlattiva mmirata lejn it-titjib tal-livell tas-sigurtà tas-sistemi tan-netwerks u l-informazzjoni (NIS) madwar l-UE. Fost l-elementi ewlenin previsti hemm ir-rekwiżit li l-organizzazzjonijiet inkarigati b'attivitajiet ekonomiċi u soċjali kruċjali jidentifikaw u jamministraw ir-riskji tal-NIS u jirrapportaw inċidenti sinifikanti. Dan ir-rekwiżit ikun jista' jrawwem kultura ta' ġestjoni NIS tar-riskji u jtejjeb il-kooperazzjoni bejn is-settur pubbliku u dak privat biex jiżguraw is-sigurtà tal-internet.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008457/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Cybersecurity

The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) recently published a report entitled 'Cyber Incident Reporting in the EU', highlighting recent incidents of cybercrime that have had a negative impact on both individuals and businesses. In order to tackle cybercrime, it is vital for businesses to report incidents involving this phenomenon, so that policymakers can introduce adequate measures to address existing cybersecurity issues. However, concern has been voiced at a lack of reporting by enterprises, which is hindering the effective resolution of the problem.

In view of the above, does the Commission intend to introduce measures aimed at obtaining more reliable reporting on the part of businesses and improving ways of addressing cybersecurity concerns?

**Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 October 2012)*

The Commission fully shares the concerns about the rise of cyber incidents and insufficient reporting of such incidents by business. Such incidents may be caused by criminals but also by natural events, human errors or technical failures. To address this issue, the Commission is currently preparing a legislative proposal aimed at improving the level of network and information systems security (NIS) across the EU. Among the key elements that are envisaged is the requirement that organisations entrusted with key economic and social activities identify and manage NIS risks and report significant incidents. Such a requirement could foster a culture of NIS risk management and improve cooperation between the private and public sector in ensuring Internet security.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008458/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Id-Direttiva dwar l-iskart tat-tagħmir elettriku u elettroniku

Parti mir-raġuni għala nħolqot id-Direttiva dwar l-iskart tat-tagħmir elettriku u elettroniku (WEEE) kienet biex tippromwovi r-riċiklaġġ u l-użu mill-ġdid ta' prodotti elettroniċi biex jiġu indirizzati kwistjonijiet relatati mal-iskart perikoluż. Madankollu, tqajjem tħassib dwar ir-rimi illegali ta' skart elettroniku, hekk kif rapporti reċenti tal-Programm Ambjentali tan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti (UNEP) jikxfu li skart elettroniku ntbagħat lejn l-Afrika minn portijiet tal-UE, taparsi bħala tagħmir użat. B'risposta għal dan it-tħassib, il-Kummissjoni ddikjarat li d-Direttiva se timponi skrutinju aktar strett ta' kwalunkwe kunsinna li tista' tkun illegali. Madankollu, hemm tħassib dwar restrizzjonijiet finanzjarji li jtellfu l-possibbiltà ta' kontrolli aktar stretti fuq l-iskart elettroniku.

Fid-dawl ta' dan kollu, il-Kummissjoni għandha pjanijiet għal xi miżura bl-għan partikolari li ttaffi dawn ir-restrizzjonijiet finanzjarji ħalli tgħin lill-Istati Membri biex itejbu l-infurzar tad-Direttiva WEEE?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(5 ta' Novembru 2012)*

L-esportazzjonijiet illegali tal-iskart elettroniku lejn l-Afrika huma problema li tittieħed b'serjetà kbira min-naħa tal-Kummissjoni. Bħala reazzjoni għall-problemi identifikati, il-Kummissjoni introduċiet reġim aktar strett għall-esportazzjonijiet ta' skart ta' tagħmir elettriku u elettroniku (WEEE) permezz tad-Direttiva 2012/19/UE dwar l-iskart ta' tagħmir elettriku u elettroniku (WEEE, tfassil mill-ġdid) ([1]). Id-Direttiva WEEE ġdida se ttejjeb il-kontrolli mal-fruntieri Ewropej fir-rigward tal-esportazzjoni tal-iskart tat-tagħmir elettriku u elettroniku u dak użat, billi l-Artikolu 23 u l-Anness VI tad-Direttiva jipprovdu l-għodod neċessarji għall-ispetturi tal-fruntieri.

Madankollu, il-Kummissjoni mhix qed tipprevedi li tipprovdi assistenza finanzjarja lill-Istati Membri biex dawn jimplimentaw kontrolli aktar stretti fuq l-esportazzjonijiet tal-iskart elettroniku.

([1]) ĠU L 197, 24.7.2012.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008458/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive was created partly to promote the recycling and re-use of electronic products in order to address issues related to hazardous waste. However, concerns have been raised about illegal dumping of electronic waste, as recent reports from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reveal that electronic waste, disguised as used equipment, has been shipped to Africa from ports in the EU. In response to this concern, the Commission stated that the directive will impose stricter scrutiny of any shipment that could prove illegal. Yet concerns have been raised over financial constraints that hamper the possibility of stricter controls on electronic waste.

In view of the above, does the Commission have plans for any measures that aim in particular to alleviate these financial concerns in order to help Member States to improve their enforcement of the WEEE Directive?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 November 2012)*

Illegal exports of electronic waste to Africa are a problem which is taken seriously by the Commission. As a reaction to the problems identified, the Commission has introduced a tightened export regime on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) with the directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE, recast) ([1]). The new WEEE Directive will improve European border controls regarding the export of used and waste electrical and electronic equipment, given that Article 23 and Annex VI of the directive provide the necessary tools for border inspectors.

However, the Commission does not envisage providing Member States with financial assistance to implement stricter controls on exports of electronic waste.

([1]) OJ L 197, 24.7.2012.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008459/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Inizjattiva Opportunitajiet għaż-Żgħażagħ

Dilemma maġġuri li l-Unjoni Ewropea qed tħabbat wiċċha magħha huwa l-qgħad, u speċifikament il-qgħad taż-żgħażagħ. Indikatur tajjeb rigward is-suċċess ekonomiku, il-qgħad baqa' fiċ-ċentru tad-diskussjonijiet f'dawn l-aħħar snin. L-Artikoli 45 u 46 tat-Trattat dwar il-Funzjonament tal-Unjoni Ewropea jabolixxu "kull diskriminazzjoni minħabba ċittadinanza bejn il-ħaddiema tal-Istati Membri". Ir-riżultat huwa t-titjib tal-mobbiltà tal-forza tax-xogħol fl-Ewropa, b'tali mod li l-individwi huam ħelsin isibu impjiegi f'żoni ġodda u possibbilment aktar stabbli. Fir-Regolament (UE) Nru 492/2011, il-Kunsill speċifika li aktar mobbiltà tapplika mhux biss għall-impjiegi, iżda wkoll għat-taħriġ vokazzjonali, u ta f'idejn il-Kummissjoni l-kompitu li tikkontrolla u tibbilanċja l-forza tax-xogħol bejn il-pajjiżi, billi żżomm Stati Membri individwali responsabbli għar-rappurtar ta' postijiet tax-xogħol battala.

Filwaqt li dan għen lil individwi jiċċirkolaw b'aktar faċilità biex isibu impjiegi disponibbli, ir-rata tal-qgħad, speċjalment fost iż-żgħażagħ, għadha għolja ħafna. Fl-2011, l-UE adottat l-Inizjattiva Opportunitajiet għaż-Żgħażagħ (YOI), bħala miżura maħsuba biex tiġġieled kontra din il-problema li qed tikber. Il-YOI għandha l-għan li tindirizza l-fenomenu tat-tluq mill-iskola qabel il-waqt, u li tkattar l-impjegabbiltà taż-żgħażagħ.

Problema potenzjali li l-UE għadha tiffaċċja, minkejja l-miżuri għat-tqawwija tat-taħriġ vokazzjonali u tal-edukazzjoni, hija l-eżistenza ta' ostakoli tal-lingwa li jistgħu jixirfu f'sitwazzjonijiet ta' impjiegi transkonfinali. Dan jikkonċerna, b'mod partikolari, liż-żgħażagħ li jkunu laħqu livelli aktar baxxi tal-edukazzjoni.

Fid-dawl ta' dan t'hawn fuq, il-Kummisjsoni x'tistma li huwa l-impatt tal-ostakoli tal-lingwa fuq l-opportunitajiet ta' impjiegi?

Ladarba individwi b'livell aktar baxx ta' ħiliet x'aktarx li jkunu f'pożizzjoni aktar vulnerabbli fis-suq tax-xogħol, il-Kummissjoni kkunsidrat li fl-Inizjattiva Opportunitajiet għaż-Żgħażagħ tinkludi korsijiet tal-lingwa?

**Tweġiba mogħtija f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(19 ta' Novembru 2012)*

L-Istħarriġ dwar it-Tkabbir Ekonomiku Annwali 2012 ħeġġeġ lill-Istati Membri jadattaw is-sistemi tagħhom ta' edukazzjoni u taħriġ biex jirriflettu l-kundizzjonijiet tas-suq tax-xogħol u d-domanda għall-ħiliet, filwaqt li jissaħħu l-effiċjenza u l-kwalità tagħhom.

Ir-riformi biex itejbu l-impjegabilità taż-żgħażagħ għandhom jikkonċentraw fuq it-titjib tal-kwalità tal-edukazzjoni b'appoġġ għat-tkabbir, l-innovazzjoni u l-impjiegi permezz tal-kisba ta' ħiliet bażiċi u trażversali, inklużi l-lingwi barranin.

In-nuqqas ta' ħiliet fil-lingwi barranin jista' tabilħaqq ixekkel il-mobbiltà taż-żgħażagħ fis-suq tax-xogħol Ewropew. Il-Kummissjoni ma għandha l-ebda stimi dwar l-impatt tal-ostakli tal-lingwa, iżda skont studju reċenti ([1]) *"l-ostakli tal-lingwa u n-nuqqas ta' informazzjoni — dan tal-aħħar parzjalment marbut ma' tal-ewwel — joħolqu l-akbar problemi għall-mobbiltà tal-ħaddiema transkonfinali."*

Il-politika tal-Kummissjoni għall-multilingwiżmu tippromwovi t-tagħlim ta' żewġ lingwi barranin jew aktar minn età bikrija, b'mod partikolari dawk tal-pajjiżi ġirien, speċjalment rilevanti għan-nies li jgħixu fiż-żoni tal-fruntiera.

L-Inizjattiva Opportunità għaż-Żgħażagħ ([2]) ħabbret għadd ta' azzjonijiet li jinvolvu kollokamenti transkonfinali, bl-ERASMUS u Leonardo da Vinci jew permezz tal-azzjoni preparatorja "L-ewwel impjieg EURES tiegħek", li tkopri wkoll l-ispejjeż ta' taħriġ lingwistiku għal ħaddiema żgħażagħ qabel it-tluq lejn Stat Membru ieħor.

Il-Kummissjoni bħalissa qed tikkunsidra kif tagħti aktar appoġġ għall-korsijiet fil-lingwi, partikolarment permezz tal-FSE.

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([1]) Scientific Report on the Mobility of Cross-Border Workers within the EU-27/EEA/EFTA Countries (January 2009) fi: ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3459&langId=en.
([2]) COM(2011) 933 tal-20 ta' Diċembru 2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008459/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Youth Opportunities Initiative

One major dilemma facing the European Union today is that of unemployment, and specifically youth unemployment. A good indicator regarding economic success, unemployment has remained at the centre of discussions over the last few years. Articles 45 and 46 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union outlaw 'any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States'. The result is to enhance mobility in the labour force in Europe, allowing individuals to obtain jobs in new and possibly more economically stable areas. In Regulation (EU) No 492/2011, the Council has specified that increased mobility applies not only to employment but also to vocational training, as well as entrusting the Commission with the task of controlling and balancing the labour force between countries, by holding individual Member States accountable for reporting job vacancies.

While this has helped individuals move more freely to find available jobs, the unemployment rate, especially among young people, remains very high. In 2011, the EU passed the Youth Opportunities Initiative (YOI), as a measure to combat this growing problem. The YOI aims to tackle the phenomenon of early dropout from school and to increase employability amongst young people.

One potential problem which the EU still faces, despite these measures to boost vocational training and education, is the existence of language barriers that can manifest themselves in crossborder employment situations. This concerns, in particular, young people having lower levels of education.

Given the above, what does the Commission estimate to be the impact of language barriers on employment opportunities?

Given that lower-skilled individuals tend to be in a more vulnerable position on the labour market, has the Commission considered including language courses in the Youth Opportunity Initiative?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 November 2012)*

The 2012 Annual Growth Survey urged Member States to adapt their education and training systems to reflect labour market conditions and skills demand, while reinforcing their efficiency and quality.

Reforms to enhance the employability of young people should concentrate on improving the quality of education in support of growth, innovation and employment via the acquisition of basic and transversal skills, including foreign languages.

Lack of foreign language skills can indeed hinder mobility of young people on the European labour market. The Commission has no estimates on the impact of language barriers, but according to a recent study ([1]) 'Language barriers and lack of information — the latter partially related to the first — bear most problems for cross-border worker's mobility'.

The Commission's policy on multilingualism promotes the learning of two or more foreign languages from an early age, in particular those of neighbouring countries, especially relevant for people living in border areas.

The Youth Opportunity Initiative ([2]) announced a number of actions involving cross-border placements, under ERASMUS and Leonardo da Vinci or via the preparatory action 'Your first EURES job', which also covers the costs of language training for young recruited workers before departure to another Member State.

The Commission is currently considering how to further support language courses, in particular through the ESF.

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([1]) Scientific Report on the Mobility of Cross-Border Workers within the EU-27/EEA/EFTA Countries (January 2009) at: ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3459&langId=en

([2]) COM(2011) 933 of 20 December 2011.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008460/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 ta' Settembru 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Investigazzjoni dwar id-dumping tal-enerġija solari

Reċentement il-Kummissjoni bdiet investigazzjoni dwar ilmenti magħmula minn impriżi tal-enerġija solari fl-UE. Dawn l-impriżi kienu diġà ressqu allegazzjonijiet ta' dumping kontra l-Gvern Ċiniż. Jekk l-investigazzjoni ssib li dawn l-allegazzjonijiet huma validi, l-UE ser timponi dazji fuq id-dumping bħala riżultat. Madankollu, tqajjem thassib dwar il-fatt li tali tariffi jżidu l-prezz globali tal-enerġija solari, u dan jagħmilha aktar diffiċli li l-enerġija solari tikkompeti ma' sorsi tal-enerġija ta' prezz baxx li jipproduċu ħafna diossidu tal-karbonju bħalma huma l-karburanti fossili.

Filwaqt li huwa importanti li jkun żgurat li l-attivitajiet ta' kummerċ jikkonformaw mal-liġi internazzjonali tal-kummerċ, tista' l-Kummissjoni tiddikjara kif bi ħsiebha tibbilanċja kwalunkwe impatt negattiv li dawn il-miżuri jista' jkollhom fuq attivitajiet ta' R&Ż fl-industrija solari, kif ukoll fuq il-kisba tal-ambizzjonijiet tal-UE li tippromwovi enerġija alternattiva u tiġġieled il-bidla fil-klima?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur De Guchton f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(30 ta' Ottubru 2012)*

Il-Kummissjoni hija responsabbli mill-investigazzjoni tal-allegazzjonijiet tad-dumping mill-produtturi esportaturi fil-pajjiżi barra mill-Unjoni Ewropea (UE). Fis-6 ta' Settembru 2012 il-Kummissjoni, skont il-qafas legali implimentat, abbażi ta' lment sostanzjat kif xieraq, nediet investigazzjoni dwar l-anti-dumping fir-rigward ta' importazzjonijiet ta' moduli fotovoltajċi tas-silikon kristallin u komponenti prinċipali (jiġifieri ċelloli u wafers) li joriġinaw mir-Repubblika Popolari taċ-Ċina.

L-iskadenza għall-impożizzjoni tal-miżuri provviżorji hija s-6 ta' Ġunju 2013 u dik għall-miżuri definittivi hija s-6 ta' Diċembru 2013. Minħabba li din l-investigazzjoni għadha kemm tnediet, għadu kmieni biex jiġi previst jekk hux se jkun hemm miżuri u l-livell tagħhom x'se jkun.

Biex jiġu imposti l-miżuri, għandu jiġi determinat id-dumping u l-ħsara li tirriżulta minnu u għandu jiġi stabbilit ukoll li mhuwiex kontra l-interess ġenerali tal-Unjoni li jiġu imposti l-miżuri. Din il-parti tal-aħħar se tikkunsidra l-impatt tat-tariffi fuq il-partijiet interessati kollha. Id-diversi politiki tal-UE, ħafna drabi jkunu marbutin u għandhom jitqiesu f'kuntest ġenerali.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-008460/12**
**to the Commission**
**David Casa (PPE)**
*(25 September 2012)*

*Subject:* Investigation into solar power dumping

The Commission has recently launched an investigation into complaints made by solar energy firms in the EU. These firms had formerly filed dumping allegations against the Chinese Government. If the investigation finds these allegations to be valid, dumping duties will be imposed as a result by the EU. However, concern has been raised over the fact that such tariffs would drive up the overall cost of solar power, making it more difficult for solar energy to compete with low-cost, $CO_2$-intensive energy sources such as fossil fuels.

Whilst it is important to ensure that trading activities conform to international trade law, can the Commission state how it intends to balance out any negative impact these measures might have on R & D activities in the solar industry, as well as on the achievement of the EU's ambitions to promote alternative energies and combat climate change?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(30 October 2012)*

The Commission is responsible for investigating allegations of dumping by exporting producers in countries outside the European Union (EU). Pursuant to the legal framework in place, on the basis of a duly substantiated complaint, the Commission has, on 6 September 2012, initiated an anti-dumping investigation on imports of crystalline silicon photovoltaic modules and key components (i.e. cells and wafers) originating in the People's Republic of China.

The deadline to impose provisional measures is 6th June 2013 and for definitive measures is 6th December 2013. Given that this investigation has just been initiated, it is premature to foresee whether there will be any measures and what would be their level.

For any measures to be imposed, a determination of dumping and resulting injury has to be made and it also has to be established that it is not against the overall Union interest to impose measures. This latter part will take into account the impact of tariffs on all interested parties. The EU's various policies are often interlinked and must be seen in an overall context.

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