ISSN 1725-2393

Den Europæiske Unions Tidende

C 372 E



Dansk udgave

Meddelelser og oplysninger

56. årgang

19. december 2013

Informationsnummer | Indhold | Side

IV *Oplysninger*

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

Europa-Parlamentet

FORESPØRGSLER TIL SKRIFTLIG BESVARELSE

2013/C 372 E/01 Forespørgsler til skriftlig besvarelse fra medlemmer af Europa-Parlamentet og svarene fra en EU-institution 1

(Se meddelelse til læseren)

DA

Meddelelse til læseren

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

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

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

Forespørgsler og svar offentliggøres i overensstemmelse med artiklerne 117 og 118 i Europa-Parlamentets forretningsorden.

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

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

FORKORTELSER FOR DE POLITISKE GRUPPER

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

DA

IV

(Oplysninger)

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

EUROPA-PARLAMENTET

FORESPØRGSLER TIL SKRIFTLIG BESVARELSE

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

(2013/C 372 E/01)

Indhold **Side**

E-001955/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Increase in the number of cases of diabetes
Versão portuguesa 27
English version 28

E-001956/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: New coronavirus
Versão portuguesa 29
English version 30

E-001957/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Peak in influenza outbreak
Versão portuguesa 31
English version 32

E-001958/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Tuberculosis — new diagnostic tool
Versão portuguesa 33
English version 34

E-001959/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: HIV: Important breakthrough in fight against disease
Versão portuguesa 35
English version 36

E-001960/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: North Korea announces enhanced nuclear capacity
Versão portuguesa 37
English version 38

E-001961/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Corruption in public procurement involving EU funds
Versão portuguesa ... 39
English version ... 40

E-001962/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: further support
Versão portuguesa ... 41
English version ... 42

P-001964/13 by Debora Serracchiani to the Commission
Subject: Posting of workers in the EU — Directive 96/71/EC
Versione italiana ... 43
English version ... 44

E-001965/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Independent checks with regard to the distribution of the agricultural budget to Austria
Deutsche Fassung ... 45
English version ... 46

E-002189/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Financial losses as a result of fraud in Austrian agriculture
Deutsche Fassung ... 45
English version ... 46

E-001966/13 by Amelia Andersdotter to the Commission
Subject: Cyberstalking and online harassment
Svensk version ... 47
English version ... 48

E-001967/13 by Nora Berra to the Commission
Subject: European debate on epilepsy
Version française ... 49
English version ... 50

E-001968/13 by Nora Berra to the Commission
Subject: Rules on football transfers
Version française ... 51
English version ... 52

E-001969/13 by Paolo De Castro to the Commission
Subject: The export of dairy products to Turkey:
Versione italiana ... 53
English version ... 54

E-001970/13 by Liisa Jaakonsaari to the Commission
Subject: Food safety in the European Union
Suomenkielinen versio ... 55
English version ... 56

E-001971/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — The war in Mali testing Europe's defences
Versão portuguesa ... 57
English version ... 58

E-001972/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Increase in the VAT rate on wine
Versão portuguesa ... 59
English version ... 60

E-001973/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Google's refusal to pay for content
Versão portuguesa ... 61
English version ... 62

E-001974/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: New technologies changing the face of drug trafficking
Versão portuguesa 63
English version 64

E-001975/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: 'Youth Guarantee'
Versão portuguesa 65
English version 66

E-001977/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: EU-Ukraine relations
Versão portuguesa 67
English version 68

E-001978/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Vaccination programmes
Versão portuguesa 69
English version 70

E-001979/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: UK's withdrawal from the EU
Versão portuguesa 71
English version 72

E-001980/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Human rights violations in Guinea-Bissau
Versão portuguesa 73
English version 74

E-001981/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Europol exposes a football match-fixing network
Versão portuguesa 75
English version 76

E-001982/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Air pollution levels in the EU
Versão portuguesa 77
English version 78

E-001983/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Portugal encouraged by the IMF to increase tax collection
Versão portuguesa 79
English version 80

E-001984/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation funding
Versão portuguesa 81
English version 82

E-001985/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Political instability in Pakistan
Versão portuguesa 83
English version 84

E-001986/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Red October — new computer virus
Versão portuguesa 85
English version 86

E-001987/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Further massacres in Syria
Versão portuguesa 87
English version 88

E-001988/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Risks of the Foz Tua II dam
Versão portuguesa ... 89
English version ... 90

E-001989/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Effects of the bad weather on Portugal
Versão portuguesa ... 91
English version ... 92

E-001990/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: UN report: World Economic Situation and Prospects 2013
Versão portuguesa ... 93
English version ... 94

E-001991/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Making use of waste II
Versão portuguesa ... 95
English version ... 96

E-001992/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Fisheries policy II
Versão portuguesa ... 97
English version ... 98

E-001993/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Neonicotinoids: effects on the bee population
Versão portuguesa ... 99
English version ... 100

E-001994/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Mercosur to present trade proposals to the EU by October
Versão portuguesa ... 101
English version ... 102

E-001995/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Creation by Brazil and the EU of a bilateral committee for increasing joint investment
Versão portuguesa ... 103
English version ... 104

E-001996/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: EU-Brazil: balance of trade
Versão portuguesa ... 105
English version ... 106

E-001997/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Wine: IMF suggestion would be disastrous for Portugal
Versão portuguesa ... 107
English version ... 108

E-001998/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: New type of cholesterol discovered
Versão portuguesa ... 109
English version ... 110

E-001999/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — War against Al-Qaida in North Africa
Versão portuguesa ... 111
English version ... 112

E-002000/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: NASA's warning about the solar storm of the century in 2013
Versão portuguesa ... 113
English version ... 114

E-002001/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: More effective chemotherapy
Versão portuguesa ... 115
English version ... 116

E-002002/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: EEA — Discovery of new products may have negative impact
Versão portuguesa ... 117
English version ... 118

E-002003/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Decline in global investment in renewable energy
Versão portuguesa ... 119
English version ... 120

E-002004/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Inguinal hernias: Portuguese develop new surgical procedure
Versão portuguesa ... 121
English version ... 122

E-002005/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: Dengue: global pandemic
Versão portuguesa ... 123
English version ... 124

E-002006/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: United States: applications for unemployment benefits hit a five-year low
Versão portuguesa ... 125
English version ... 126

E-002007/13 by Diane Dodds to the Commission
Subject: Trans-European Energy Networks
English version ... 127

E-002008/13 by Diane Dodds to the Commission
Subject: Protests in Northern Ireland
English version ... 128

E-002010/13 by Diane Dodds to the Commission
Subject: TB eradication programme
English version ... 129

E-002044/13 by Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: Transmission of tuberculosis to cattle and the proposed cull of badgers in the UK
English version ... 129

E-002011/13 by Diane Dodds to the Commission
Subject: Ban on first ploughing of carbon-rich soils
English version ... 131

E-002012/13 by Diane Dodds to the Commission
Subject: Suspension of neonicotinoids
English version ... 132

P-002013/13 by Anna Maria Corazza Bildt to the Commission
Subject: Rules on withdrawal of meat products from stores
Svensk version ... 133
English version ... 134

P-002014/13 by Alyn Smith to the Commission
Subject: DNA testing of animal feed
English version ... 135

P-002015/13 by Marina Yannakoudakis to the Commission
Subject: The Ma'an Network and EU funding
English version ... 136

E-002016/13 by Juan Fernando López Aguilar to the Commission
Subject: Youth Employment Initiative
Versión española ... 137
English version ... 138

E-002017/13 by Ole Christensen to the Commission
Subject: Possible dumping of cod from Norway
Dansk udgave ... 139
English version ... 140

E-002018/13 by Jörg Leichtfried to the Commission
Subject: Microsoft computer software
Deutsche Fassung ... 141
English version ... 142

E-002019/13 by Daniel Caspary and Michael Gahler to the Commission
Subject: Ban on the import into the EU of products manufactured in Laogai camps
Deutsche Fassung ... 143
English version ... 144

E-002020/13 by Nikolaos Chountis to the Commission
Subject: Data on the implementation of the 2007-2013 Greek Rural Development Programme
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 145
English version ... 147

E-002021/13 by Marietje Schaake to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Sanctions against Iran blocking access to life-saving medicine
Nederlandse versie ... 148
English version ... 150

E-002023/13 by Rachida Dati to the Commission
Subject: Launch of EU-US trade negotiations: immediate steps to make rules and practices in the automotive industry more consistent
Version française ... 151
English version ... 152

E-002024/13 by Andrea Zanoni to the Commission
Subject: Hazardous and harmful emissions into the air of north-eastern Italy due to Epiphany bonfires, breaching Directives 2008/50/EC on air quality and 2008/98/EC on waste
Versione italiana ... 153
English version ... 155

E-002025/13 by Elisabetta Gardini to the Commission
Subject: Food fraud and consumer protection
Versione italiana ... 157
English version ... 159

E-002026/13 by Philippe De Backer to the Commission
Subject: Uniform regulations concerning healthy floor coverings
Nederlandse versie ... 161
English version ... 163

E-002027/13 by Judith A. Merkies to the Commission
Subject: Registration requirement for solar panels
Nederlandse versie ... 164
English version ... 165

P-002028/13 by Niki Tzavela to the Commission
Subject: Further Greek debt 'haircut'
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 166
English version ... 167

P-002029/13 by Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou to the Commission
Subject: The minimum wage in Greece
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 168
English version ... 169

P-002030/13 by Giancarlo Scottà to the Commission
Subject: Aflatoxin in corn
Versione italiana ... 170
English version ... 171

E-002032/13 by Jutta Steinruck to the Commission
Subject: Labour law in relation to church institutions
Deutsche Fassung ... 172
English version ... 173

E-002033/13 by Konstantinos Poupakis to the Commission
Subject: Thousands of Greek Workers' Housing Organisation (OEK) borrowers face repossession of their homes
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 174
English version ... 176

E-002034/13 by Nikolaos Chountis to the Commission
Subject: Spot checks on construction companies by the Hellenic Competition Commission
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 178
English version ... 179

E-002035/13 by Nikolaos Chountis to the Commission
Subject: Data on the 'Management of Domestic and Industrial Waste' in the Peloponnese ROP
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 180
English version ... 181

E-002036/13 by Nikolaos Chountis to the Commission
Subject: VAT on catering services in Greece
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 182
English version ... 183

E-002037/13 by Julie Girling to the Commission
Subject: Kalahari Bushmen in Botswana
English version ... 184

E-002038/13 by Satu Hassi and Fiona Hall to the Commission
Subject: Protecting the public against the adverse effects of light pollution
Suomenkielinen versio ... 185
English version ... 186

E-002039/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: Reform of the current VAT own resource
Nederlandse versie ... 187
English version ... 188

E-002040/13 by Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: Box retailers, primary deforestation, eco-certification and the political economy of timber
English version ... 189

E-002041/13 by Phil Bennion to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — EU aid and institution-building support to Yemen
English version ... 190

E-002042/13 by Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: Legal certainty over the legal status of digital downloads
English version ... 191

E-002043/13 by Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: The possible value of an EU pollinator-friendly label for plants to help save Europe's Honeybee
English version ... 192

E-002045/13 by Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: Possible role of the Bundesbank as an alternative objective and impartial credit rating agency
English version ... 193

E-002046/13 by Marina Yannakoudakis to the Commission
Subject: High-risk and low-risk medical devices
English version ... 194

E-002047/13 by Sajjad Karim to the Commission
Subject: Legacy additives in recyclates under REACH
English version ... 195

E-002048/13 by Roberta Angelilli to the Commission
Subject: Possible funding for the development and upgrading of the Cantina Sociale Borgo Santa Maria in the Italian province of Latina
Versione italiana ... 196
English version ... 198

E-002049/13 by Mitro Repo to the Commission
Subject: European horsemeat scandal
Suomenkielinen versio ... 199
English version ... 200

E-002050/13 by Sari Essayah to the Commission
Subject: Threat of foreign cyber attacks
Suomenkielinen versio ... 201
English version ... 203

E-002051/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: France 'totally bankrupt'
Versão portuguesa ... 205
English version ... 206

E-002052/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Portuguese mosquito-repellent technology
Versão portuguesa ... 207
English version ... 208

E-002053/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Horsemeat crisis: destination of edible products
Versão portuguesa ... 209
English version ... 210

E-002054/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: World's largest ever seizure of counterfeit euros
Versão portuguesa ... 211
English version ... 212

E-002055/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Zimbabwe: referendum on 16 March 2013
Versão portuguesa ... 213
English version ... 214

E-002056/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Maintaining aid for Rwanda: an appeal by Tony Blair
Versão portuguesa ... 215
English version ... 216

E-002057/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Nuclear tests in North Korea
Versão portuguesa ... 217
English version ... 218

E-002058/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — EU-Ukraine Association Agreement: situation update
Versão portuguesa 219
English version 220

E-002059/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Fourth Railway Package
Versão portuguesa 221
English version 222

E-002060/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Outermost regions — reinforcing territorial cooperation
Versão portuguesa 223
English version 224

E-002061/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Transnational Cooperation Programme Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands — assessment
Versão portuguesa 225
English version 226

E-002062/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Social Investment Package
Versão portuguesa 227
English version 228

E-002063/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Transforming EURES into a more flexible recruitment instrument
Versão portuguesa 229
English version 230

E-002064/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: European Unitary Patent — Specialised Court
Versão portuguesa 231
English version 232

E-002065/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Transatlantic Financial Alliance
Versão portuguesa 233
English version 234

E-002066/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Research and the market
Versão portuguesa 235
English version 236

E-002067/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Drought in Europe — European response
Versão portuguesa 237
English version 238

E-002068/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Madeira — ratio of companies closed to companies formed
Versão portuguesa 239
English version 240

E-002069/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Bolivia — expropriation of European companies
Versão portuguesa 241
English version 242

E-002070/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Germany — Possible bird flu outbreak
Versão portuguesa 243
English version 244

E-002071/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: EU-US Free Trade Area — obstacles and opportunities
Versão portuguesa ... 245
English version ... 246

E-002072/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: European identity, history and culture
Versão portuguesa ... 247
English version ... 248

E-002073/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Fishing communities — European support now and in the future
Versão portuguesa ... 249
English version ... 250

E-002075/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Kidnapping of French citizens in Cameroon
Versão portuguesa ... 251
English version ... 252

E-002076/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Productive investment in the EU — criteria
Versão portuguesa ... 253
English version ... 255

E-002077/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Recovering European national treasures
Versão portuguesa ... 256
English version ... 257

E-002078/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Fusion of European police forces
Versão portuguesa ... 258
English version ... 259

E-002079/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: European horse passport
Versão portuguesa ... 260
English version ... 261

E-002080/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: European public prosecutor's office: preparatory work
Versão portuguesa ... 262
English version ... 263

E-002081/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: More effective protection against substances that cause hormonal disorders
Slovenské znenie ... 264
English version ... 265

E-002082/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Development goals after 2015
Slovenské znenie ... 266
English version ... 267

E-002083/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: EU investment in research on neurodegenerative diseases
Slovenské znenie ... 268
English version ... 269

E-002084/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Simpler recognition of qualifications in the European Union
Slovenské znenie ... 270
English version ... 271

E-002085/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Nuclear power plant safety
Slovenské znenie ... 272
English version ... 273

E-002086/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Young Europeans and the labour market
Slovenské znenie ... 274
English version ... 275

E-002087/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: The effort to provide effective support for the poorest
Slovenské znenie ... 276
English version ... 277

E-002088/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: The European Commission and support for international scientific cooperation
Slovenské znenie ... 278
English version ... 279

E-002089/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Difficult negotiations over the multiannual EU budget
Slovenské znenie ... 280
English version ... 281

E-002090/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Humanitarian aid for Africa
Slovenské znenie ... 282
English version ... 283

E-002091/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Euro area debt is approaching its peak
Slovenské znenie ... 284
English version ... 285

E-002092/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Recession in the eurozone
Slovenské znenie ... 286
English version ... 287

E-002093/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Slowdown in the flow of credit
Slovenské znenie ... 288
English version ... 289

E-002094/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: The labour market in Spain
Slovenské znenie ... 290
English version ... 291

E-002095/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Solar installations in Germany
Slovenské znenie ... 292
English version ... 293

E-002096/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Protection of animals during transport
Slovenské znenie ... 294
English version ... 295

E-002097/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Digital freedom
Slovenské znenie ... 296
English version ... 297

E-002098/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Small and medium-sized enterprises
Slovenské znenie ... 298
English version ... 299

E-002099/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: The EU's Digital Single Market
Slovenské znenie ... 300
English version ... 301

E-002100/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: Prevention of age-related women's diseases
Slovenské znenie ... 302
English version ... 303

E-002101/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: Commissioner Neelie Kroes' opinion of Silvio Berlusconi
Nederlandse versie ... 304
English version ... 305

E-002102/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: Kroes' ideas on school reforms
Nederlandse versie ... 306
English version ... 307

E-002104/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Direct air links between the Azores, Cape Verde and Madeira
Versão portuguesa ... 308
English version ... 309

E-002105/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Agricultural agreement between Angola, Brazil, India and South Africa
Versão portuguesa ... 310
English version ... 311

E-002106/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: meeting between José Ramos-Horta and the armed forces
Versão portuguesa ... 312
English version ... 313

E-002107/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: greater efforts to combat drug trafficking
Versão portuguesa ... 314
English version ... 315

E-002108/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Protection, preservation, promotion and study of montado ecosystems
Versão portuguesa ... 316
English version ... 317

E-002109/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Timor-Leste: gas and oil in the 'Greater Sunrise' field
Versão portuguesa ... 318
English version ... 319

E-002110/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Timor-Leste: Executive Secretary of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP)
Versão portuguesa ... 320
English version ... 321

E-002111/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: The economic situation of the Azores
Versão portuguesa ... 322
English version ... 323

E-002112/13 by Anne E. Jensen to the Commission
Subject: Tendering rules for ferry services
Dansk udgave ... 324
English version ... 325

E-002113/13 by Ivo Belet to the Commission
Subject: Emissions from air conditioning systems in cars
Nederlandse versie ... 326
English version ... 327

E-002114/13 by Gaston Franco to the Commission
Subject: Link between human health and climate change
Version française ... 328
English version ... 329

E-002115/13 by Matteo Salvini to the Commission
Subject: Harmonisation of laws relating to complementary medicinal products in the Member States
Versione italiana ... 330
English version ... 331

E-002116/13 by Michael Cramer to the Commission
Subject: Public consultation on the proposal concerning noise-related operating restrictions
Deutsche Fassung ... 332
English version ... 333

E-002117/13 by Michael Cramer to the Commission
Subject: Statements of the Commission concerning cross-border large heavy goods vehicle traffic
Deutsche Fassung ... 334
English version ... 335

E-002118/13 by Cornelia Ernst to the Commission
Subject: Housing situation of the Roma in the Czech Republic, in particular as regards the implementation of the EU Framework and the National Roma Integration Strategy in the Czech Republic
Deutsche Fassung ... 336
English version ... 337

E-002120/13 by Amelia Andersdotter to the Commission
Subject: Why has the Commission not recommended functional separation in the telecommunications industry?
Svensk version ... 338
English version ... 339

E-002121/13 by Amelia Andersdotter to the Commission
Subject: Who will draw up the initial draft plurilateral agreement?
Svensk version ... 340
English version ... 341

E-002122/13 by Godfrey Bloom to the Commission
Subject: European Public Prosecutor
English version ... 342

E-002123/13 by Gay Mitchell to the Commission
Subject: Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA) programme — funding query
English version ... 344

E-002124/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission efforts to step up work-based learning
English version ... 345

E-002125/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission efforts towards tertiary level qualification requirements
English version ... 346

E-002126/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU 2020 foreign language knowledge targets
English version ... 347

E-002127/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission response to horse meat scandal
English version 348

E-002128/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Next step towards Trans-Adriatic Pipeline
English version 349

E-002129/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU-Japan discussions on non-tariff barriers
English version 350

E-002130/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU progress with Japan on a proposed Global Partnership Agreement
English version 351

E-002131/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Russia's G20 Presidency and progress on Russia-EU visa-free arrangement
English version 352

E-002132/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU's relationship with the Single Economic Space of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan
English version 353

E-002133/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission input into the Council of Europe's 'cyber hate' campaign
English version 354

E-002134/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU efforts to ensure equal terms for persons with disabilities
English version 355

E-002135/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Snus and Swedish solutions to combat smoking popularity
English version 356

E-002136/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Monitoring of European Research Area chairs
English version 357

E-002137/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission proposals for sanctions on digital environment companies
English version 358

E-002139/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission monitoring of effects on euro currency
English version 359

E-002140/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission's view on negative campaign against EU migrants by UK Government
English version 360

E-002141/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission's monitoring of judicial and media law changes in Hungary
English version 361

E-002142/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission response to 'One Billion Rising'
English version 362

E-002143/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU response in relation to International Whaling Commission
English version 363

E-002144/13 by Gaston Franco to the Commission
Subject: Traceability of fish sold in the EU
Version française ... 364
English version ... 365

E-002145/13 by Christine De Veyrac to the Commission
Subject: Airport security rules
Version française ... 366
English version ... 367

E-002146/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Council
Subject: Necessity of border controls
Nederlandse versie ... 368
English version ... 370

E-002147/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU-US trade negotiations and US market access for haggis
English version ... 372

E-002148/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Discussion of US-Russia relationship during EU-US trade negotiations
English version ... 373

E-002149/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Negotiations with Ukraine following its decision to raise tariffs
English version ... 374

E-002150/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Building on the Nobel Peace Prize legacy
English version ... 375

E-002151/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: EU investments in cultural and creative sectors
English version ... 376

E-002152/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: European literature grant for minority languages
English version ... 377

E-002153/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission efforts to encourage greater uptake of entrepreneurship education
English version ... 378

E-002154/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission actions to tackle forgery and counterfeiters
English version ... 379

E-002155/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission actions to aid Kosovo in the fight against organised crime and corruption
English version ... 380

E-002156/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Affordability of Wireless Insole for Independent and Safe Elderly Living (WIISEL) technology
English version ... 381

E-002157/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: 'Active and Healthy Ageing': promoting technical ideas to older generations
English version ... 382

E-002158/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Eleventh anniversary of the detention of Shaker Aamer
English version ... 383

E-002159/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Commission approach to doping in commercial and popular sport
English version ... 384

E-002160/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Facebook's new privacy policy
English version ... 385

E-002161/13 by Ian Hudghton to the Commission
Subject: Balancing solutions to EU raw material shortage with sustainability of mining
English version ... 386

E-002164/13 by Jim Higgins to the Commission
Subject: Standardisation of food supplements
English version ... 387

P-002165/13 by Vicky Ford to the Commission
Subject: Bulgaria's and Romania's accession to the Schengen area
English version ... 388

E-002166/13 by Gay Mitchell to the Commission
Subject: Proposed amendment to the Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) with regard to the duration of medical training
English version ... 389

E-002167/13 by Marina Yannakoudakis to the Commission
Subject: Staff cuts in EU agencies
English version ... 391

E-002168/13 by Cristiana Muscardini to the Commission
Subject: Horsemeat and food safety
Versione italiana ... 392
English version ... 393

E-002169/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Council
Subject: Clarification on the EU/Turkey readmission agreement
Versione italiana ... 394
English version ... 395

E-002170/13 by Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: Lack of communication between Member States regarding medical doctors struck off national medical registers or subject to disciplinary proceedings
English version ... 396

E-002171/13 by Andreas Schwab to the Commission
Subject: Implementation of the 'black list' in the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive and review of the directive concerning misleading and comparative advertising
Deutsche Fassung ... 397
English version ... 399

E-002172/13 by Anne Delvaux to the Commission
Subject: Food safety checks following the horsemeat lasagne scandal
Version française ... 401
English version ... 402

E-002173/13 by Ole Christensen to the Commission
Subject: Sugar prices in the EU
Dansk udgave ... 403
English version ... 404

E-002174/13 by Jutta Steinruck to the Commission
Subject: Disadvantage faced by severely disabled people
Deutsche Fassung ... 405
English version ... 406

E-002175/13 by Andreas Mölzer to the Commission
Subject: Uranium in fertilisers
Deutsche Fassung ... 407
English version ... 408

E-002176/13 by Andreas Mölzer to the Commission
Subject: Food from China
Deutsche Fassung ... 409
English version ... 410

E-002177/13 by Andreas Mölzer to the Commission
Subject: Turnover tax fraud in connection with energy
Deutsche Fassung ... 411
English version ... 412

E-002178/13 by Nikos Chrysogelos to the Commission
Subject: Disposal of placentas from home births
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 413
English version ... 414

E-002179/13 by Theodoros Skylakakis to the Commission
Subject: OPAP — Data Room Procedure
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 415
English version ... 416

E-002181/13 by Jim Higgins to the Commission
Subject: Implementation of the 2005 Council Directive on passenger car related taxes
English version ... 417

E-002182/13 by Giancarlo Scottà to the Commission
Subject: Waste-derived fuel
Versione italiana ... 418
English version ... 420

E-002183/13 by Georgios Papastamkos to the Commission
Subject: Degree of organisation of agricultural producers
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 421
English version ... 423

E-002184/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Targeted killings in Afghanistan
Versione italiana ... 424
English version ... 425

E-002185/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Disruption of Hezbollah financing
Versione italiana ... 426
English version ... 427

E-002186/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Foreigners arrested in Libya for spreading Christianity
Versione italiana ... 428
English version ... 429

E-002187/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Hebrew lessons for Gaza schoolchildren
Versione italiana ... 430
English version ... 431

E-002188/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Islamists reportedly banning the sale of alcohol in Egypt
Versione italiana ... 432
English version ... 433

E-002190/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Establishment of an enforcement agency for financial reporting
Deutsche Fassung 434
English version 435

E-002191/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Compliance with provisions of legislative resolution on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins intended for circulation
Deutsche Fassung 436
English version 437

E-002192/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Impact assessment on the continued issuance of 1 and 2 cent coins
Deutsche Fassung 438
English version 439

E-002193/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Relationship of commercial banks and investment banks with the Commission
Deutsche Fassung 440
English version 442

E-002194/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Influence of the financial sector on the work of the Commission
Deutsche Fassung 440
English version 442

E-002195/13 by Nuno Melo to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Further North Korean nuclear test
Versão portuguesa 443
English version 444

E-002196/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Grant agreements under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development
Deutsche Fassung 445
English version 446

E-002197/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Number of consultants employed by Commissioners and the cost of these consultants
Deutsche Fassung 447
English version 448

E-002198/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Council
Subject: Construction costs for the Europa building
Deutsche Fassung 449
English version 450

E-002199/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Compliance of the use of drones (RPAS) with the existing law
Deutsche Fassung 451
English version 452

E-002200/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Efforts undertaken by the Commission with a view to cooperation on asylum policy with Frontex
Deutsche Fassung 453
English version 454

E-002201/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: EU competition law and smartphone operating systems
Deutsche Fassung 455
English version 456

E-002202/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Competition among smartphone operating systems
Deutsche Fassung ... 457
English version ... 458

E-002203/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Frequency of cold calling in the EU
Deutsche Fassung ... 459
English version ... 460

E-002204/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Protection of intra-EU migrant workers
Deutsche Fassung ... 461
English version ... 462

P-002205/13 by Eleni Theocharous to the Commission
Subject: Violation by Turkey of international law of the sea and the sovereign rights of an EU Member State
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 463
English version ... 464

E-002206/13 by Ulrike Lunacek and Eva Lichtenberger to the Commission
Subject: Expansion of photovoltaics in Austria
Deutsche Fassung ... 465
English version ... 466

E-002207/13 by Eleni Theocharous to the Council
Subject: Viability of Cyprus' debt
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 467
English version ... 468

E-002208/13 by Paul Murphy to the Council
Subject: EU- Israel trade relations and the EU's approach to illegal settlement products
English version ... 469

E-002209/13 by Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu to the Commission
Subject: Adverse health side-effects of the economic crisis
Versiunea în limba română ... 470
English version ... 471

E-002210/13 by Cătălin Sorin Ivan to the Commission
Subject: European universities
Versiunea în limba română ... 472
English version ... 473

E-002211/13 by Czesław Adam Siekierski to the Commission
Subject: New demarcation of Less Favoured Areas (LFAs)
Wersja polska ... 474
English version ... 476

E-002213/13 by Jarosław Kalinowski to the Commission
Subject: New criteria for designating less favoured areas (LFAs)
Wersja polska ... 474
English version ... 476

P-002212/13 by Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Unequal pay and unemployment
Versão portuguesa ... 478
English version ... 479

E-002215/13 by Jim Higgins to the Commission
Subject: Cost of the European Union
English version ... 480

E-002216/13 by Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: Remuneration for landowners who contribute to environmental conservation
Versión española ... 481
English version ... 482

E-002217/13 by Britta Reimers to the Commission
Subject: Food safety inspections in the EU
Deutsche Fassung ... 483
English version ... 484

P-002218/13 by Michael Cramer to the Commission
Subject: Effectiveness of penalties provided for in Regulation (EC) No 1/2005
Deutsche Fassung ... 485
English version ... 486

E-002219/13 by Raimon Obiols to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Parliamentary elections in Egypt
Versión española ... 487
English version ... 488

E-002220/13 by Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: Foreign investors in Sareb
Versión española ... 489
English version ... 490

E-002221/13 by Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: A recent audit of the Spanish banking sector
Versión española ... 491
English version ... 492

E-002222/13 by Bendt Bendtsen to the Commission
Subject: Unfair competition in the air transport sector — follow-up question
Dansk udgave ... 493
English version ... 494

E-002223/13 by Martin Ehrenhauser to the Commission
Subject: EJC
Deutsche Fassung ... 495
English version ... 496

E-002224/13 by Martin Ehrenhauser to the Commission
Subject: Financing of media content
Deutsche Fassung ... 497
English version ... 498

E-002225/13 by Martin Ehrenhauser to the Commission
Subject: PNR negotiations with Canada
Deutsche Fassung ... 499
English version ... 500

E-002226/13 by Martin Ehrenhauser to the Commission
Subject: Media and information services
Deutsche Fassung ... 501
English version ... 502

E-002227/13 by Thomas Ulmer to the Commission
Subject: Harmonising telemetric reading and programming devices for defibrillators and pacemakers
Deutsche Fassung ... 503
English version ... 504

E-002228/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Food safety in products imported from China
Deutsche Fassung ... 505
English version ... 507

E-002229/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Sustainable measures to ensure food labelling
Deutsche Fassung 509
English version 511

E-002230/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Regulation on animal transport in Bulgaria
Deutsche Fassung 512
English version 513

E-002231/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Emissions trading in crisis — impact on finances and the environment?
Deutsche Fassung 514
English version 515

E-002232/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Council
Subject: The spread of Alzheimer's disease
Deutsche Fassung 516
English version 517

E-002233/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Research to combat the spread of the Alzheimer's 'epidemic'
Deutsche Fassung 518
English version 520

E-002234/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Release of genetically modified mosquitoes by a British biotechnology company
Deutsche Fassung 521
English version 522

E-002235/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Housing shortage in Austria and the situation in Europe
Deutsche Fassung 523
English version 524

E-002236/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Green genetic engineering
Deutsche Fassung 525
English version 526

E-002237/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Mafia involvement in Pompeii
Deutsche Fassung 527
English version 528

E-002238/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: 'Zombie companies'
Deutsche Fassung 529
English version 530

E-002239/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Private sector development aid?
Deutsche Fassung 531
English version 532

E-002240/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Poverty in old age as an obstacle to healthy ageing
Deutsche Fassung 533
English version 534

E-002241/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Water shortage in Pakistan
Deutsche Fassung 535
English version 536

E-002242/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: Sicily facing bankruptcy
Deutsche Fassung ... 537
English version ... 538

E-002243/13 by Angelika Werthmann to the Commission
Subject: De facto ban on e-cigarettes
Deutsche Fassung ... 539
English version ... 540

E-002244/13 by David Martin to the Commission
Subject: Effect of REACH legislation on amateur beadmaking
English version ... 541

E-002245/13 by Mojca Kleva Kekuš to the Council
Subject: Commitment to halt tax avoidance
Slovenska različica ... 542
English version ... 544

E-002246/13 by Mojca Kleva Kekuš to the Commission
Subject: Commitment to halt tax avoidance
Slovenska različica ... 546
English version ... 547

E-002247/13 by Amelia Andersdotter to the Commission
Subject: UEFI Secure Boot and Microsoft as a single point of trust
Svensk version ... 548
English version ... 549

E-002248/13 by Stephen Hughes to the Commission
Subject: European Investment Bank — promotional literature
English version ... 550

E-002249/13 by Jim Higgins to the Commission
Subject: Insurance scheme in the common agricultural policy
English version ... 551

E-002250/13 by Cristiana Muscardini to the Commission
Subject: Hazardous substances in imported footwear
Versione italiana ... 552
English version ... 553

E-002251/13 by Cristiana Muscardini to the Commission
Subject: Sweden's missing horses
Versione italiana ... 554
English version ... 555

E-002252/13 by Cristiana Muscardini to the Commission
Subject: Applied renewable energies
Versione italiana ... 556
English version ... 557

E-002253/13 by Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė to the Commission
Subject: Compatibility of national health policies with Union law
Tekstas lietuvių kalba ... 558
English version ... 559

E-002254/13 by Peter van Dalen to the Commission
Subject: Use of Filipino workers as temporary agency workers by European road hauliers
Nederlandse versie ... 560
English version ... 562

E-002255/13 by Konrad Szymański to the Commission
Subject: Public consultation on shale gas
Wersja polska ... 564
English version ... 565

P-002917/13 by Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska to the Commission
Subject: Public consultations on the future development of unconventional fossil fuels
Wersja polska ... 564
English version ... 565

E-002256/13 by Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska to the Commission
Subject: Sanctions imposed on Poland in the field of agriculture
Wersja polska ... 566
English version ... 567

P-002257/13 by Thomas Händel to the Commission
Subject: Concession directive/privatisation of public services
Deutsche Fassung ... 568
English version ... 569

E-002258/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Public health and safety — sealing of personal care products
Versão portuguesa ... 570
English version ... 571

E-002259/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Public health and safety — nail varnish
Versão portuguesa ... 570
English version ... 571

E-002260/13 by Diogo Feio to the Commission
Subject: Public health and safety — sealing of detergents
Versão portuguesa ... 572
English version ... 573

E-002261/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: Reconstruction and structural prevention measures in the wake of 20 February 2010
Versão portuguesa ... 574
English version ... 575

E-002262/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: Support for distillation
Versão portuguesa ... 576
English version ... 577

E-002263/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: State aid for the fisheries sector
Versão portuguesa ... 578
English version ... 579

E-002264/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: Decoupling of agricultural production aid
Versão portuguesa ... 580
English version ... 581

E-002265/13 by João Ferreira and Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Pressure by the Commission on Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD) to close branches and cut staff in Spain
Versão portuguesa ... 582
English version ... 583

E-002266/13 by João Ferreira and Inês Cristina Zuber to the Council
Subject: National envelopes under the common agricultural policy (CAP) (2014-2020) and Portugal's situation
Versão portuguesa ... 584
English version ... 585

E-002267/13 by João Ferreira and Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: National envelopes under the common agricultural policy (CAP) (2014-2020) and Portugal's situation
Versão portuguesa ... 586
English version ... 587

E-002268/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: Use of traditional terms associated with Portuguese wines for wines produced in other countries
Versão portuguesa ... 588
English version ... 589

E-002269/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: Increase in Cohesion Funds and the EIB loan for the Autonomous Region of Madeira
Versão portuguesa ... 590
English version ... 591

E-002270/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: The 'Paints and tiles' Programme — Autonomous Region of Madeira
Versão portuguesa ... 592
English version ... 593

P-002271/13 by Åsa Westlund to the Commission
Subject: The proposal for a new tobacco directive and Swedish *snus*
Svensk version ... 594
English version ... 595

E-002272/13 by Monica Luisa Macovei to the Commission
Subject: Witness protection programmes (WPPs)
Versiunea în limba română ... 596
English version ... 597

E-002273/13 by Marina Yannakoudakis to the Commission
Subject: Communication between EU executive agencies
English version ... 598

E-002274/13 by Marina Yannakoudakis to the Commission
Subject: Diplomatic privileges of agency staff
English version ... 599

E-002275/13 by Milan Zver to the Commission
Subject: Size of fines for infringements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport (follow-up question to Written Question E-000372/13)
Slovenska različica ... 600
English version ... 601

E-002276/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 93 of the INI report in relation to the obstacles encountered by visually impaired people
Magyar változat ... 602
English version ... 603

E-002277/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 80 of the INI resolution regarding combating rare diseases
Magyar változat ... 604
English version ... 605

E-002278/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 69 of the INI report in relation to self-employment
Magyar változat ... 606
English version ... 607

E-002279/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 60 of the INI report in relation to early support
Magyar változat ... 608
English version ... 609

E-002280/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Council
Subject: The subject matter of point 58 of the INI report in relation to the education and training systems
Magyar változat ... 610
English version ... 611

E-002281/13 by Laurence J.A.J. Stassen to the Commission
Subject: Complete abolition of the CO_2 tax on air transport
Nederlandse versie ... 612
English version ... 613

E-002282/13 by Izaskun Bilbao Barandica and Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: Agreement on the reform of regulatory bodies in Spain
Versión española ... 614
English version ... 615

E-002283/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Council
Subject: The subject matter of point 54 of the INI report in relation to public procurement regulations
Magyar változat ... 616
English version ... 617

E-002284/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 53 of the INI report in relation to discrimination
Magyar változat ... 618
English version ... 619

E-002285/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 50 of the INI report in relation to sheltered employment
Magyar változat ... 620
English version ... 621

E-002286/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 41 of the INI report regarding cultural infrastructure
Magyar változat ... 622
English version ... 623

E-002287/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of points 37 and 40 of the INI report in relation to online and accessible content
Magyar változat ... 624
English version ... 625

E-002288/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 32 of the INI report in relation to cross-border healthcare
Magyar változat ... 626
English version ... 627

E-002289/13 by Ádám Kósa to the Commission
Subject: The subject matter of point 29 of the INI report in relation to accessible transport
Magyar változat ... 628
English version ... 629

E-002290/13 by Ria Oomen-Ruijten to the Commission
Subject: Problems faced by EU students in the Netherlands
Nederlandse versie ... 630
English version ... 632

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001955/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento do número de casos de diabetes

Considerando que:

— Segundo dados do relatório anual do Observatório Nacional da Diabetes, em 2011 o número de pessoas com diabetes em Portugal ultrapassou um milhão, e a percentagem de doentes não diagnosticados é ainda de 44 %. Ainda segundo este relatório, estima-se que esta doença atinja 12,7 % da população entre os 20 e os 79 anos;

— Na maior parte dos países desenvolvidos, a diabetes já é a quarta principal causa de morte e, de acordo com a OMS, poderá conduzir no futuro a uma redução da esperança média de vida, pela primeira vez em 200 anos.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que análise faz destes novos dados? Quais os números que possui relativamente à incidência da diabetes noutros países europeus?

Pondera adotar novas medidas de combate a esta doença, à escala europeia, com uma maior aposta na prevenção e no diagnóstico precoce?

Resposta dada por Joe Borg em nome da Comissão
(27 de março de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente do aumento de casos de diabetes na Europa e por todo o mundo, que representam um sério desafio para os sistemas de saúde.

A Comissão publicou recentemente um relatório intitulado «Panorama da saúde: Europa 2012» ([1]) conjuntamente com a OCDE. Este relatório mostra que as estimativas de prevalência da diabetes, em 2011, em pessoas com idades compreendidas entre os 20-79 anos correspondem a 9,8 % para Portugal, o que é consideravelmente mais elevado do que os 6,4 % da média europeia. Os dados do Eurostat ([2]) mostram que a taxa de mortalidade por diabetes *mellitus* é de 23,9 por 100 000 habitantes em Portugal, enquanto a média da UE é de 12,0.

A Comissão está empenhada em enfrentar o desafio da epidemia da diabetes, em particular a prevenção da diabetes tipo II, agindo sobre os fatores de risco conhecidos, como a nutrição e a falta de exercício físico, e, neste sentido, a Comissão está a definir uma estratégia de caráter global ([3]).

Para além disso, a Comissão financiou projetos relacionados com a diabetes ao abrigo do programa no domínio da Saúde ([4]), como o «Maior controlo da diabetes pediátrica e em adolescentes na UE»: que visa criar centros de referência ([5]) para a diabetes pediátrica, BIRO — *European Best Information through Regional Outcomes in Diabetes* (sistema europeu de informações para a diabetes de base regional) ([6]) e *Development and Implementation of a European Guideline and training standards for Diabetes Prevention* (desenvolvimento e implementação de diretrizes e normas de formação a nível europeu no domínio da prevenção da diabetes) ([7]).

Para um apoio continuado à prevenção e diagnóstico precoce da diabetes tipo II, está a ser desenvolvida uma ação conjunta relativa às doenças crónicas entre os Estados-Membros e a Comissão, cofinanciada pelo programa no domínio da Saúde. Parte da ação conjunta incide especificamente na diabetes de tipo II, por forma a estudar quais são as barreiras que se colocam à prevenção, os exames de rastreio e tratamento da diabetes e para melhorar a cooperação entre os Estados-Membros na sua luta contra a diabetes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/european/health_glance_2012_en.htm
([2]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_asdr&lang=en
([3]) Livro branco sobre uma estratégia para a Europa em matéria de problemas de saúde ligados à nutrição, ao excesso de peso e à obesidade, COM(2007) 279.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:301:0003:0013:PT:PDF
([5]) http://sweet-project.eu/
([6]) http://www.eubirod.eu/
([7]) http://www.image-project.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001955/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Increase in the number of cases of diabetes

— According to the annual report of the National Diabetes Observatory, in 2011 the number of people with diabetes in Portugal exceeded one million, and the percentage of people with undiagnosed diabetes is 44%. Also according to the report, it is estimated that the disease affects 12.7% of the population between 20 and 79 years old.

— In most developed countries, diabetes is already the fourth leading cause of death and, according to the World Health Organisation, it could lead in the future to a fall in average life expectancy for the first time in 200 years.

What does the Commission make of these new data? What figures does it have concerning the incidence of diabetes in other European countries?

Does it intend taking new, Europe-wide measures to combat the disease, with greater emphasis on prevention and early diagnosis?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission is aware of rising diabetes cases in Europe and worldwide, which represent a serious challenge to health systems.

The Commission has recently released the report 'Health at a Glance Europe 2012' ([1]) jointly with the OECD. This report shows that the 2011 prevalence estimates of diabetes for people aged 20-79 years are 9.8% for Portugal, which is considerably higher than the 6.4% European average. Eurostat data ([2]) shows that the 2010 death rate for diabetes mellitus is 23.9 per 100 000 inhabitants in Portugal where the EU average is 12.0.

The Commission is committed to addressing the challenge of the diabetes epidemic, in particular the prevention of diabetes type II, by taking action on known risk factors such as nutrition and lack of physical activity, where the Commission has put in place a comprehensive strategy ([3]).

In addition, the Commission has financed projects related to diabetes under the Health Programme ([4]), such as 'Better control in paediatric and adolescent diabetes in the EU: working to create Centres of Reference ([5])', 'European Best Information through Regional Outcomes in Diabetes ([6])', and 'Development and Implementation of a European Guideline and training standards for Diabetes Prevention ([7])'.

To further support prevention and early diagnosis of diabetes type II, a joint action on chronic diseases is being developed between Member States and the Commission, co-financed by the Health Programme. Part of the joint action is specifically devoted to diabetes type II, to study barriers to prevention, screening and treatment of diabetes and to improve cooperation among Member States to act on diabetes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/european/health_glance_2012_en.htm
([2]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_asdr&lang=en
([3]) White paper on a strategy for Europe on nutrition, overweight and obesity related health issues COM(2007)279.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:301:0003:0013:EN:PDF
([5]) http://sweet-project.eu/
([6]) http://www.eubirod.eu/
([7]) http://www.image-project.eu/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001956/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Novo coronavírus

Considerando que:

— Dados recentes apontam o novo coronavírus como o responsável por 12 casos confirmados de pneumonia grave em todo o mundo, dos quais 5 resultaram em óbito;

— O Reino Unido confirmou esta terça-feira a morte de um doente que estava infetado com o novo coronavírus — Síndrome Respiratória Aguda Grave Associada ao Coronavírus (SARS-CoV);

— Segundo um comunicado emitido pela Direção-Geral da Saúde, em Portugal, «não se pode excluir a transmissão pessoa a pessoa, uma vez que foram recentemente identificados, no Reino Unido, dois doentes sem história de viagem à Península Arábica, mas com contacto próximo com um caso confirmado».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

Que medidas pondera tomar como resposta a esta ameaça?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(9 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão está plenamente ciente da situação relativa ao novo coronavírus (NCoV). O vírus pertence à família dos vírus corona, mas é diferente do vírus que causou a Síndrome Respiratória Aguda (SRA). A doença provocada pelo NCoV é também muito diferente da SRA, em termos de epidemiologia e da sua capacidade de propagação entre os seres humanos. Desde abril de 2012, foram comunicados quinze casos de NCoV confirmados laboratorialmente, incluindo oito mortes.

As medidas de saúde pública tomadas até à data incluem a vigilância ativa, a existência de rigorosas medidas de controlo das infeções a nível hospitalar, bem como a identificação de contactos. Estas medidas revelaram-se ter sido eficazes para controlar a situação. Os casos de NCoV foram comunicados aos Estados-Membros através do Sistema de Alerta Rápido e de Resposta. Os Estados-Membros foram incentivados a prosseguir a vigilância ativa das infeções respiratórias agudas graves e a vigiar de perto qualquer caso inabitual.

A Comissão está em estreito contacto com o Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças e com a Organização Mundial de Saúde e continua a monitorizar a situação atentamente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001956/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: New coronavirus

— Recent data show that the new coronavirus is responsible for 12 confirmed cases of severe pneumonia around the world, five of which resulted in death.

— On Tuesday, the United Kingdom confirmed the death of a patient who was infected with the new Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-associated coronavirus (SARS-CoV).

— According to a note issued by the Portuguese Directorate-General for Health, 'person-to-person transmission cannot be excluded, since two patients were recently identified in the UK who had not travelled to the Arabian Peninsula but had been in close contact with a confirmed case'.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

What measures does it intend on taking in response to this threat?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the situation related to the novel coronavirus (NCoV). The virus belongs to the family of corona viruses, but it is different from the virus which has caused Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The disease caused by the NCoV is also very different from SARS, in terms of its epidemiology and its ability to spread from human to human. Since April 2012, fifteen laboratory-confirmed cases of NCoV have been reported, including eight deaths.

The public health measures undertaken so far include active surveillance, strict infection control measures at hospital level and contact tracing. They have been effective to control the situation. NCoV cases have been notified to the Member States through the Early Warning and Response System. Member States have been encouraged to continue their active surveillance for severe acute respiratory infections and to carefully follow up any unusual case.

The Commission is in close contact with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, and the World Health Organisation and continues monitoring the situation attentively.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001957/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Pico de surto de gripe

Considerando que:

— O vírus da gripe está a circular com bastante força na Europa e nos EUA, e, segundo os especialistas, está cada vez mais agressivo e são esperados mais casos;

— Na sequência de uma epidemia de gripe que já afetou mais de 19 mil pessoas no estado de Nova Iorque, foi decretado nesta cidade o estado de emergência sanitária;

— Na Europa, segundo o Centro Europeu para o Controlo e Prevenção de Doenças (ECDC), na última semana de 2012, pelo menos 15 países reportaram atividade gripal;

— Em Portugal, no ano passado houve um total de seis mil vítimas mortais, com um aumento de 1400 pessoas face a 2011, e este ano, a DGS (Direção Geral de Saúde) chama a atenção para esta propagação invulgar do vírus, alertando para um pico de surto de gripe, também no mês de fevereiro, e cujas estimativas apontam para que possam vir a padecer da doença mais de 15 mil pessoas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem acompanhado a situação descrita?

Que medidas pensa tomar para controlar o referido vírus?

Resposta dada por Joe Borg em nome da Comissão
(8 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente da situação epidemiológica da gripe sazonal na Europa — assim como no resto do mundo — e está a acompanhar atentamente a situação com o apoio do Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças (CEPCD), e através do Sistema Europeu de Vigilância da Gripe ([1]) com a Organização Mundial de Saúde.

Cada estação de gripe é diferente e as medidas que são necessárias variam em conformidade. Em fevereiro de 2013 ([2]) foi elaborada pelo CEPCD uma avaliação de risco e concluiu-se que a epidemiologia na Europa é diferente da América do Norte, já que o vírus que circula na Europa é menos patogénico.

A vacinação continua a ser a medida mais apropriada de prevenção contra a gripe, e através de medidas especificas é possível mitigar o impacto nas populações mais vulneráveis como os idosos. Neste contexto, a Recomendação do Conselho 2009/1019/UE sobre a vacinação contra a gripe sazonal, incentiva a adoção e implementação de políticas e planos nacionais, regionais ou locais para melhorar a cobertura vacinal contra a gripe sazonal. O objetivo é atingir, até ao inverno 2014-2015, uma taxa de cobertura vacinal de 75 % para os idosos e outros grupos de risco, incluindo os profissionais de saúde.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/surveillance/EISN/Pages/indx.aspx
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/influenza-season-risk-assessment-europe-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001957/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Peak in influenza outbreak

Given that:

— There is a severe outbreak of the influenza virus in Europe and the US, and experts say that the virus is increasingly aggressive and that more cases are expected;

— A public health emergency has been declared in the State of New York following an influenza epidemic which has affected more than 19 000 people in the state;

— According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), in the last week of 2012 at least 15 countries reported cases of influenza in Europe;

— Last year there was a total of 6000 deaths in Portugal, a rise of 1400 compared with 2011, and this year the Directorate-General for Health (DGS) is drawing attention to the unusual spread of the virus, warning of another peak in the influenza outbreak during February, with estimates suggesting that the disease could claim the lives of more than 15 000 people.

Is the Commission monitoring this situation?

What measures does it intend taking to control this virus?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the epidemiological situation of seasonal influenza in Europe — and also abroad — and is monitoring the situation very closely with the support of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and through the European Influenza Surveillance Network ([1]) with the World Health Organisation.

Every influenza season is different and the countermeasures that are needed vary accordingly. A risk assessment was prepared by the ECDC in February 2013 ([2]) and the conclusions were that the epidemiology in Europe is different from North America as the virus circulating in Europe is less pathogenic.

Vaccination remains the most appropriate countermeasure against influenza, and through targeted measures it is possible to mitigate its impact on the most vulnerable populations such as the elderly. In this context, Council Recommendation 2009/1019/EU on seasonal influenza vaccination, encourages the adoption and implementation of national, regional or local plans and policies to improve seasonal influenza vaccination coverage. The aim is to achieve, by the 2014-2015 winter season, a vaccination coverage rate of 75% for older age groups and other risk groups, including healthcare workers.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/surveillance/EISN/Pages/indx.aspx.
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/influenza-season-risk-assessment-europe-2013.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001958/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Tuberculose — novo instrumento de diagnóstico

Considerando que:

— A tuberculose, causada pela bactéria Mycobacterium tuberculosis, é uma das doenças mais mortíferas do mundo. Em 2011 afetava quase nove milhões de pessoas em todo mundo, tendo surgido, no mesmo ano, 400 mil novos casos, segundo a OMS.

— Em Portugal, de acordo com dados do Portal da Saúde, em 2011 registaram-se 2 388 casos de tuberculose em Portugal, dos quais 2 231 foram novos.

— Uma equipa de investigadores da Universidade de Vermont, nos Estados Unidos, concluiu que a análise do hálito pode identificar bactérias e possíveis infeções do pulmão, podendo vir a diagnosticar em poucos minutos doenças como a tuberculose.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta nova forma de diagnóstico?

Pondera implementar um processo semelhante desta nova forma de diagnóstico da tuberculose?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos testes de análise do hálito a que se refere o Senhor Deputado, que visam a deteção de moléculas únicas no hálito dos doentes. O estudo averiguou a utilização de testes de análise do hálito em ratos relativos a infeções pulmonares causadas pelas bactérias «Staphylococcus aureus» e «Pseudomonas aeruginosa». Nos últimos anos, também foram efetuados estudos sobre a análise do hálito relativos à tuberculose nos seres humanos. No entanto, não existe atualmente qualquer análise do hálito disponível que seja recomendada para utilização com caráter de rotina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001958/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Tuberculosis — new diagnostic tool

Given that:

— Tuberculosis, caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, is one of the deadliest diseases in the world. Worldwide, nearly nine million people were affected in 2011, with 400 000 new cases emerging that year according to the WHO.

— According to data from the Health Portal, there were 2 388 cases of tuberculosis in Portugal in 2011, of which 2 231 were new cases.

— A team of scientists from the University of Vermont in the United States has concluded that breath analysis can identify bacteria and possible lung infections and could diagnose diseases like tuberculosis in a matter of minutes.

Is the Commission aware of this new method of diagnosis?

Is it considering implementing this new technique for diagnosing tuberculosis?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the breath tests referred to by the Honourable Member, which aim at detecting unique molecules in the breath of patients. The study investigated the use of breath tests in mice for lung infections caused by the bacteria 'Staphylococcus aureus' and 'Pseudomonas aeruginosa'. In the past few years, studies have also been done on breath tests for tuberculosis in humans. However, there is currently no breath test available that is recommended for use on a routine basis.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001959/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: HIV: Descoberta importante no combate à doença

De acordo com um comunicado divulgado pela agência noticiosa francesa AFP, a pesquisa realizada por um investigador do Queensland Institute of Medical Research, na Austrália, consiste na modificação da proteína do HIV responsável pela propagação do vírus da sida pelo corpo humano, que aparentemente se mostra infalível.

Através dessa alteração, a proteína inverte a sua função e passa a ser inibidora do vírus da imunodeficiência humana, apresentando o melhor modo de travar a infeção.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta importante descoberta?

Que avaliação faz dos resultados enunciados?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente do estudo científico mencionado pelo Senhor Deputado do Parlamento Europeu que se refere a um artigo publicado no «Human Gene Therapy» por um grupo de cientistas australianos ([1]).

Neste estudo, uma das proteínas do VIH, «tat», foi modificada e introduzida em células humanas «in vitro», tendo-se observado um efeito positivo no que diz respeito à alteração da replicação do VIH.

Porém, esta é só uma das muitas experiências feitas com diferentes proteínas, que — como esta — foram feitas em cultura celular em laboratório.

([1]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Harrich+hiv++Human+Gene+Therapy

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001959/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: HIV: Important breakthrough in fight against disease

According to a press release issued by the French news agency AFP, a study carried out by a researcher at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research in Australia involved the modification of a protein in HIV that normally helps the virus spread in the human body, and this modification apparently works every time.

This modification turns the HIV virus against itself and becomes a potent inhibitor, and it is the best way of stopping the infection.

Is the Commission aware of this important discovery?

What is its view of the results that have been announced?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the scientific study mentioned by the Honourable Member of the European Parliament and that refers to an article published in 'Human Gene Therapy' by a group of Australian scientists ([1]).

In this study, one of the HIV proteins, 'tat', has been modified and introduced into human cells '*in vitro*', and a good effect on modifying the HIV replication has been observed.

However, this is just one of the many experiments done with different proteins, which — just like this one — have only been done in cell culture in a laboratory.

([1]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Harrich+hiv++Human+Gene+Therapy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001960/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Coreia do Norte anuncia reforço de capacidades nucleares

Considerando que:

— Após o lançamento de um foguete em dezembro do ano passado, foi publicada uma resolução do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas que amplia as sanções ao regime comunista de Pyongyang;

— As sanções existentes já previam a proibição de testes de tecnologias associadas a mísseis balísticos ou armas nucleares;

— Em resposta, a Coreia do Norte anunciou que não irá participar nas negociações para a desnuclearização da península coreana e que irá mesmo reforçar as suas capacidades militares e nucleares;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Existem ou estão previstas sanções da UE ao regime de Pyongyang? Quais?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

A UE impôs o seu próprio regime de sanções à RPDC relativo aos programas nucleares e de mísseis balísticos deste país. O regime da UE apoia o regime da ONU mas dispõe de medidas autónomas que vão além das sanções das Nações Unidas. As medidas da UE incluem proibições à exportação e importação de armas, proibição à exportação e importação de determinados produtos e tecnologia que poderiam contribuir para os programas de armamento da RPDC, medidas nos setores financeiro e comercial destinadas a restringir relações financeiras por parte do regime em relação a esses programas e medidas no setor dos transportes, vigilância e inspeção de cargas suspeitas provenientes e destinadas à RPDC. Atualmente, 26 pessoas e 33 entidades são alvo de medidas restritivas da UE (proibição de viajar e proibição de contactos comerciais no caso de empresas).

Na sequência da adoção da Resolução 2094 do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas, em 7 de março de 2013, a UE analisará a forma de apoiar esta resolução, incluindo mediante medidas autónomas complementares. É fundamental que a comunidade internacional apoie e defenda o regime universal de não proliferação e as resoluções correspondentes das Nações Unidas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001960/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: North Korea announces enhanced nuclear capacity

Following the launch of a rocket in December last year, the United Nations Security Council published a resolution to extend sanctions against the Communist regime in Pyongyang.

Existing sanctions already stipulated a ban on testing technology linked to ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons.

In response, North Korea announced that it will not participate in negotiations on denuclearising the Korean peninsula and that it will enhance its military and nuclear capacities.

Are EU sanctions against the Pyongyang regime in place? Are such sanctions planned? What do/will these sanctions comprise?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The EU has its own sanctions regime in place towards DPRK targeted at its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The EU regime exists in support of the UN regime, but has EU autonomous measures which go beyond UN sanctions. EU measures include prohibitions on the export and import of arms, a ban on the export and import of certain goods and technology which could contribute to the DPRK's weapons programs, measures in the financial and trade sectors which aim to restrict financial dealings by the regime in relation to such programs, measures in the transport sector, vigilance and inspection of suspect cargo to and from DPRK. Currently 26 persons and 33 entities are subject to the EU's restrictive measures (travel ban and ban on commercial contacts in case of companies).

Following UNSC resolution 2094 of 7 March 2013, the EU will consider how to support this resolution, including with additional autonomous measures. It is essential that the international community upholds and defends the global non-proliferation regime and relevant UN resolutions.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001961/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Corrupção nos contratos públicos com fundos da UE

— O deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005097/2012.

— Na resposta dada por Cecília Malmström, em nome da Comissão, é feita referência a um estudo encomendado pelo OLAF (European Anti-fraud Office) em matéria de corrupção nos contratos públicos que envolvam fundos da UE.

— Sendo que estava prevista a apresentação das conclusões do referido estudo para o final de 2012, e considerando que um dos objetivos deste estudo é a criação de um instrumento de avaliação dos custos da corrupção ao nível da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Quais as conclusões apresentadas no referido estudo encomendado pelo OLAF?

2. Quais as medidas preventivas e repressivas a implementar para combater este tipo de corrupção específica, relativa à contratação pública?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2013)

1. Devido aos atrasos na realização do estudo, o prazo de execução do contrato teve de ser prolongado. Neste momento, esperam-se os resultados finais do estudo em Junho de 2013. O relatório final será publicado.

2. A Comissão Europeia prevê publicar o seu primeiro relatório sobre a luta contra a corrupção na UE em meados de 2013, incluindo uma avaliação da situação no que respeita à corrupção a nível dos contratos públicos. Este relatório tomará em consideração, na medida do possível, as conclusões retiradas do estudo sobre contratos públicos efetuado pelo Organismo Europeu de Luta Antifraude (OLAF). As lições aprendidas serão tidas em conta numa apresentação de âmbito geral relativa ao domínio dos contratos públicos, bem como, quando necessário, nas avaliações por país. Contudo, o relatório não vai propor uma solução única para todos. Em vez disso, centrar-se-á em recomendações específicas para cada Estado-Membro, na medida do necessário.

Além disso, as propostas adotadas pela Comissão em dezembro de 2011 sobre a revisão das diretivas relativas aos contratos públicos incluem disposições com vista a melhorar as salvaguardas existentes contra as práticas empresariais antiéticas (por exemplo, disposições relativas a conflitos de interesses, comportamentos ilícitos, vantagens desleais, e regras mais estritas no domínio da alteração de contratos, etc.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001961/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Corruption in public procurement involving EU funds

— This MEP submitted Question No E-005097/2012 for written answer to the Commission.

— The answer by Cecilia Malmström, on behalf of the Commission, refers to a study commissioned by OLAF (European Anti-Fraud Office) on corruption in public procurement involving EU funds.

— The findings of this study were due at the end of 2012, and one of the aims of this study is to create an evaluation tool to assess the costs of corruption at EU level.

1. What are the findings of this study commissioned by OLAF?

2. What preventive and deterrent measures will be implemented to combat this particular kind of corruption related to public procurement?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

1. Due to delays in the realisation of the study, the implementation deadline of the contract had to be prolonged. Currently the final results of the study are expected by June 2013. The final report will be published.

2. The European Commission plans to publish its first EU Anti-corruption Report in mid-2013, including the assessment of the situation with regards to corruption in public procurement. This report will take into account, to the extent possible, the conclusions drawn from the study of OLAF on public procurement. The lessons learnt will be reflected in a general presentation on the subject of public procurement, as well as, when necessary, in the individual country assessments. However, the report will not attempt to propose a 'one-for-all' solution; rather, it will focus on tailor-made recommendations for each Member State, to the extent necessary.

Moreover, the proposals adopted by the Commission in December 2011 on the revision of the public procurement directives comprise provisions aiming at improving the safeguards against unsound business practices (e.g. provisions on conflicts of interests, illicit conduct, unfair advantages, and stricter rules for modification of contracts, etc.).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001962/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau — novos apoios

Considerando que:

— Os apoios externos à Guiné-Bissau diminuíram muito na sequência do golpe de Estado de 12 de abril de 2012 e da consequente instabilidade política que se tem verificado neste país, que está a ser gerido por autoridades de transição, não reconhecidas pela maior parte da comunidade internacional;

— O Fundo Monetário Internacional encontra-se na Guiné-Bissau para avaliar o desempenho feito pelo Governo de transição, e este regresso é visto como um voto de confiança;

— O representante da ONU na Guiné-Bissau, José Ramos-Horta, visitou recentemente o país e considerou que a comunidade internacional nunca apoiou muito o país e que é preciso que «aprenda com os erros do passado» e dê maior apoio ao povo guineense.

Assim pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

Considera adotar novas medidas de apoio direto a este país e que contribuam para a consolidação da paz?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(29 de maio de 2013)

A UE continua a ser um dos principais doadores ativos na Guiné-Bissau.

Apesar de ter suspendido, em 2011, uma parte da sua cooperação (cooperação «governo a governo») com a Guiné-Bissau no âmbito do artigo 96.° do Acordo de Cotonu, a UE nunca suspendeu os programas de cooperação de apoio direto à população. A partir de abril de 2013, estão a ser executadas 31 ações, que correspondem a um montante total de 49 milhões de euros. Outros programas, com um orçamento total de cerca de 30 milhões de euros, encontram-se numa fase avançada de avaliação. O reinício dos programas suspensos terá lugar se e quando os níveis de referência acordados para a democracia e o Estado de direito forem alcançados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001962/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: further support

— External support to Guinea-Bissau has decreased considerably following the coup that took place on 12 April 2012 and the consequent political instability throughout the country, which is being governed by transitional authorities that are not recognised by most of the international community.

— The International Monetary Fund is in Guinea-Bissau to assess how the transitional government is performing, and this return is seen as a vote of confidence.

— José Ramos-Horta, the UN envoy to Guinea-Bissau, recently visited the country and said that the international community had never really supported Guinea-Bissau and that it needed 'to learn from past mistakes' and lend more support to the Guinean people.

Will the Vice-President/High Representative consider adopting new direct support measures for Guinea-Bissau to help the consolidation of peace in the country?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The EU remains one of the main active donors in Guinea-Bissau.

Even though the EU suspended in 2011 a part of its cooperation ('government to government' cooperation) with Guinea-Bissau in the framework of Art. 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, it never suspended the cooperation programmes directly in support of the population. As of April 2013, 31 actions, for a total amount of EUR 49 million, are being implemented. Other programmes, for a total of about EUR 30 million, are in an advanced phase of appraisal. Resumption of suspended programmes will take place if and when the agreed benchmarks towards Democracy and the Rule of Law are reached.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001964/13
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(22 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Distacco comunitario — direttiva 96/71/CE

Il tema del distacco comunitario, regolato dalla direttiva 96/71/CE, appare o almeno è percepito in alcuni paesi come un fenomeno negativo, attraverso il quale si finiscono per legalizzare situazioni di dumping sociale. Nel settore dei trasporti, sembra essere diffusa la fornitura delle prestazioni di personale di lavoro temporaneo da parte di agenzie di lavoro non stabilite nel paese di esecuzione. Infatti, sembrerebbe che alcune aziende italiane di trasporto abbiano scelto di assumere i loro conducenti in paesi che presentano un ridotto costo del lavoro.

Al di là delle conseguenze occupazionali per la categoria, viene messa a rischio la certezza di retribuzione (oneri previdenziali e retributivi) pagata dalle imprese italiane alle agenzie di lavoro che, in teoria, dovrebbero versare i contributi al sistema previdenziale italiano. Se così non fosse, gli autotrasportatori assunti tramite agenzie interinali localizzate in paesi dove i costi del lavoro sono molto più bassi rischierebbero di non ricevere la pensione.

La Commissione europea è al corrente delle conseguenze economiche e sociali che si stanno verificando in alcuni paesi in seguito all'applicazione della direttiva sopra citata? E se sì, come intende la Commissione affrontare il problema del distacco degli autotrasportatori?

Crede la Commissione che attraverso il rafforzamento della cooperazione transnazionale, il miglioramento della conoscenza dei vari organismi nazionali di controllo e lo scambio di informazioni a livello europeo, si possa almeno alleviare il problema del dumping sociale?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole dell'impatto socioeconomico prodotto dall'applicazione della direttiva 96/71/CE ([1]) in certi paesi.

Si rammenta tuttavia che la direttiva sul distacco dei lavoratori si applica soltanto alle situazioni in cui le attività sono espletate su base temporanea in uno Stato membro diverso da quello in cui il lavoratore distaccato lavora di norma. Tale fattispecie non si dà allorché la manodopera (come ad esempio i conducenti su lunghe distanze) è fornita su base strutturale tramite agenzie di collocamento nel settore dei trasporti.

Per migliorare la tutela dei lavoratori distaccati e combattere il fenomeno dell'elusione e dell'abuso delle regole applicabili la Commissione ha adottato, il 21 marzo 2012, una proposta ([2]) di direttiva concernente l'applicazione della direttiva 96/71/CE. Tale proposta intende chiarire come applicare meglio le regole dell'UE in tema di distacco e farle rispettare nella pratica oltre a definire, tra l'altro, regole più chiare per rafforzare la cooperazione tra le autorità nazionali, facendo anche ricorso all'IMI ([3]) per lo scambio di informazioni tra di esse.

Si noti inoltre che una persona che normalmente lavora quale lavoratore dipendente in due o più Stati membri (ad esempio i guidatori di camion nei trasporti internazionali) è soggetta alla legislazione sulla sicurezza sociale di un unico Stato membro come stabilito all'articolo 13 del regolamento (CE) n. 883/2004 in combinato disposto con l'articolo 14 del regolamento (CE) n. 987/2009 ed illustrato in dettaglio nella Parte II della Guida pratica sulla legislazione applicabile ([4]).

([1]) Direttiva 96/71/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 dicembre 1996, relativa al distacco dei lavoratori nell'ambito di una prestazione di servizi, GU L 18 del 21.1.1997.
([2]) COM(2012)131 final.
([3]) Sistema d'informazione del mercato interno.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social-security-coordination.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001964/13
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Posting of workers in the EU — Directive 96/71/EC

The issue of the posting of workers in the EU, governed by Directive 96/71/EC, appears to be, or at least is perceived in some countries as being, a negative phenomenon, whereby social dumping ends up being legalised. In the transport sector, the supply of temporary staff from employment agencies that are not established in the country where the work is being carried out, appears to be widespread. Indeed, some Italian transport companies have apparently chosen to hire their drivers in countries with low labour costs.

Over and beyond the repercussions on employment for this category, the certainty of the remuneration (salary and social security contributions) paid by the Italian companies to these employment agencies is under threat. In theory, the latter are supposed to pay the contributions into the Italian pension system — otherwise, drivers hired through temporary employment agencies in countries where labour costs are much lower might not receive a pension.

Is the Commission aware of the economic and social impact in some countries of the implementation of the abovementioned directive? If so, how will the Commission deal with the problem of the posting of long-distance drivers?

Does the Commission not agree that by strengthening transnational cooperation, improving the knowledge of the various national supervisory bodies and the exchange of information at EU level, the problem of social dumping can at least be alleviated?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the economic and social impact the implementation of Directive 96/71/EC ([1]) has in some countries.

However, it should be recalled that the Posting of Workers Directive only applies to situations where the activities are performed on a temporary basis in a Member State other than the one in which the posted worker normally works. The latter often does not appear to be the case when labour (such as long-distance drivers) is provided on a structural basis via employment agencies in the transport sector.

In order to improve the protection of posted workers and tackle the phenomenon of circumvention and abuse of the applicable rules, the Commission adopted on 21 March 2012 a proposal ([2]) for a directive on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC. This proposal aims clarifying how the EU rules on posting should be better applied and enforced in practice and *inter alia* establishes clearer rules strengthening the cooperation between national authorities, including the use of the IMI ([3]) for the exchange of information between them.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that a person who normally pursues an activity as employed person in two or more Member States (e.g. lorry driver in international transport) shall be subject to social security legislation of one Member State only as it is determined in Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 in conjunction with Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 and explained in detail in Part II of Practical guide on applicable legislation ([4]).

([1]) Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, OJ L 18, 21.1.1997.
([2]) COM(2012) 131 final.
([3]) Internal Market Information System.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social-security-coordination.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001965/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(22. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Unabhängige Prüfung zur Verteilung des Agrarbudgets an Österreich

Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge hat die Europäische Union vorerst alle Fördermittel für österreichische Bauern ausgesetzt, da durch die EU zahlreiche bewirtschaftete Felder subventioniert wurden, die eigentlich hätten brachliegen müssen. Die EU hat die österreichische Gesellschaft Agrarmarkt Austria Marketing (AMA) mit einer Prüfung der Anbauflächen beauftragt und das Ergebnis der Prüfung als Bedingung für zukünftige Zahlungen festgelegt.

1. Welcher rechtliche Rahmen regelt beziehungsweise begründet diese Aussetzung von Agrarsubventionszahlungen für ein ganzes Mitgliedland?

2. Sieht die EU einen Interessenskonflikt bei der Prüfung der bewirtschafteten und ungenutzten Felder in Österreich durch eine Organisation aus demselben Mitgliedsland, wie im Falle der AMA?

3. Bisher haben europäische Behörden in Österreich nur Stichproben durchgeführt. Werden zukünftig häufigere Prüfungen für österreichische Agrarsubventionen durchgeführt?

4. In welcher Form wird die Kommission die Ergebnisse der AMA-Untersuchung verifizieren, und was wird dies kosten?

5. Warum wurde ausschließlich die AMA für diese Prüfung ausgewählt, und auf welchen Betrag belaufen sich die Gesamtkosten dieser Prüfung?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002189/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Finanzielle Schäden durch Betrugsfälle in der Landwirtschaft in Österreich

Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge hat die Europäische Union vorerst alle Fördermittel für österreichische Landwirte gestrichen, da durch die EU zahlreiche bewirtschaftete Felder subventioniert wurden, die eigentlich hätten brachliegen müssen. Die EU hat die österreichische Gesellschaft Agrarmarkt Austria Marketing (AMA) mit einer Prüfung der Anbauflächen beauftragt und das Ergebnis der Prüfung als Voraussetzung für zukünftige Zahlungen festgelegt.

1. Welche finanziellen Schäden sind nach Schätzungen der Kommission durch die unkontrollierten Anbauflächen in Österreich entstanden?

2. Wann rechnet die Kommission mit den Ergebnissen der Prüfung durch die AMA?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

Die Kommission hat weder die Erstattung von Direktzahlungen noch von Mitteln für die ländliche Entwicklung an Österreich ausgesetzt.

Nach den geltenden Verordnungen für die Finanzverwaltung der für die gemeinsame Agrarpolitik (GAP) eingesetzten EU-Mittel müssen die Mitgliedstaaten Zahlstellen benennen ([1]). Sie sind zuständig für diese Verwaltung in den Mitgliedstaaten oder Regionen, in denen sie tätig sind. Bei der Agrarmarkt Austria (AMA) handelt es sich um die österreichische Zahlstelle und nicht um eine private Gesellschaft.

([1]) Siehe insbesondere Artikel 6 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1290/2005 über die Finanzierung der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik (ABl. L 209 vom 11.8.2005 , S. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001965/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Independent checks with regard to the distribution of the agricultural budget to Austria

According to various media reports, the European Union has suspended all aid to Austrian farmers for the time being, as subsidies have been paid out by the EU for numerous cultivated fields which should actually have been left fallow. The EU has charged the Austrian company Agrarmarkt Austria Marketing (AMA) with the task of checking the cultivated areas and has made future payments conditional upon the result of the checks.

1. What legal framework governs or provides a basis for this suspension of agricultural subsidy payments for an entire Member State?

2. Does the EU see a conflict of interest in the checking of cultivated and uncultivated fields in Austria by an organisation from the same Member State, as in the case of the AMA?

3. Up to now, European authorities have only carried out spot checks in Austria. Will more frequent checks be carried out in future for Austrian agricultural subsidies?

4. What method will the Commission use to verify the results of the AMA investigation and what will this cost?

5. Why was it only the AMA that was chosen to carry out these checks and what will the total costs of these checks be?

Question for written answer E-002189/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Financial losses as a result of fraud in Austrian agriculture

According to various media reports, the European Union has cancelled all aid to Austrian farmers for the time being, as subsidies have been paid out by the EU for numerous cultivated fields which should actually have been left fallow. The EU has charged the Austrian company Agrarmarkt Austria Marketing (AMA) with the task of checking the cultivated areas and has made future payments conditional upon the result of the checks.

1. In the Commission's estimation, what financial losses have been incurred as a result of the unchecked cultivated areas in Austria?

2. When does the Commission expect to receive the results of the AMA's checks?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission has not suspended any reimbursement of direct payments or rural development funds to Austria.

Regulations in force for financial management of the EU funding for the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) provide that Member States must designate Paying Agencies ([1]). They are responsible for such management in the Member State or region they operate. Agrarmarkt Austria (AMA) is indeed the Austrian Paying Agency and not a private company.

([1]) See in particular Article 6 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 on the financing of the common agricultural policy (OJ L 209, p. 1).

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-001966/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(22 februari 2013)

Angående: Cyberstalking och nättrakasserier

I genomförbarhetsstudien för Europeiska it-brottscentrumet, som genomfördes av RAND Europe på uppdrag av kommissionen under 2012 ([1]), anges att en typ av it-brott består i att använda datorer för att orsaka personliga men såsom oro, vånda eller psykologiska skador, inbegripet kränkande, hotande eller hätska e-postmeddelanden och meddelanden samt publicering av nedsättande information på nätet. I studien har åtskillnad gjorts mellan ”nättrakasserier” och ”cyberstalking”, där cyberstalking kännetecknas av förföljelse och rädsla ([2]).

Håller kommissionen med om att de två ovannämnda aktiviteterna omfattas av definitionen it-brott?

Håller kommissionen med om att det är nödvändigt och lämpligt att tydligt skilja på ”nättrakasserier” och ”cyberstalking”, så som det görs i genomförbarhetsstudien?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(24 april 2013)

I enlighet med RAND-studien används begreppet ”it-brottslighet” allmänt för att beteckna en rad olika verksamheter. It-brottslingar missbrukar i synnerhet uppgifter, dator- och informationssystem samt cyberrymden för ekonomisk, personlig eller psykologisk vinning. Det finns olika definitioner av och system för att klassificera it-brottslighet i och utanför EU. För närvarande finns det ingen juridisk definition på EU-nivå av begreppet ”it-brottslighet”. Begreppen ”nättrakasserier” och ”cyberstalking” används ofta för att uttrycka samma sak, vilket framhålls i studien. I ett exempel citeras en akademiker som föreslår ett sätt att skilja mellan de två begreppen, men det hävdas inte i studien att det är nödvändigt och lämpligt att göra det. För närvarande är det medlemsstaternas lagstiftning som avgör om sådana handlingar är brottsliga och om en åtskillnad ska göras mellan dem.

([1]) http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2012/RAND_TR1218.pdf
([2]) s. 23, fotnot.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001966/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Cyberstalking and online harassment

In the feasibility study for the European Cybercrime Centre conducted by RAND Europe on behalf of the Commission in 2012 ([1]), it is said that 'one type of cybercrime involves the use of computers to cause personal harm such as anxiety, distress or psychological harm, including abusive, threatening or hateful emails and messages and the posting of derogatory information online'. In the study, a distinction is made between 'online harassment' and 'cyberstalking', where 'cyberstalking is characterised by pursuit and fear' ([2]).

Does the Commission agree that the two aforementioned activities fall under the definition of cybercrime?

Does the Commission agree that it is necessary and appropriate to distinguish between 'online harassment' and 'cyberstalking', as is done in the feasibility study?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

As outlined in the RAND study, the term 'cybercrime' is commonly used to refer to a broad range of activities. In particular, cybercriminals misuse data, computer and information systems, and cyberspace for economic, personal or psychological gain. Different definitions and systems classifying cybercrime exist throughout the EU and beyond. Currently, there is no legal definition at EU level of the term 'cybercrime'. As the study points out, the terms 'online harassment' and 'cyberstalking' are often used interchangeably; the study cites the example of one academic who proposes a way to distinguish between the two, but does not state that it is necessary and appropriate to do so. Whether such acts are of a criminal nature and whether a distinction is made between the two is determined at present by the laws of the Member States.

([1]) http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2012/RAND_TR1218.pdf
([2]) p. 23, footnote.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001967/13
à la Commission
Nora Berra (PPE)
(22 février 2013)

Objet: Réflexion européenne sur l'épilepsie

Le 11 février dernier a eu lieu la journée européenne de l'épilepsie. À cette occasion, plusieurs événements de sensibilisation furent organisés pour rappeler que l'épilepsie est un enjeu de santé publique majeur qui touche encore 6 millions de personnes en Europe et que 350 000 nouveaux cas sont détectés chaque année.

En 2012, la Commission européenne s'est engagée à lancer avec les États membres une réflexion autour des solutions qui permettraient de relever de manière optimale les défis posés par les maladies chroniques, dont l'épilepsie. La Commission a indiqué qu'elle tiendrait compte de la déclaration écrite sur l'épilepsie adoptée par le Parlement européen le 15 septembre 2011, dans laquelle il l'invite à encourager la recherche et l'innovation dans le domaine de la prévention, ainsi que du diagnostic et du traitement précoces de l'épilepsie.

La Commission peut elle indiquer si cette réflexion a été lancée? Si oui, quand compte-t-elle informer le Parlement de ses conclusions?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(17 avril 2013)

La Commission a entamé, avec les États membres et les organisations intéressées, une réflexion sur la meilleure manière de relever les défis posés par les maladies chroniques; dans ce contexte, elle a proposé des mesures destinées à promouvoir la santé, à favoriser la prévention et à améliorer la gestion des maladies.

Cette réflexion porte sur tous les troubles chroniques, y compris l'épilepsie, mais son objectif premier est de mettre en évidence les problèmes transversaux communs à de nombreuses maladies chroniques, au lieu de se concentrer sur les problèmes propres à telle ou telle maladie. Le groupe de haut niveau «Santé publique» du Conseil élabore actuellement un rapport sur les résultats de la réflexion, qui devrait être achevé à l'automne 2013.

La recherche et l'innovation dans le domaine de la prévention, du diagnostic et du traitement de l'épilepsie ont été soutenues tout au long du septième programme-cadre de recherche et de développement technologique (2007-2013). Pour l'heure, la Commission a investi plus de 50 millions d'euros dans 35 projets en rapport avec l'épilepsie. En juillet 2012, elle a aussi publié, au titre du septième programme-cadre, un appel à propositions relatif à la physiopathologie et au traitement de l'épilepsie et des troubles épileptiformes.

En outre, la Commission prépare un «Mois européen du cerveau» ([1]), qui aura lieu en mai 2013 et qui contribuera à sensibiliser les citoyens à la recherche et aux problèmes de santé liés au cerveau, dont l'épilepsie. Elle soutient financièrement le Forum de recherche sur l'épilepsie, qui se tiendra cette année du 25 au 27 mai, sous la présidence irlandaise, et entend prendre part au débat sur la coordination de la recherche à l'échelon national et européen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001967/13
to the Commission
Nora Berra (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: European debate on epilepsy

11 February 2013 was European Epilepsy Day. A number of awareness-raising events were held on that day to draw attention to the fact that epilepsy is a major public-health issue that still affects 6 million people in Europe and that 350 000 new cases are diagnosed each year.

In 2012 the Commission pledged to launch a debate with the Member States on the best ways of addressing the challenges presented by chronic diseases, including epilepsy. It indicated that it would take account of the written declaration on epilepsy adopted by Parliament on 15 September 2011, in which it is called on to encourage research and innovation in the area of prevention and early diagnosis and treatment of epilepsy.

Can the Commission say whether that debate has been launched? If so, when will it inform Parliament of its conclusions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission has initiated a reflection process with Member States and stakeholder organisations about the options to optimize the response to the challenges of chronic diseases, including proposed actions in health promotion, prevention and disease management.

This reflection process covers all chronic disorders, including epilepsy. However, its focus is on the identification of cross-cutting issues that affect many chronic diseases and not on disease-specific issues. A report on the outcomes of the reflection process is under preparation and should be concluded in autumn 2013 by the Senior Level Working Party on Public Health of the Council.

Research and innovation on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of epilepsy have been supported throughout the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development 2007-2013. So far, the Commission has invested over EUR 50 Million to support 35 projects related with epilepsy. In addition, within the Seventh Framework Programme, the Commission published in July 2012 a call for proposals on 'Patho-physiology and therapy of epilepsy and epileptiform disorders'.

The Commission is also organising a European Month of the Brain ([1]) in May 2013 that will help raise awareness on brain research and healthcare issues, including epilepsy. The Commission is financially supporting the Epilepsy Research Forum 2013 on 25 to 27 May 2013 as part of the Irish presidency and seeks to contribute to the debate on the coordination of research at national and European level.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001968/13
à la Commission
Nora Berra (PPE)
(22 février 2013)

Objet: Règles sur les transferts des joueurs de football

Le Traité de Lisbonne reconnaît le rôle de l'Union européenne dans le domaine du sport. L'Union est désormais compétente pour soutenir, coordonner et compléter les actions des États membres. Le développement d'une politique européenne du sport contribue à promouvoir l'équité des compétitions sportives et la coopération des instances sportives, ainsi qu'à protéger l'intégrité des sportifs.

Dans une étude publiée le 7 février 2013, la Commission européenne reconnaît que les règles actuelles sur le transfert des joueurs créent des déséquilibres compétitifs entre les grands et les petits clubs. L'essentiel de l'argent issu des transferts étant insuffisamment redistribué vers ces derniers, la Commission propose différentes mesures pour inverser la tendance (instauration d'une redevance reversée aux clubs les moins fortunés, limitation du nombre de joueurs par club, etc.).

Quelles suites la Commission envisage-t-elle de donner à cette étude?

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(11 avril 2013)

L'étude évoquée par l'Honorable Parlementaire a été effectuée par des experts indépendants et ne reflète pas nécessairement la position de la Commission européenne. Comme indiqué dans l'étude, «les règles de transfert dans le domaine du sport sont examinées attentivement par les institutions de l'UE, qui vérifient la compatibilité des exceptions prévues avec la législation européenne relative à la libre circulation des travailleurs et/ou le droit de la concurrence» (p. 20).

L'étude sera présentée et examinée au sein du groupe d'experts «Bonne gouvernance» de l'UE qui a été créé en vertu de la résolution du Conseil établissant un plan de travail de l'UE en faveur du sport pour 2011-2014 ([1]). Ce groupe d'experts, assisté de la Commission, doit présenter des recommandations en matière de transferts et d'agents sportifs au Conseil d'ici la fin de 2013. Sur cette base, le Conseil assurera un suivi politique approprié.

Au sein de la commission du dialogue social sectoriel au niveau européen pour le football professionnel, les partenaires sociaux du secteur du football (clubs/ligues et joueurs) discuteront aussi des résultats de l'étude dans le cadre de leur réflexion sur la question de la stabilité contractuelle et du respect des contrats. La Commission jouera un rôle de facilitateur et soutiendra ces travaux.

([1]) 2011/C 162/01.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001968/13
to the Commission
Nora Berra (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Rules on football transfers

The Lisbon Treaty recognises the European Union's role in relation to sport. The Union now has the power to support, coordinate and supplement Member States' actions. The development of an EU sports policy helps to promote fairness in sporting competitions and cooperation among sporting bodies, as well as to protect the integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen.

In a study published on 7 February 2013, the Commission recognises that the current rules on player transfers create competitive imbalances between large and small clubs. Since only a small amount of the money made from transfers is redistributed to small clubs, the Commission is proposing a variety of measures to reverse the trend, including the introduction of a levy paid to less wealthy clubs and a limit on the number of players per club.

How does the Commission intend to follow up this study?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The study referred to by the Honourable Member was carried out by independent experts and does not necessarily reflect the position of the European Commission. As noted by the study, 'transfer rules in sport are subject to EU institutions' scrutiny on the compatibility of such exceptions with EC law on free movement of workers and/or competition law' (p. 20).

The study will be presented and discussed within the EU Expert Group 'Good Governance' which was set up on the basis of the Council Resolution establishing an EU Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014 ([1]). The Expert Group, with the assistance of the Commission, is expected to make recommendations to the Council in the area of transfers and sports agents by the end of 2013. On this basis, the Council will ensure appropriate political follow-up.

Within the framework of the EU Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Professional Football, social partners in the football sector (clubs/leagues and players) will also discuss the results of the study as part of their debate on the topic of contractual stability and respect of contracts. The Commission will act as a facilitator and support this work.

([1]) 2011/C 162/01.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001969/13
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(22 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Esportazione di prodotti lattiero-caseari in Turchia

Premesso che:

— in data 27 novembre 2011 le autorità turche hanno trasmesso al Ministero della salute italiano un nuovo certificato veterinario, da utilizzare per le esportazioni di latte e prodotti lattiero-caseari;

— il modello, in vigore dal 1° febbraio u.s., pur facendo riferimento alla normativa igienico-sanitaria vigente nell'UE, prevede l'obbligo della pastorizzazione del latte crudo non previsto dalla regolamentazione europea;

— le autorità italiane sono intervenute sul governo turco sostenendo che i formaggi stagionati prodotti da latte crudo sono sicuri per i consumatori, come comprovato da un'ampia bibliografia scientifica e chiedendo una revisione del certificato veterinario;

— il 29 gennaio 2013, le autorità turche hanno respinto la proposta del Governo italiano;

— dal 1° di febbraio, le imprese europee non possono più esportare in Turchia formaggi prodotti ottenuti a partire da latte crudo;

— l'obbligo della pastorizzazione del latte crudo, peraltro non previsto dalla normativa dell'UE, impedisce l'esportazione in Turchia dei formaggi europei ottenuti da latte crudo, quali alcune denominazioni di origine protetta;

— la filiera lattiero-casearia europea rappresenta uno dei più importanti pilastri in termini economici e sociali all'interno del sistema agroalimentare dell'UE,

può la Commissione dire:

1. se è a conoscenza del problema e cosa intende fare per continuare a permettere le esportazioni europee in Turchia nel settore lattiero-caseario;

2. cosa intende fare per tutelare gli interessi legittimi delle imprese casearie, pregiudicati dal certificato veterinario turco e dal blocco alle esportazioni?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della problematica sollevata dall'onorevole deputato. La Turchia è incoraggiata ad allineare progressivamente la propria legislazione all'acquis.

La questione verrà sollevata con le autorità turche nel quadro del prossimo gruppo di lavoro sui problemi commerciali di ordine sanitario e fitosanitario ove viene discusso questo tipo di problematiche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001969/13
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: The export of dairy products to Turkey:

Given that:

— on 27 November 2011, the Turkish authorities sent the Italian Ministry of Health a new veterinary certificate to be used for the export of milk and dairy products;

— the form, valid from 1 February this year, is based on EU health and hygiene standards, but also requires pasteurisation of raw milk, which is not required under EU regulations;

— the Italian authorities appealed to the Turkish Government, insisting that aged cheeses made from raw milk are safe for consumers, which is a scientifically proven fact, and requesting a revision of the veterinary certificate;

— on 29 January 2013, the Turkish authorities rejected the Italian Government's appeal;

— as of 1 February, European companies can no longer export cheeses made from raw milk to Turkey;

— the obligation to pasteurise raw milk, which is not required under EU regulations, prevents the export of raw milk cheeses to Turkey, including those protected by designations of origin;

— the European dairy industry is one of the most important economic and social pillars of the EU agri-food system;

can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the problem and what it intends to do in order to continue to allow European exports of products from the dairy sector to Turkey;

2. what it intends to do in order to protect the legitimate interests of the dairy companies that have been affected by the Turkish veterinary certificate and the block on exports?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The European Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member. Turkey is encouraged to align its legislation progressively with the *acquis*.

This issue will be notably raised with the Turkish authorities in the framework of the next working group on sanitary and phytosanitary trade issues where such kinds of trade matters are discussed.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-001970/13
komissiolle
Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)
(22. helmikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Ruokaturvallisuus Euroopan unionissa

Hevosenlihaskandaali paisuu Euroopassa. Joka päivä uutisoidaan uusia tapauksia, joissa ruokaa on vedetty markkinoilta hevosenlihalöydöksien takia. Skandaali on levinnyt jo lähes kaikkiin EU-maihin.

Kuluttajilla on oltava oikeus tietää, mitä tuotteet oikeasti sisältävät ja kuinka paljon kutakin ainetta tuotteessa on. Periaatteessa vastuu on valmistajilla ja vähittäiskaupalla. Mutta millaiset keinot valvontaan oikeasti on? Kenellä oikeasti on vastuu?

Onko komissiolla aikeita tarkistaa valvonnan toimivuutta? Olisiko tarpeen kiristää säätelyä ja lisätä tuotesisällön tarkkuutta? Onko tarpeen ryhtyä pikaisiin toimiin lainsäädännön uudistamisessa, niin että se kattaisi nykyisen, pitkän hankintaketjun valvonnan tehokkaammin?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(12. huhtikuuta 2013)

Nykyisten sääntöjen ([1]) mukaan elintarvikkeiden merkinnät eivät saa johtaa kuluttajia harhaan tuotteiden luonteen, alkuperän ja sisällön suhteen. Kaikki elintarvikkeen ainesosat on merkittävä. Lihaa sisältävien elintarvikkeiden merkinnöissä on ilmoitettava myös asianomainen eläinlaji. Lisäksi siinä tapauksessa, että ainesosa mainitaan elintarvikkeen nimessä, sen prosentuaalinen osuus tuotteesta on ilmoitettava ainesosien luettelossa. Tämä vaatimus on otettu käyttöön sen välttämiseksi, että kuluttajille aiheutuisi epätietoisuutta elintarvikkeen luonteesta ja koostumuksesta. Kaikki nämä vaatimukset on sisällytetty asetukseen (EU) N:o 1169/2011 ([2]), minkä lisäksi siinä edellytetään, että mikäli on kyse muista eläimistä peräisin olevia lisättyjä proteiineja sellaisinaan (hydrolysoidut eläinvalkuaiset mukaan luettuina) sisältävistä lihatuotteista tai -valmisteista, elintarvikkeen nimen yhteydessä on mainittava niiden käyttö ja alkuperä.

Vastuu elintarvikeketjua koskevan lainsäädännön täytäntöönpanosta kuuluu jäsenvaltioille ([3]), joiden on otettava käyttöön virallinen valvontajärjestelmä sen toteamiseksi, että toimijat noudattavat lainsäädännön asettamia vaatimuksia. Komissio seuraa jäsenvaltioiden suorittamaa valvontaa muun muassa paikalla tehtävin tarkastuksin. Tapauksessa, johon arvoisa parlamentin jäsen viittaa, jäsenvaltioiden käyttöön ottamat viralliset valvontajärjestelmät ovat auttaneet paljastamaan voimassa oleviin sääntöihin kohdistuneita rikkomisia.

Edellä sanotusta riippumatta suunnitteilla olevalla virallista valvontaa koskevalla komission ehdotuksella pyritään tehostamaan entisestään nykyistä järjestelmää.

([1]) Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston direktiivi 2000/13/EY, annettu 20 päivänä maaliskuuta 2000, myytäväksi tarkoitettujen elintarvikkeiden merkintöjä, esillepanoa ja mainontaa koskevan jäsenvaltioiden lainsäädännön lähentämisestä, EYVL L 109, 6.5.2000, s. 29.

([2]) Asetus (EU) N:o 1169/2011 elintarviketietojen antamisesta kuluttajille, Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetusten (EY) N:o 1924/2006 ja (EY) N:o 1925/2006 muuttamisesta sekä komission direktiivin 87/250/ETY, neuvoston direktiivin 90/496/ETY, komission direktiivin 1999/10/EY, Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston direktiivin 2000/13/EY, komission direktiivien 2002/67/EY ja 2008/5/EY sekä komission asetuksen (EY) N:o 608/2004 kumoamisesta, EUVL L 304, 22.11.2011, s. 18. Asetusta sovelletaan 13. joulukuuta 2014 alkaen.

([3]) Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetus (EY) N:o 882/2004/EY, annettu 29 päivänä huhtikuuta 2004, rehu- ja elintarvikelainsäädännön sekä eläinten terveyttä ja hyvinvointia koskevien sääntöjen mukaisuuden varmistamiseksi suoritetusta virallisesta valvonnasta, EUVL L 165, 30.4.2004, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001970/13
to the Commission
Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Food safety in the European Union

The horsemeat scandal is growing in Europe. Every day, new cases are reported in which food has been withdrawn from the market because it has been found to contain horsemeat. The scandal has already spread to nearly all EU Member States.

Consumers should have the right to know what products really contain and how much of each ingredient they contain. In principle, it is manufacturers and retailers who bear responsibility for this. But what methods are really available for such monitoring? Who is genuinely responsible?

Does the Commission intend to check the effectiveness of monitoring? Should regulation be stepped up and the precision of information on ingredients be increased? Are urgent measures needed to overhaul legislation so that it covers supervision of the long supply chain of the present day more effectively?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

Under existing rules, ([1]) the labelling of foods must not mislead the consumer as to their nature, origin and content. All food ingredients must be labelled. The labelling of foods containing meat must also indicate the animal species concerned. Moreover, if an ingredient is mentioned in the name of the food, its quantity expressed as percentage has to be provided in the list of ingredients. This requirement has been established in order to avoid the consumer being misled as to the identity and composition of the food. Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 maintains all these requirements ([2]), additionally, in the case of meat products or meat preparations containing added proteins as such, including hydrolysed proteins, of a different animal origin, it requires that the name of the food shall bear an indication of the presence of those proteins and of their origin.

The responsibility for enforcing food chain legislation lies with Member States ([3]), which are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with requirements deriving therefrom. The Commission monitors delivery by the Member States of their control duties, including through on-the-spot audits. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the official controls systems established by the Member States have allowed them to identify violations of applicable rules.

Notwithstanding the above, the forthcoming proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18. This regulation will enter into application on 13 December 2014.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001971/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guerra no Mali põe à prova a defesa da Europa

Considerando o seguinte:

— A França combate sozinha no terreno contra o avanço dos islamistas no Mali, ressentindo-se da relutância dos parceiros europeus em fornecer reforços;

— Se o problema no Mali implicasse apenas o Mali, os militares franceses não se teriam provavelmente envolvido na guerra contra as milícias islâmicas;

— É do interesse da União Europeia impedir os islamitas e os terroristas de controlar o Mali, tornando-o num outro Afeganistão às portas da Europa e servindo de ponto de partida, de zona de formação, bem como de retaguarda para o terrorismo internacional;

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente:

Como interpreta o estado da política de segurança e de defesa comum assente neste facto?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(13 de junho de 2013)

A União Europeia está ciente da importância dos desafios relacionados com a região do Sahel, que está estreitamente ligada à do norte de África. No quadro da abordagem global, foi desenvolvida uma Estratégia para a Segurança e Desenvolvimento na região do Sahel, que tem por objetivo contribuir para combater a ameaça terrorista. A intensificação da crise no Mali e o ataque de grupos terroristas levaram um Estado-Membro a implicar-se diretamente no plano militar. Neste contexto, o Conselho deu o seu apoio à operação militar francesa e africana (MISMA), desenvolvendo também uma resposta de urgência apoiada por um conjunto de instrumentos. O reforço das capacidades malianas em matéria de prevenção e de luta antiterrorista constitui uma das prioridades dessa resposta de urgência. Está prevista a aquisição de equipamento para esse efeito a partir do montante de 20 milhões de euros mobilizados para o Instrumento de Estabilidade. Por outro lado, no que diz respeito à PCSD, a UE acelerou o envio da missão EUTM Mali, para a formação e treino das forças de defesa e segurança do Mali. Reforçou também o gabinete da EUCAP Sahel em Bamaco, cuja tarefa consiste em apoiar progressivamente as capacidades das forças de segurança interna e da justiça do Mali sobre as questões relacionadas com o terrorismo. Por último, a UE coordenará a sua ação com a futura missão PCSD na Líbia (controlo das fronteiras).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001971/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The war in Mali testing Europe's defences

— France is single-handedly fighting against the advance of Islamists in Mali and is suffering the consequences of its European partners' reluctance to provide reinforcements.

— If the problems in Mali involved only Mali, the French military would probably not have become embroiled in the war against the Islamic militias.

— It is in the European Union's interest to prevent Islamists and terrorists from seizing control of Mali, turning it into another Afghanistan on Europe's doorstep and serving as a springboard, a training ground and a rearguard for international terrorism.

What is the Vice-President's interpretation of the state of the Common Security and Defence Policy in view of this fact?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante M^me^ Ashton au nom de la Commission
(13 juin 2013)

L'Union européenne a conscience de l'importance des enjeux liés à la région du Sahel, qui est étroitement liée à celle de l'Afrique du Nord. Dans le cadre de l'approche globale, une Stratégie pour la sécurité et le développement au Sahel, qui a pour objectif de contribuer à résorber la menace terroriste, a été développée. L'intensification de la crise au Mali et l'attaque de groupes terroristes a, parallèlement, amené un État membre à s'impliquer directement au plan militiaire. Dans ce contexte, le Conseil a marqué son soutien à l'opération militaire française et africaine (MISMA), tout en développant une réponse d'urgence déclinée par le biais d'un ensemble d'instruments. Le renforcement des capacités maliennes en matière de prévention et de lutte antiterroriste figure parmi les priorités de cette réponse d'urgence. Parmi les 20 millions d'euros qui ont été mobilisés sur l'instrument de stabilité, est prévu l'achat d'équipement dédié à cet effet. De même, en ce qui concerne la PSDC, l'UE a accéléré le déploiement de la mission EUTM Mali, de formation et d'entrainement des forces de défense et de sécurité maliennes. Elle a également renforcé le bureau d'EUCAP Sahel à Bamako, destiné pour sa part à appuyer progressivement les capacités spécialisées des forces de sécurité intérieure et de la justice malienne sur les questions terroristes. Enfin, l'UE coordonnera son action avec la future mission PSDC en Libye (contrôle des frontières).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001972/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento da taxa do IVA no vinho

Considerando que:

— No relatório que acompanha a sexta avaliação do programa de ajustamento português, o FMI refere que alguns dos bens e serviços a que atualmente são aplicadas as taxas de IVA reduzida e intermédia devem sofrer um aumento, sugerindo, no caso do vinho, que a taxa atualmente fixada em 13 % possa aumentar para 23 %;

— Na mais antiga região demarcada do mundo, a Região Demarcada do Douro, onde os vinhos do Porto e Douro representam cerca de 480 milhões de euros anuais de volume de negócio, tal implicaria uma quebra imediata das vendas, num setor de grande relevância para a agricultura nacional.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Como avalia a situação descrita?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão considera que o alargamento da matéria coletável do IVA, através da eliminação de taxas reduzidas e isenções, irá aumentar a eficiência graças à redução das distorções decorrentes do tratamento diferencial, gerando ao mesmo tempo mais receitas. As recentes alterações do regime do IVA em Portugal, cujo objetivo consiste em melhorar a eficácia deste imposto, alargando a matéria coletável sujeita à taxa normal, podem ser consideradas um passo na boa direção. Esta evolução deve igualmente ser vista no contexto da necessidade de Portugal realizar uma consolidação orçamental sustentável e reequilibrar a sua economia.

Além disso, Portugal aplica a taxa intermédia de 13 % ao vinho, ao passo que a grande maioria dos Estados-Membros aplica a taxa normal. O seguinte documento fornece informações sobre as taxas de IVA aplicadas a diversos bens e serviços nos Estados-Membros da UE:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/rates/vat_rates_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001972/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Increase in the VAT rate on wine

— In the report accompanying the sixth review of the Portuguese adjustment programme, the IMF states that VAT rates should be increased for some goods and services that are currently subject to reduced and intermediate rates. In the case of wine, it suggests that the current rate of 13% could be increased to 23%.

— In the oldest demarcated region in the world, the Demarcated Region of Douro, where port and Douro wines generate an annual turnover of around EUR 480 million, this increase would bring about an immediate drop in sales in a sector that is highly important for Portuguese agriculture.

— What view does the Commission take of the above situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission is of the view that a broadening of the VAT base, i.e. removing reduced rates and exemptions, would improve efficiency through reducing distortions generated by differential treatment while at the same time generating more revenue. The recent changes to VAT in Portugal, aimed at improving VAT efficiency by extending the area of application of the standard rate, can be considered a step in the right direction. This also has to be seen against the background of the need for Portugal to achieve sustainable fiscal consolidation and to rebalance the Portuguese economy.

Furthermore, Portugal applies the parking rate of 13% to wine, whilst the vast majority of Member States apply the standard rate. The following document provides information on VAT rates applied to different goods and services in EU Member States:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/rates/vat_rates_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001973/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Google recusa pagar pelos conteúdos

A Google tem sido o principal alvo da indústria dos *media* na batalha pelos direitos de autor. A grande maioria dos conteúdos colocados *online* pelas empresas de comunicação social é reutilizada por empresas com fins lucrativos, sem autorização dos detentores dos respetivos direitos e sem qualquer remuneração. No seu motor de busca, a empresa Google apresenta parte de conteúdos de *sites* de terceiros, além de que utiliza no Google News notícias que não são produzidas por si, sem pagar qualquer remuneração. A Google ganha dinheiro com tais conteúdos, uma vez que consegue publicidade para as páginas que têm essas indexações e agregações.

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento desta situação?

2. Que posição assume a Comissão sobre as recentes negociações que a Google tem vindo a estabelecer com os diferentes países acerca da problemática da anexação e agregação de conteúdos?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(8 de maio de 2013)

1. A Comissão segue de perto a evolução da situação evocada pelo Senhor Deputado, nomeadamente em França, onde foi recentemente celebrado um acordo entre a Google e a comunicação social francesa, e noutros Estados-Membros em que esta questão está a ser debatida a nível nacional.

2. A Comissão não está em posição de fornecer uma descrição detalhada ou de avaliar a situação em Estados-Membros específicos. No entanto, a Comissão é sensível à preocupação de proteção dos direitos de autor das obras jornalísticas em linha e está empenhada na preservação de um jornalismo de alta qualidade. Na opinião da Comissão, a viabilidade de uma imprensa escrita independente, de alta qualidade e profissional é um fator importante para a cultura europeia, o pluralismo e a democracia. Ao mesmo tempo, a Comissão está trabalhar para tornar a Europa no local de eleição para as empresas do setor das tecnologias digitais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001973/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Google's refusal to pay for content

Google has been the media industry's prime target in the battle over copyright. The bulk of the content placed online by social communication companies is reused by companies for profit, without the authorisation of the respective copyright holders and without any compensation. In its search engine, Google displays some third-party website content and it uses news that it did not produce on its Google News service, yet pays nothing. Google earns money from this content as it attracts advertising for pages that contain this indexing and aggregation.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What is the Commission's view of the talks that Google has recently been holding with various countries on the question of appropriating and aggregating content?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

1. The Commission follows closely the developments pertaining to the question raised by the Honourable Member, notably in France where an agreement was recently concluded between Google and the French press, and in other Member States in which this matter is discussed at national level.

2. The Commission is not in a position to provide a detailed account and assessment of the situation in specific Member States. However, the Commission is receptive to concerns about copyright protection of press works online and committed to the preservation of high quality journalism. In the Commission's view, the viability of independent, high quality and professional written media is an important factor in European culture, pluralism and democracy. At the same time, the Commission is dedicated to making Europe the place of choice for digital entrepreneurs.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001974/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Novas tecnologias estão a mudar tráfico de droga

Os avanços tecnológicos sentem-se, de forma significativa, na produção, compra e venda de drogas ilícitas. Com uma vasta gama de novas substâncias e comportamentos, os esforços individuais de cada país não são suficientes. O controlo das atividades ilícitas na Internet é considerado extremamente difícil e as oportunidades de comunicação providenciadas pela Internet começam agora a ter impacto no mercado das drogas. Estabeleceu-se um mercado totalmente novo para as novas drogas, e as substâncias psicoativas não reguladas são comercializadas a um ritmo cada vez mais rápido.

Tendo em conta que tal representa um desafio global para as políticas de controlo da droga, que posição assume a Comissão perante este novo cenário?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2013)

A tecnologia da Internet facilita cada vez mais uma vasta gama de atividades da criminalidade grave e organizada, a nível da comunicação, da investigação, da logística, do marketing, do recrutamento, da distribuição e dos meios de pagamento. As novas substâncias psicoativas incluem uma vasta gama de substâncias que não estão abrangidas pela legislação internacional em matéria de drogas. Nos últimos anos, registou-se um crescimento sem precedentes do seu número, tipo e disponibilidade. A tecnologia da Internet tornou-se um importante facilitador para os mercados da droga, sendo geralmente utilizada na comercialização e venda de novas substâncias psicoativas ([1]). Estas substâncias permanecem legais até declaração em contrário pela legislação nacional, da UE ou internacional. Tal como anunciado na sua Comunicação «Para uma resposta europeia mais eficaz na luta contra a droga» ([2]), a Comissão está atualmente a trabalhar na elaboração de propostas destinadas a reforçar a legislação da UE sobre as novas substâncias psicoativas a fim de, nomeadamente, permitir uma resposta mais rápida quando surgem tais substâncias.

([1]) Ver mais pormenorizadamente o relatório da UE sobre o mercado das drogas, uma análise estratégica, do Observatório Europeu da Droga e da Toxicodependência e da Europol; Luxemburgo: Serviço das Publicações da União Europeia, 2013.
([2]) COM(2011) 689 final de 25.10.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001974/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: New technologies changing the face of drug trafficking

Technological advances are having a significant effect on the production, purchase and sale of illegal drugs. The individual efforts of each country are not enough to deal with a vast range of new substances and activities. Controlling illegal activities on the Internet is regarded as extremely difficult and the communication opportunities afforded by the Internet are now starting to have an impact on the drugs market. A totally new market has emerged for new drugs and unregulated psychoactive substances are being sold with increasing frequency.

Bearing in mind that this represents a global challenge for drug control policies, what is the Commission's view of this new state of affairs?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

Internet technology increasingly facilitates a wide range of serious and organised crime activities, acting as a communication, research, logistics, marketing, recruitment, distribution and payment tool. New psychoactive substances comprise a broad range of substances that are not controlled under international drug laws. Over the past years there has been an unprecedented growth in their number, type and availability. Internet technology has emerged as an important facilitator for drug markets, and is commonly used in the marketing and sale of new psychoactive substances ([1]). These substances remain legal until declared otherwise by national, EU or international law. As announced in its communication 'Towards a stronger European response to drugs' ([2]), the Commission is currently working on proposals to strengthen EU legislation on new psychoactive substances by notably enabling a faster response to the emergence of such substances.

([1]) See in more detail European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, Europol, EU Drugs Market Report, A Strategic Analysis, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2013.
([2]) COM(2011) 689 final of 25.10.2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001975/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: «Garantia à Juventude»

O Comissário Europeu para o Emprego, László Andor, alertou recentemente para a possibilidade de a Europa perder uma geração, caso não adote medidas para a criação de emprego. A exclusão destes jovens do mercado laboral representa uma perda para a economia europeia estimada em 150 mil milhões de euros anuais.

A «Garantia à Juventude», proposta pela Comissão Europeia, não constitui uma garantia de emprego, mas sim um instrumento que permite assegurar que todos os cidadãos da UE, até aos 25 anos, recebam uma boa oferta de emprego, formação permanente, aprendizagem ou estágio, num prazo de 4 meses após a perda do emprego ou o abandono da educação formal.

1. Sabendo que os Estados-Membros apresentam diferentes níveis de disponibilidade para a adoção das medidas sugeridas pela Comissão Europeia e inseridas no pacote «Garantia à Juventude», como tenciona a Comissão apoiar os Estados-Membros que se ressentem de condicionalismos financeiros?

2. Como pretende a Comissão supervisionar a aplicação da «Garantia à Juventude» por parte de todos os Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

1. Em 28 de fevereiro de 2013, o Conselho chegou a acordo político sobre a proposta da Comissão ([1]) de uma recomendação do Conselho relativa ao estabelecimento de uma Garantia para a Juventude.

Para apoiar a sua implementação, a Comissão incentiva os Estados-Membros a tomar disposições de financiamento adequadas, nomeadamente o Fundo Social Europeu. A proposta de regulamento relativo ao Fundo Social Europeu para o período de programação de 2014-2020 inclui uma prioridade de investimento do FSE dedicada à integração sustentada dos jovens sem emprego, educação ou formação no mercado de trabalho. Os Estados-Membros com uma elevada taxa de desemprego juvenil deverão articular os respetivos acordos de parceria e programas operacionais de 2014-2020 com as medidas tendentes a facilitar a transição da escola para o trabalho e para os mecanismos de garantia destinados aos jovens.

Além disso, o Conselho Europeu de fevereiro de 2013 decidiu criar a Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens e reservar um montante de 6 mil milhões de euros no âmbito do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual de 2014-2020, para apoiar as medidas estabelecidas no pacote de emprego para os jovens e, em particular, a Garantia para a Juventude. Este financiamento será aberto a todas as regiões onde o desemprego dos jovens ultrapasse 25 %.

2. Em conformidade com a recomendação do Conselho, a Garantia para a Juventude será acompanhada pela supervisão multilateral do Comité do Emprego, no âmbito do Semestre Europeu, e por recomendações específicas dirigidas a cada Estado-Membro, conforme o necessário. O acompanhamento e a apresentação regular de relatórios também envolvem a Rede Europeia dos Serviços Públicos de Emprego.

([1]) COM(2012) 729 final de 5 de dezembro de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001975/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: 'Youth Guarantee'

László Andor, the European Commissioner for Employment, recently warned that Europe may lose a generation if job creation measures are not adopted. The exclusion of young people from the labour market represents an estimated annual loss of EUR 150 billion for the European economy.

The 'Youth Guarantee' proposed by the Commission is not a guarantee of employment, but an instrument to ensure that all EU citizens up to the age of 25 receive a decent offer of employment, permanent training, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of losing a job or leaving formal education.

1. Given that the Member States have different levels of funding available to adopt the measures proposed by the Commission, which are included in the 'Youth Guarantee' package, how does the Commission intend to support those Member States that are feeling the effects of financial constraints?

2. How does it intend to oversee the implementation of the 'Youth Guarantee' in all the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

1. On 28 February 2013 the Council reached political agreement on the Commission proposal ([1]) for a Council recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee.

To support its implementation, the Commission encourages the Member States to make adequate provision for funding, including from the European Social Fund. The proposal for a regulation on the European Social Fund for the 2014-20 programming period includes a dedicated ESF investment priority for the sustainable labour-market integration of young people not in employment, education or training. Member States with high youth unemployment rates are expected to gear their partnership agreements and operational programmes in 2014-20 to action to facilitate the transition from school to work and to Youth Guarantee schemes.

Furthermore, the February 2013 European Council decided to create a Youth Employment Initiative and set aside EUR 6 billion under the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-20 for support of measures set out in the Youth Employment Package, and in particular the Youth Guarantee. This funding will be open to all regions where youth unemployment is over 25%.

2. In line with the Council recommendation, the Youth Guarantee schemes will be monitored through the multilateral surveillance of the Employment Committee within the framework of the European Semester, and country-specific recommendations will be addressed to Member States, where appropriate. Monitoring and regular reporting will also involve the European Network of Public Employment Services.

([1]) COM(2012) 729 final of 5 December 2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001977/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Relações entre a Ucrânia e a UE

Considerando que:

— O Ministério Público Ucraniano suspeita que a ex-primeira-ministra Iulia Timochenko organizou o assassínio de um deputado em 1996;

— Condenada a 7 anos de prisão em outubro de 2011, a antiga primeira-ministra afirma que está a ser alvo de uma vingança política do seu rival, o atual presidente Viktor Ianukovitch;

— Após vários meses de conversações, os enviados especiais do Parlamento Europeu, o antigo presidente do Parlamento Europeu Pat Cox e o antigo Presidente polaco Aleksander Kwaśniewski, não conseguiram fazer com que Yulia Tymoshenko fosse libertada da prisão.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— De que forma tem a União Europeia acompanhado esta situação? Considera estarem em causa motivações políticas?

— Como encara a posição da Ucrânia na Europa e a forma como o regime de Kiev respeita os padrões democráticos?

Resposta dada por Štefan Füle em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

A UE tem acompanhado de perto os processos judiciais que envolvem Yulia Tymoshenko e outros membros do anterior Governo da Ucrânia. A delegação da UE em Kiev tem prestado especial atenção a esta questão, em coordenação e com a participação das embaixadas locais dos Estados-Membros, nomeadamente dos seus consultores jurídicos. Este acompanhamento implicou a presença nas audiências em tribunal e o estabelecimento de contactos com peritos jurídicos independentes, com as autoridades, com Yulia Tymoshenko e a sua equipa de defesa, bem como o pleno apoio à missão do Parlamento Europeu, presidida pelos antigos Presidentes Cox e Kwasniewski. A UE tem manifestado constantemente a sua preocupação em relação aos casos de justiça seletiva, incluindo na Cimeira UE-Ucrânia de 25 de fevereiro de 2013 e em outras instâncias de diálogo entre a UE e a Ucrânia. A UE sublinhou igualmente a necessidade de uma reforma sistémica do sistema judicial, a fim de garantir que as situações de justiça seletiva não voltem a ocorrer.

A posição geral da União Europeia em relação à Ucrânia, incluindo sobre a questão da justiça seletiva, foi apresentada em 10 de dezembro de 2012 nas conclusões do Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros ([1]). Uma declaração sobre a situação na Ucrânia foi apresentada pelo Comissário responsável pelo Alargamento e Política de Vizinhança durante o debate do Parlamento Europeu de 13 de março de 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/134136.pdf
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-226_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001977/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: EU-Ukraine relations

The Ukrainian Prosecutor General suspects that the country's former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko organised the murder of a politician in 1996.

Sentenced to seven years in prison in October 2011, the former Prime Minister claims that she is the target of an act of political revenge by her rival President Viktor Yanukovych.

After several months of dialogue, Parliament's special envoys, the former President of the European Parliament, Pat Cox, and the former Polish President, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, were unsuccessful in their bid to free Yulia Tymoshenko.

How has the European Union been monitoring this situation? Does it believe that political motives are involved?

How does the Commission view Ukraine's position in Europe and the Ukrainian Government's respect for democratic standards?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The EU has monitored closely the legal proceedings involving Yulia Tymoshenko and other members of Ukraine's former Government. The EU Delegation in Kyiv paid particular attention to following this matter, in coordination with and with the involvement of Member States' local embassies and notably their legal advisors. This implied observing Court hearings; contacts with independent legal experts, with the authorities, with Yulia Tymoshenko and her defence team; as well as full support to Parliament's mission, headed by former Presidents Cox and Kwasniewski. The continued concern over the cases of selective justice has been consistently raised by the EU, including at the 25 February 2013 EU-Ukraine Summit and in other formats of EU-Ukraine dialogues. The EU has also stressed the need for a systemic reform of the judicial system in order to ensure that there will be no recurrence of selective justice.

The overall position of the European Union on Ukraine, including on the matter of selective justice, is presented in the 10 December 2012 conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council ([1]). A statement on the situation in Ukraine was presented by the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy during the Parliament debate of 13 March 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/134136.pdf
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-226_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001978/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programas de Vacinação

Considerando que:

— A Aliança Mundial para Vacinas e Imunização (GAVI) calcula que apenas 4 % das crianças a nível mundial recebem as 11 vacinas recomendadas pela Organização Mundial de Saúde;

— As 11 vacinas recomendadas pela Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) são contra a hepatite B, o rotavírus, a difteria, tétano, tosse convulsa, a Haemophilus influenzae do tipo B (Hib), doenças pneumocócicas, poliomielite, sarampo-papeira-rubéola, tuberculose e varicela.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Que prioridades estão inscritas na agenda da Comissão no que toca à imunização, considerada um fator importante para o desenvolvimento socioeconómico?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

Todos os Estados-Membros da UE incluem, nos seus programas nacionais, a vacinação universal contra a difteria, o tétano, a tosse convulsa, a poliomielite, a Haemophilus influenzae tipo B, o sarampo, a papeira, a rubéola e a hepatite B.

A vacinação contra a tuberculose é oferecida de acordo com diferentes regimes devido à grande variabilidade da situação epidemiológica da tuberculose nos diferentes Estados-Membros. Outras vacinas recentemente desenvolvidas, tais como as relacionadas com infeções pneumocócicas, o rotavírus, o papilomavírus humano e a varicela, são utilizadas de diferentes formas, em conformidade com as prioridades nacionais.

Os Estados-Membros são responsáveis pelas políticas de vacinação a nível nacional e a Comissão Europeia apoia uma série de iniciativas destinadas a apoiar e a complementar as iniciativas dos Estados-Membros em matéria de doenças que podem ser prevenidas por vacinação, que envolvem, por exemplo, formação, comunicação com o público e trabalhadores do setor da saúde, segurança das vacinas e cobertura a nível da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001978/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Vaccination programmes

The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) estimates that globally only 4% of children receive the 11 vaccines recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The 11 vaccines recommended by the WHO are those protecting against hepatitis B, rotavirus, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), pneumococcal diseases, polio, measles mumps and rubella, tuberculosis and chickenpox.

What are the Commission's priorities with regard to immunisation, which is considered an important factor for socioeconomic development?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

All EU Member States include in their national programmes universal vaccination against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, Haemophilus influenzae type b, measles, mumps rubella and hepatitis B.

Tuberculosis vaccination is offered according to different schemes due to the wide variability of the epidemiological situation of tuberculosis in different Member States. . Additional recently developed vaccines, such as those related to pneumococcal, rotavirus, human papillomavirus, and chickenpox, are diversely used according to national priorities.

Individual Member States are responsible for vaccination policies at national level and the European Commission supports a number of initiatives to support and complement Member States in the field of vaccine preventable diseases, for example regarding training, communication with the public and healthcare workers, vaccine safety and coverage at EU level.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001979/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Saída do Reino Unido da UE

Considerando que:

Em recentes declarações sobre a possível saída do Reino Unido da UE, David Cameron, primeiro-ministro britânico, deixou a promessa de realizar, até final de 2017,um referendo sobre a permanência do Reino Unido na União a 27.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Como interpreta estas declarações?

— Além do impacto irreparável na economia britânica, quais as consequências para a União Europeia da possível saída do Reino Unido?

— Caso se conceda as isenções pretendidas às políticas europeias, não considera existir o risco de tal gerar pedidos idênticos de outros países?

Resposta dada por José Manuel Barroso em nome da Comissão
(22 de março de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-000529/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001979/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: UK's withdrawal from the EU

In a recent statement about the United Kingdom's possible withdrawal from the EU, the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, promised to hold a referendum on British EU membership before the end of 2017.

How does the Commission interpret this statement?

Besides the irreparable impact on the British economy, what consequences would the UK's withdrawal have on the EU?

If the UK's request for exemptions from certain EU policies is granted, does it not believe there is a risk that other countries will request the same?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000529/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001980/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Violações de Direitos Humanos na Guiné-Bissau

Considerando que:

— Quase um ano depois do golpe de Estado de abril de 2012, em que altos oficiais guineenses depuseram as autoridades eleitas, continua a existir uma falta de controlo e supervisão sobre as forças de segurança e defesa, bem como tentativas por parte de alguns políticos para manipular os militares;

— Além de execuções e buscas domiciliárias extrajudiciais, há relatos de ameaças, raptos e ofensas à integridade física de políticos, abandonados, posteriormente, nos arredores da capital;

— Estas tentativas minam o funcionamento eficaz das instituições democráticas, sendo também a perceção de que uma reforma na área da segurança e justiça deve acontecer.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Sabendo que estão em causa violações dos mais básicos direitos humanos e que tal não deve ser tolerado, que posição assume a Comissão para combater a impunidade e promover a segurança e justiça?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(23 de abril de 2013)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente está muito preocupada com os atropelos aos direitos humanos na Guiné-Bissau e com as graves violações dos direitos cívicos e políticos ocorridas depois do alegado contragolpe de Estado de 21 de outubro de 2012.

A UE está empenhada a todos níveis, designadamente com a ONU, a União Africana e a Cedeao, e também com as organizações da sociedade civil presentes na Guiné-Bissau (Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos, Caritas, Manitese, SNV, Plan international), em promover o respeito pelos direitos humanos no país e combater a impunidade. A delegação da UE na Guiné-Bissau dá apoio à criação do Observatório Nacional dos Direitos Humanos, sediado na *Casa dos Direitos* e financiado pelo Instrumento Europeu para a Democracia e os Direitos Humanos. A UE tem instado repetidamente as autoridades da Guiné-Bissau a assegurarem a proteção e o respeito dos direitos humanos. O quadro de obrigações mútuas estabelecido ao abrigo do procedimento previsto no artigo 96.° do Acordo de Cotonu é reflexo da atenção dada pela UE ao respeito pelos direitos humanos e ao combate à impunidade. A questão dos direitos humanos é, aliás, sistematicamente lembrada pelo SEAE nas instâncias internacionais.

A delegação da UE no país tem desempenhado um papel importante na proteção das vítimas potenciais da violência, oferecendo refúgio humanitário temporário a pessoas perseguidas que se encontram sob ameaça de morte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001980/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Human rights violations in Guinea-Bissau

Almost a year after the coup in Guinea-Bissau in April 2012, in which senior officers overthrew the elected authorities, there is still a lack of control and supervision over security and defence forces, as well as attempts by some politicians to manipulate the military.

Besides extrajudicial killings and house searches, there are also reports of politicians being threatened, kidnapped and assaulted, and later abandoned on the outskirts of the capital.

These attempts undermine the effective functioning of the democratic institutions and highlight the need for reform in the area of security and justice.

Given that the most basic human rights are being violated and that such violations must not be tolerated, what stance is the Commission taking to combat impunity and to promote security and justice?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The HRVP is very concerned with the human rights situation in Guinea-Bissau and with the serious violations of civil and political rights which have occurred after the alleged counter-coup d'état of 21 October 2012.

The EU is being active at all levels and is engaging, with the UN, the African Union and Ecowas, as well as with Civil Society Organisations in Guinea-Bissau (Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos, Caritas, Manitese, SNV, Plan international), in order to promote human rights in Guinea-Bissau and the fight against impunity. In this respect, the EU Delegation is supporting the creation of a 'Human Rights National Observatory' based in the *Casa dos Direitos* and financed trough the European Instrument on Democracy and Human Rights.We have repeatedly urged Guinea-Bissau authorities to ensure protection and respect of Human Rights. The framework of mutual obligations established in the context of the ongoing procedure under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement reflects the EU attention to human rights and the fight against impunity. In addition, the Human Rights issue is systematically brought up by EEAS in international fora.

In this context, the EU Delegation is playing an important role in providing protection to potential victims of violence by giving temporary humanitarian refuge to persecuted persons under death threat.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001981/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Europol denuncia rede de jogos manipulados no futebol

Considerando que:

— Investigadores da Europol identificaram mais de 380 jogos de futebol manipulados na Europa, incluindo dois encontros da Liga dos Campeões e jogos de qualificação para o Europeu e o Mundial, bem como outros jogos nas Ligas Europeias.

— Rob Wainright, diretor da Europol, revelou que foram identificados 425 oficiais (dirigentes, membros das organizações futebolísticas, etc), jogadores e criminosos em 15 países;

— Esta rede de corrupção estará relacionada com apostas no mercado asiático, levando à manipulação de jogos principalmente na Europa.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento desta investigação?

— Está a acompanhar os desenvolvimentos deste caso?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento da investigação da Europol relativa à rede de jogos manipulados no futebol referida pelo Senhor Deputado. A Comissão está muito preocupada com este tipo de criminalidade organizada que afeta a integridade das competições desportivas.

A Comissão está determinada a ajudar os organismos desportivos, os operadores de apostas e os organismos policiais a combater o flagelo da manipulação dos resultados e da corrupção no desporto. Como a Comissária Vassiliou explicou na sessão plenária do Parlamento Europeu de 14 de março de 2013, a Comissão está a ajudar a dar uma resposta global a este problema, em coordenação com as autoridades públicas, as organizações desportivas, os operadores de apostas, a Europol, a Eurojust e o Conselho da Europa. A ação da Comissão inclui a participação ativa nas negociações relativas a uma eventual convenção do Conselho da Europa contra a manipulação das competições desportivas, o apoio a cinco projetos relativos à prevenção da manipulação dos resultados no âmbito da ação preparatória de 2012 «Parceria Europeia para o Desporto» e a futura adoção de uma recomendação sobre as melhores práticas em matéria de prevenção e combate à manipulação de resultados relacionada com apostas no âmbito do plano de ação sobre os jogos em linha.

A Europol continuará a cooperar com as autoridades policiais nacionais, a Interpol e outros organismos responsáveis pela aplicação da lei relativamente à manipulação dos resultados, tal como se verificou no inquérito em questão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001981/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Europol exposes a football match-fixing network

Europol investigators have identified more than 380 European football matches that may have been fixed, including two matches in the Champions League and European Championship and World Cup qualification matches, as well as other matches in European national leagues.

According to Rob Wainwright, Director of Europol, 425 officials (managers, members of football organisations, etc.), players and criminals in 15 countries have been identified as suspects.

This criminal network may be linked to gambling in the Asian market, leading to matches being fixed, primarily in Europe.

Is the Commission aware of this investigation?

Is it monitoring developments in this case?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the Europol football match-fixing investigation referred to by the Honourable Member. The Commission is very concerned about this type of organised crime which affects the integrity of sporting competitions.

The Commission is determined to help sports bodies, betting operators and law enforcement agencies to tackle the scourge of match-fixing and corruption in sport. As Commissioner Vassiliou explained at the plenary session of the European Parliament on 14 March 2013, the Commission is helping to lead a comprehensive response to this challenge, in coordination with public authorities, sports organisations, betting operators, Europol, Eurojust, and the Council of Europe. The Commission's action includes active involvement in the negotiations for a possible Council of Europe Convention against the manipulation of sports competitions, as well as support given to five projects on the prevention of match fixing under the 2012 Preparatory Action 'European Partnership on Sports' and the future adoption of a recommendation on best practices in the prevention and combatting of betting-related match-fixing as part of the action plan on online gambling.

Europol will continue to cooperate with national law enforcement authorities, Interpol and other law enforcement bodies on match fixing, as was the case in the investigation in question.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001982/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Níveis de poluição do ar na UE

Considerando que:

— A Comissão vai iniciar novos processos contra 17 dos seus 27 Estados-Membros por incumprimento das normas sobre poluição atmosférica;

— Em muitos países europeus a poluição do ar continua acima dos limites legais, encurtando em 2 anos a vida dos que moram nas cidades mais poluídas;

— Apesar de se verificar uma diminuição das emissões, segundo dados da Agência Europeia do Ambiente, alguns poluentes continuam a inspirar preocupação como as partículas, o ozono (O_3) e o dióxido de azoto (NO_2), que permanecem presentes no ar em quantidades preocupantes;

— Os limites atuais de exposição individual à poluição do ar vigentes na UE estão longe do que a Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) considera seguro;

— Cerca de 430 mil pessoas morrem prematuramente, por ano, na Europa, devido à exposição exagerada a partículas muito finas, segundo um estudo publicado em 2012 no âmbito de um projeto da Organização Mundial de Saúde sobre o impacto das doenças no mundo;

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tendo sido definido o ano de 2013 como o Ano Europeu do Ar e sabendo que a Comissão tenciona redefinir a estratégia atual, definida em 2005, que medidas estão inscritas na agenda da Comissão, no sentido de reduzir a poluição atmosférica?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(10 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão está empenhada em prosseguir e mesmo reforçar a sua ação em prol da qualidade do ar na UE e procede atualmente a uma reapreciação da política neste domínio com esse propósito. Submeteu-se a consulta pública um amplo leque de opções para reduzir a poluição atmosférica. Com base nas respostas a esta consulta e nos resultados de um estudo de impacto em curso, a Comissão determinará a combinação mais apropriada de medidas a propor antes do final de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001982/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Air pollution levels in the EU

The Commission is to take action against 17 of the 27 Member States for failing to meet air pollution standards.

In many European countries air pollution continues to exceed legal limits, reducing the life expectancy of those living in the most polluted cities by two years.

Although emissions have been falling, data from the European Environment Agency show that some pollutants, such as particulates, ozone (O_3) and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), remain a cause for concern as they are still found in the air at alarming levels.

The EU's current limits for individual exposure to air pollution are way above what the World Health Organisation (WHO) considers to be safe.

Around 430 000 people die prematurely in Europe every year because of overexposure to very fine particles, according to a study published in 2012 as part of the WHO's global burden of disease project.

As 2013 is the European Year of Air and given that the Commission intends to redefine the current strategy, originally developed in 2005, what measures is it planning in order to reduce air pollution?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Commission is committed to continue and reinforce its action to improve air quality at EU level and is indeed conducting a comprehensive review of the EU air quality policy for that purpose. A public consultation has been carried out on a broad range of policy options to reduce the impacts on air pollution. Based on the responses, and on the outcome of an on-going impact assessment, the Commission will determine the most appropriate combination of policies for proposal before the end of 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001983/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: FMI incentiva Portugal a aumentar cobrança de impostos

Considerando o seguinte:

— Num comunicado recente, o vice-diretor-geral do FMI, Nemat Shafik, afirmou que o programa de revisão da despesa pública que está a ser elaborado pelo Governo deve ir mais longe, no sentido de aumentar a cobrança de impostos;

— Christine Lagarde, diretora-geral do FMI, afirmou que Portugal tem feito um bom trabalho a reduzir o défice orçamental, mas que «ainda há trabalho por fazer».

— Nos documentos divulgados na passada sexta-feira, na sequência da sexta avaliação do Programa de Assistência Económica e Financeira (PAEF), o FMI considerou que a situação social e política em Portugal se tornou «significativamente mais difícil» pelo esforço exigido e pelas circunstâncias vividas face ao aumento generalizado de impostos;

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Como avalia as declarações proferidas, tendo em conta que a mesma entidade admite que as tensões sociais e políticas em Portugal são cada vez maiores?

— Não considera que Portugal, como país exemplar e cumpridor, deve merecer apoios e condições para finalizar o programa de assistência financeira de forma segura e pacífica?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de chamar à atenção do Senhor Deputado para o facto de, em princípio, recusar comentar declarações de outras instituições internacionais.

Todavia, as recentes quebras significativas nas receitas fiscais, quando comparadas com as projeções feitas para Portugal, são em larga medida explicadas pela recessão e recomposição da atividade económica orientada para setores com menos intensidade em termos fiscais, tais como as exportações. Porém, uma pequena parte da questão também parece estar ligada a problemas a nível da cobrança de impostos. É neste contexto que têm de ser apreciados os esforços atualmente desenvolvidos por Portugal com vista a melhorar o cumprimento das obrigações fiscais e tornar a administração fiscal mais eficaz. Se bem que por razões de eficiência económica e justiça social este seja um objetivo que todos os Estados-Membros se devem esforçar por cumprir, é particularmente importante para um país como Portugal em que o esforço de ajustamento deve ser distribuído da forma mais ampla possível entre os diversos grupos da população.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001983/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Portugal encouraged by the IMF to increase tax collection

In a recent statement, Nemat Shafik, Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), commented that the public expenditure review being conducted by the Portuguese Government had to go further in terms of stepping up tax collection.

Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the IMF, has stressed that Portugal has done good work in reducing the fiscal deficit, but that there is still a lot of work to be done.

In the documents released last Friday as part of the Sixth Review of the Economic and Financial Assistance Programme (EFAP), the IMF indicated that the social and political climate in Portugal was 'markedly more difficult' due to the effort required and the circumstances regarding the general increase in taxes.

What is the Commission's view of the IMF's statements, considering that the same institution has accepted that social and political tensions in Portugal are increasing?

Does it not agree that Portugal, a country that is exemplary in meeting its obligations, deserves the support and terms necessary to complete the financial assistance programme safely and without problems?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that it declines in principle making comments on other international institutions' statements.

Nevertheless, the recent strong shortfalls in tax revenue compared with projections in Portugal are to a large extent explained by the recession and the recomposition of economic activity towards less tax intensive sectors such as exports. However, a small part appears to be linked also to problems with tax collection. It is in this context that the ongoing efforts of Portugal to improve tax compliance and make the tax adminstration more effective have to be seen. While for reasons of economic efficiency and social justice this is an objective all EU Member States should strive for, it is particularly important for a counry like Portugal where the adjustment effort should be distributed as broadly as possible among the different groups of the population.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001984/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Fundos do Programa Europeu para a Ciência e Inovação

Considerando que:

— Portugal está a contribuir mais do que recebe dos fundos do programa europeu para ciência e inovação, ou seja, Portugal está a ser contribuinte líquido de países como a Holanda, a Bélgica, a Dinamarca, Finlândia, Suécia e Reino Unido;

— A área da ciência portuguesa recebe anualmente 50 milhões de euros do programa quadro, valor que é ultrapassado por muitas instituições europeias, como é o caso do *Imperial College*, uma universidade britânica;

— Apesar da dimensão dos projetos ser pequena, Portugal está entre os países que mais cresceram no número de investigadores. O peso do número de investigadores por população ativa em Portugal está acima da média Europeia a 15 e muito acima da Europa a 27.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Como avalia a dificuldade de acesso dos projetos portugueses aos financiamentos europeus?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

O Programa-Quadro aplica critérios de competitividade para o financiamento dos melhores projetos na sequência de convites abertos à apresentação de propostas. A Comissão continua empenhada em garantir que sejam financiadas apenas as propostas selecionadas segundo critérios de excelência. Para assegurar a transparência, a seleção é feita com base numa avaliação externa, por peritos independentes (avaliação interpares).

A Comissão está ciente da participação relativamente desequilibrada no 7.° Programa-Quadro de Investigação (7.° PQ) e propõe medidas ainda durante o decorrer do 7.° PQ ([1]) e para o PQ Horizonte 2020, que é o próximo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação da UE. O 7.° PQ inclui atividades como o programa «Potencial de Investigação», temas de especial interesse/impacto para Estados-Membros com níveis de desempenho reduzidos, estudos sobre os fatores de fraco desempenho e ações de sensibilização, bem como atividades de ligação em redes. O PQ Horizonte 2020 contribuirá para libertar a excelência e a inovação nos Estados-Membros e regiões com fraco desempenho no domínio da investigação, desenvolvimento e inovação e, em última instância, reforçará a competitividade da UE através da implementação de medidas dedicadas a eliminar a clivagem no domínio da inovação. O Programa incluirá o apoio à geminação/constituição de equipas entre centros de excelência existentes e emergentes, a criação de cátedras do Espaço Europeu da Investigação, bem como o apoio ao acesso a redes internacionais e transfronteiras de investigadores e inovadores através da Cooperação Europeia no domínio da Investigação Científica e Técnica (COST) e dos Pontos de Contacto Nacionais.

A este propósito, e em paralelo ao PQ Horizonte 2020, o financiamento de programas de coesão para 2014-2020 incentivará a investigação e a inovação a nível nacional/regional mediante um processo de especialização inteligente. Simultaneamente, estão previstas maiores sinergias entre os dois programas.

Neste contexto, a Comissão incentiva Portugal a continuar a investir na investigação e inovação de modo a assegurar que os seus próprios organismos de investigação possam participar mais no 7.° PQ e no PQ Horizonte 2020 e contribuir para os objetivos mais vastos da Estratégia Europa 2020, para o crescimento e o emprego.

([1]) O Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (2007 a 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001984/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation funding

Portugal contributes more to EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation funding than it receives back. That means Portugal is a net contributor to countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Portuguese science receives EUR 50 million per year from the framework programme but many European institutions, such as Imperial College, a British university, receive more than this.

Portugal is among the countries that have seen the biggest rise in the number of researchers, even though its projects are small in size. The number of researchers in Portugal as a proportion of the working population is higher than the EU-15 average and much higher than that of the EU-27.

What view does the Commission take of the difficulty Portuguese projects face in accessing EU funding?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The framework Programme applies competitive criteria for funding the best projects following open calls for proposals. The Commission remains committed to ensuring that only proposals selected on the basis of excellence are funded. To ensure transparency, selection is done on the basis of external evaluation by independent experts (peer review).

The Commission is aware of the relative unbalanced participation in FP7 and proposes remedies still during FP7 ([1]) and for Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. FP7 features activities such as the Research Potential Programme, topics with a special interest/impact for low-performing Member States, studies on factors of under-performance and awareness raising as well as networking activities. Horizon 2020 will help unlocking excellence and innovation in low-performing RDI Members States and Regions and ultimately reinforcing EU competitiveness by implementing dedicated measures to close the innovation divide. This will include Teaming, Twinning and ERA-chairs as well as support to international cross-border networks (COST) and National Contact Points.

In this regard, and in parallel with Horizon 2020, Cohesion funding programmes for 2014-2020 will incentivise research and innovation at national/regional level through the process of smart specialisation. Concurrently, increased synergies are foreseen between the two programmes.

Within this context, the Commission encourages Portugal to continue to invest in research and innovation to ensure that its own research organisations will be able to participate more in FP7 and Horizon 2020 and contribute to the broader objectives of Europe 2020 strategy, for growth and jobs.

([1]) The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001985/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Instabilidade política no Paquistão

Segundo a agência Reuters, o Supremo Tribunal paquistanês ordenou a detenção do primeiro-ministro devido a um caso de corrupção de contratos ilegais no setor de energia.

Ainda segundo a mesma notícia, «o presidente do Supremo Tribunal ordenou a prisão de todas as pessoas acusadas no caso, qualquer que seja o seu cargo», declarou Ammir Abbas, advogado do comité paquistanês anticorrupção, indicando que o governante «faz parte» do grupo.

Pergunto à Comissão:

De que forma é que a anunciada decisão poderá afetar o relacionamento da UE com o Paquistão?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(12 de abril de 2013)

A UE está empenhada em apoiar o Paquistão a longo prazo, incluindo no reforço da democracia e da governação e a enfrentar os numerosos desafios com que o país se depara. Embora a UE não possa comentar o caso referido, as alegações contra políticos não afetam o empenho da UE em apoiar o Paquistão e sublinham a necessidade de prosseguir o diálogo com o governo e de prestar apoio às instituições democráticas.

Para além do diálogo político regular entre a UE e o Paquistão, a UE está também a apoiar projetos no Paquistão que visam melhorar o funcionamento parlamentar, a gestão das finanças públicas e o trabalho das assembleias provinciais nacionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001985/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Political instability in Pakistan

According to the Reuters news agency, Pakistan's Supreme Court has ordered the arrest of the Prime Minister over corruption allegations involving illegal energy contracts.

According to the report, Amir Abbas, lawyer for the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), said that the chief justice had ordered the arrest of all those accused in the case 'regardless of rank', stating that the Prime Minister was among those accused.

How might the Supreme Court's decision affect the relationship between the EU and Pakistan?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The EU is committed to supporting Pakistan for the long-term, including the strengthening of democracy and governance and addressing the many challenges facing the country. Whilst the EU cannot comment on the case referred to, allegations brought against individual politicians do not affect the EU's commitment to Pakistan, but rather they underline the need for continued engagement with the government and for support for the democratic institutions.

In addition to the regular political dialogue between the EU and Pakistan, the EU is also supporting projects in Pakistan to assist in improving parliamentary performance, public finance management, and the work of the provincial national assemblies.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001986/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: «Red October» — novo virus informático

Considerando o seguinte:

— Foi descoberto uma nova frente de espionagem cibernética que busca documentos confidenciais. Este novo vírus de computador foi batizado de «Red October» e ataca computadores de todo o mundo;

— Segundo uma empresa de segurança informática, a rede que lançou o Red October está ativa desde 2007 e recolhe *screenshots*, palavras-passe, ficheiros apagados e encriptados com software de várias entidades europeias e da NATO. Este vírus surpreendeu os técnicos pela sua especificidade, pois inclui instruções especialmente desenhadas para detetar e copiar documentos secretos;

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento da utilização deste novo vírus informático no espaço da UE?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Mallström em nome da Comissão
(23 de abril de 2013)

A Direção de Segurança da Direção-Geral dos Recursos Humanos e da Segurança analisou o relatório da Kaspersky, ao qual o Senhor Deputado se refere, e a informação aí facultada. A Kaspersky foi contactada para se obter mais informação e confirmou que não possui qualquer prova direta de que a infraestrutura informática da Comissão Europeia foi afetada pelo ataque «Red October». No que respeita às outras instituições e aos Estados-Membros, a Comissão não tem conhecimento do (eventual) impacto do «Red October».

Em resposta à crescente ameaça à cibersegurança representada pelo «malware» (software malicioso) e pelos incidentes informáticos, a Comissão intensificou os seus esforços e adotou uma abordagem política mais global da cibersegurança e da promoção da segurança das redes e da informação em toda a UE e nos vários setores. A comunicação sobre uma estratégia de cibersegurança para a União Europeia, que a Comissão adotou, em conjunto com a Alta Representante da União para os Negócios Estrangeiros e a Política de Segurança, define ações concretas para garantir um ambiente digital seguro e resiliente e intensificar a luta contra o cibercrime, respeitando e promovendo os direitos e valores fundamentais da UE. A estratégia é acompanhada por uma proposta de diretiva da Comissão relativa à segurança das redes e da informação na UE, destinada a garantir o bom funcionamento do mercado interno. A proposta tem como objetivo reforçar a capacidade de resposta nacional, inclusivamente contra vírus como o «Red October», e a cooperação a nível da UE, bem como impor obrigações de segurança das redes e da informação aos prestadores de serviços e fornecedores de infraestruturas que são essenciais para a economia e a sociedade.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001986/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Red October — new computer virus

— A new cyber-spy network that searches for confidential documents has been uncovered. This new computer virus has been dubbed 'Red October' and targets computers worldwide.

— According to a computer security company, the network behind Red October has been active since 2007 and collects screenshots, passwords and deleted files encrypted with software used by several European entities including NATO. The specific nature of this virus has shocked experts, since it includes instructions specifically designed to detect and copy secret documents.

Is the Commission aware that this new computer virus is active in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The Security Directorate of Directorate General of Human Resources and Security has analysed the Kaspersky report to which the Honourable Member refers, and the information provided therein. Kaspersky was contacted for further information and they confirmed that they have no direct evidence that the information technology infrastructure of the European Commission was affected by the 'Red October' attack. As far as other institutions and the Member States are concerned, the Commission has no knowledge of the (possible) impact of 'Red October'.

In response to the mounting threat to cyber security posed by malware and cyber incidents, the Commission has stepped up its efforts and has taken a more comprehensive policy approach to cybersecurity and to the promotion of network and information security across the EU and across sectors. The communication on a Cybersecurity Strategy for the European Union that the Commission has adopted together with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy sets out specific policy actions to ensure a safe and resilient digital environment and step up the fight against cybercrime, while respecting and promoting fundamental rights and EU core values. The strategy is accompanied by a Commission proposal for a directive on network and information security across the EU to ensure the smooth functioning of the internal market. The proposal aims to strengthen national preparedness, including against viruses such as 'Red October'; reinforce EU-level cooperation; and impose network and information security obligations on providers of services and infrastructure which are critical for the economy and society.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001987/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Novos massacres na Síria

Considerando o seguinte:

— O Observatório Sírio dos Direitos Humanos (OSDH) revelou que mais de 100 civis morreram recentemente durante um novo ataque do exército sírio nos arredores de Homs;

— As Nações Unidas denunciaram recentemente uma «proliferação dos crimes de guerra» na Síria, onde mais de 60 000 pessoas morreram desde o início, em 15 de março de 2011, de uma revolta contra o regime de Bashar al-Assad;

— Foram recentemente encontrados mais de cem corpos executados a tiro em Alepo;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Quais as sanções/reações previstas ao nível da UE, relativamente à Síria, em consequência do massacre em questão?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

A UE condenou repetidamente todos os massacres, ataques e mortes de que há notícia na Síria, em especial quando dirigidos indiscriminadamente contra civis inocentes. A UE volta a expressar a sua consternação pela deterioração da situação na Síria e pelo nível inaceitável de violência, que continua a causar sofrimento a milhões de sírios.

A UE continua a acreditar que a chave para a solução do conflito consiste em facilitar um processo conduzido pela Síria e, para tal, promover uma solução política credível e eficaz. Nesse contexto, a UE continuará a apoiar todos os esforços no sentido de uma solução política, nomeadamente apoiando o Representante da ONU/LEA, Lakhdar Brahimi, apelando a todos os membros do Conselho de Segurança da ONU no sentido de que assumam as suas responsabilidades, colaborando nos esforços da coligação da oposição síria para apresentar uma alternativa credível e inclusiva ao regime e impondo novas medidas visando esse mesmo regime, e não a população civil, enquanto continuar a repressão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001987/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Further massacres in Syria

— The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) has revealed that more than 100 civilians were recently killed in another attack by the Syrian army on the outskirts of Homs.

— The UN recently reported a proliferation of war crimes in Syria, where more than 60 000 people have been killed since the start of the uprising against the Assad regime on 15 March 2011.

— More than 100 people were recently found shot dead in Aleppo.

How will the EU respond to this massacre? Will it impose sanctions on Syria?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The EU has repeatedly condemned all reported massacres, attacks and killing in Syria, especially when indiscriminately targeting innocent civilians. The EU remains appalled by the deteriorating situation in Syria and the unacceptable level of violence, which continues to cause suffering to millions of Syrians.

The EU continues to believe that the key to the solution of the conflict lies in facilitating the Syrian-led process and to this end promoting a credible and effective political solution. In this respect, the EU will continue to support all efforts leading to a political solution, including supporting the UN/LAS representative L. Brahimi, calling on all members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to uphold their responsibilities, engaging with the Syrian Opposition Coalition in its endeavors to present a credible and inclusive alternative to the regime and by imposing additional measures targeting the regime, not the civilian population, as long as repression continues.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001988/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Riscos da barragem no Tua

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008665/2012.

Na resposta dada por Janez Potocnik em nome da Comissão, é dito que «na sequência de uma queixa, a Comissão deu início a um inquérito. Esse inquérito conduziu à troca de informações e de contactos diretos entre a Comissão e as autoridades portuguesas. A última resposta recebida das autoridades portuguesas está a ser apreciada atualmente à luz da legislação ambiental relevante da UE».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Quais foram, em concreto, as informações comunicadas por Portugal, a este respeito?

Considera terem sido cumpridos todos os requisitos relativos à legislação da União Europeia, e, em especial, em termos de avaliação de impacto ambiental?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(15 de abril de 2013)

A avaliação das informações fornecidas por Portugal no âmbito do processo EU Pilot com a referência 3507/12/ENVI ainda está em curso. Por conseguinte, ainda não é possível tirar quaisquer conclusões, em especial no que diz respeito à questão de cumprimento ou não dos requisitos constantes da Diretiva 85/337/CEE, relativa à avaliação dos efeitos de determinados projetos públicos e privados no ambiente (Diretiva AIA).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001988/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Risks of the Foz Tua II dam

I submitted Question No E-008665/2012 for written answer to the Commission.

The answer given by Janez Potočnik on behalf of the Commission states that: 'Further to … the receipt of a complaint, the Commission has initiated an investigation. This investigation has led to an exchange of information and direct discussions between the Commission and the Portuguese authorities. The latest response from the Portuguese authorities is currently being assessed in the light of the relevant EU environmental legislation.'

What specific information did Portugal supply in this respect?

Does the Commission believe that all the requirements of EU legislation have been met, particularly as regards the environmental impact assessment?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The assessment of the information provided by Portugal under EU Pilot file 3507/12/ENVI is still ongoing. Therefore, it is not yet possible to draw any conclusions, in particular as regard the question as to whether or not the requirements of Directive 85/337/EEC ([1]) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive) have been met.

([1]) OJ L 175, 5.7.1985.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001989/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Efeitos do mau tempo em Portugal Continental

O mau tempo que se verificou em Portugal Continental no mês de janeiro teve efeitos catastróficos no setor agrícola de Norte a Sul do país.

Considerando que:

— Cerca de 2 400 explorações agrícolas, sobretudo estufas da Póvoa de Varzim, Vila do Conde e Esposende, tiveram alguns milhões de euros em prejuízos;

— Trinta hectares de estufas de morangos ficaram completamente destruídos no concelho de Torres Vedras;

— A Câmara Municipal de Odemira reporta mais de 2 milhões de euros de prejuízos na Agricultura;

— A Associação dos Agricultores do Distrito de Portalegre refere «prejuízos significativos» no setor agropecuário no Alto Alentejo, onde se registou a morte de «vários animais»;

— A Associação Portuguesa de Seguradores refere que os prejuízos para as seguradoras serão superiores a 23 milhões de euros;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que ajudas extraordinárias poderão ser concedidas a Portugal para fazer face a estes prejuízos?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(25 de março de 2013)

Uma vez que se verifica que a pergunta do Senhor Deputado é exatamente igual à que formulou na pergunta escrita E-001663/2012, a Comissão sugere ao Senhor Deputado a consulta da resposta que então lhe foi dada.

Acresce que, devido aos episódios meteorológicos extremos que ocorreram recentemente, as autoridades portuguesas reforçaram a medida referida na resposta à pergunta acima mencionada, pelo que o financiamento público total se eleva agora a 31 milhões de euros, dos quais 25 milhões cofinanciados pelo Feader.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001989/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Effects of the bad weather on Portugal

The bad weather that hit Portugal in January has had a catastrophic effect on the agricultural sector up and down the country.

— The damage caused to around 2 400 farms, especially to greenhouses in Póvoa de Varzim, Vila do Conde and Esposende, has amounted to millions of euros.

— Thirty hectares of strawberry greenhouses were completely destroyed in the municipality of Torres Vedras.

— Odemira City Council has reported more than EUR 2 million worth of damage to the agricultural sector.

— The Portalegre District Farmers' Association has reported 'significant damage' to the agricultural sector in Alto Alentejo, where 'several animals' were killed.

— The Portuguese Association of Insurers has stated that insurance companies are set to lose more than EUR 23 million.

What special assistance grants could Portugal receive to address the damage caused?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The Commission would point out that this question is exactly the same as the Honourable Member's previous Written Question E-001663/2012 and would therefore refer the Honourable Member to the corresponding answer already given.

Furthermore, the measure mentioned was reinforced by the Portuguese authorities due to recent extreme weather events being the total public financing now of around EUR 31 million, of which EUR 25 million co-financed by the EAFRD.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001990/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório ONU: Situação e Perspetivas da Economia Mundial 2013

A ONU alertou recentemente para o «grave risco de uma nova recessão» se não forem adotadas medidas de combate ao aumento do desemprego no mundo e manteve a sua revisão em baixa das previsões de crescimento económico.

A ONU considera ainda que as atuais políticas económicas baseadas na austeridade fiscal e nos cortes orçamentais «não conseguem oferecer o que é necessário para incentivar a recuperação económica e conter a crise do emprego».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz do referido relatório?

Quais as previsões da Comissão para o espaço comunitário em 2013?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(26 de março de 2013)

O relatório da ONU que o Senhor Deputado menciona prevê uma aceleração muito gradual do crescimento do PIB mundial em 2013 e 2014. Esta previsão coincide *grosso modo* com as projeções da Comissão apresentadas nas Previsões Económicas Europeias do inverno de 2013. As projeções da ONU foram publicadas antes da divulgação dos dados do PIB para o quarto trimestre de 2012. Assim sendo, as projeções de base para o crescimento na UE não diferem grandemente das apresentadas nas referidas previsões de 2013. No que respeita ao risco de perdas analisados nas previsões da ONU, a Comissão assinala a melhoria significativa da situação dos mercados financeiros desde o último verão, em resultado das importantes medidas tomadas pelos Estados-Membros e também ao nível da UE e da área do euro. A avaliação feita nas previsões da Comissão indica que essa melhoria induziu uma redução significativa dos riscos extremos.

A Comissão reconhece que a consolidação orçamental acarreta efeitos negativos a curto prazo no crescimento do PIB e no emprego. Crê, não obstante, que não há alternativa viável a este caminho em alguns Estados-Membros confrontados com a perda de confiança dos mercados, um acesso reduzido aos mercados e prémios de risco elevados. A solidez e sustentabilidade das finanças públicas são um prerrequisito essencial da estabilidade macroeconómica e do crescimento. A consolidação orçamental tem, pois, de continuar segundo estratégias diferenciadas, ser conduzida sem se opor ao crescimento e ser também acompanhada de reformas estruturais.

O Senhor Deputado poderá consultar as Previsões Económicas Europeias do inverno de 2013 no sítio Web:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/ee1_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001990/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: UN report: World Economic Situation and Prospects 2013

The UN recently warned that the global economy is at serious risk of slipping into another recession if measures to combat increasing global unemployment are not implemented, and continued to revise down its economic growth forecasts.

The UN also believes that current economic policies based on fiscal austerity and budget cuts 'fall short of what is needed for economic recovery and addressing the jobs crisis'.

What is the Commission's assessment of this report?

What are its forecasts for the EU for 2013?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

The UN's 'World Economic Situation and Prospects 2013' projects a very gradual re-acceleration of global GDP growth in 2013 and 2014. This is broadly in line with the projections in the Commission's recent winter 2013 European Economic Forecast. The UN's projections were published before the release of GDP data for the fourth quarter of 2012. Considering this, the baseline growth projections for the EU are not too different from those in the winter European Economic Forecast. However, as regards the downside risks discussed in the UN's forecast, the Commission points to the significant improvement in the financial market situation brought about by important policy action by Member States as well as at the EU and euro area level since last summer. The assessment in the Commission's forecast is that this has led to a significant reduction of tail risks.

The Commission acknowledges that fiscal consolidations entail short-term negative effects on GDP growth and employment. Nevertheless, it believes that in some Member States that face loss of market confidence, reduced market access and high risk premia there is no viable alternative to fiscal consolidation. Sound and sustainable public finances are an essential prerequisite for macroeconomic stability and growth. Accordingly, fiscal consolidation has to continue along the path of a differentiated consolidation strategy and be conducted in a growth-friendly manner, also accompanied by structural reforms.

The Honourable Member will find the recent winter 2013 European Economic Forecast under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/ee1_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001991/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Aproveitar os desperdícios II

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004964/2012.

Na resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão, é dito que «a Comissão está a analisar com todos os atores relevantes, Estados-Membros e peritos, a forma de minimizar o desperdício de alimentos ao longo de toda a cadeia alimentar sem pôr em risco a segurança dos alimentos».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Existe alguma iniciativa pensada ao nível da UE relativamente a esta matéria? Qual?

Pondera atribuir ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020 (QFP) verbas destinadas ao aproveitamento dos desperdícios alimentares?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(9 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão criou o «Grupo de trabalho sobre as perdas de produtos alimentares e desperdícios alimentares», no âmbito do «Grupo Consultivo da Cadeia Alimentar, da Saúde Animal e da Fitossanidade» para discutir em estreita cooperação com os intervenientes de toda a cadeia alimentar o modo de reduzir as perdas e os desperdícios alimentares, bem como eventuais medidas da UE para complementar as medidas nacionais. Os documentos da reunião podem ser consultados no sítio Web da UE sobre as perdas de produtos alimentares ([1]).

Os trabalhos realizados serão integrados na Comunicação sobre Alimentação Sustentável que a Comissão está a preparar e que deverá ser adotada até ao final de 2013.

As futuras possibilidades de financiar projetos relacionados com resíduos alimentares serão exploradas na pendência dos resultados do debate sobre o quadro financeiro plurianual 2014-2020.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001991/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Making use of waste II

This MEP submitted Question No E-004964/2012 for written answer to the Commission.

Mr Dalli's response on behalf of the Commission states that 'the Commission is analysing with relevant stakeholders, Member States and experts how to minimise food waste throughout the entire food chain without compromising food safety'.

Does the EU have some kind of initiative in place to address this matter? What is this initiative?

Does it plan on allocating funds to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 for making use of waste?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The Commission set up the 'Working Group on Food Losses and Food Waste' in the context of the 'Advisory Group on the Food Chain, Animal and Plant Health' to discuss in close cooperation with stakeholders of the whole food chain, how to reduce food losses and food waste and possible EU measures to complement national measures. The meeting documents can be consulted on the EU Food Waste website ([1]).

The work will feed into the communication on 'Sustainable Food' that the Commission is preparing and that is foreseen to be adopted by the end of 2013.

Future possibilities to fund food waste related projects will be explored pending the outcome of the discussion on the Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001992/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Política de Pescas II

O deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita (E-004961/2012).

Perante a resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão, conclui-se que, manifestamente, a pergunta colocada não deverá ter sido lida, pelo menos corretamente, pelo autor da resposta.

Na verdade, o que se perguntava especificamente era se a Comissão «não considerava que, tendo em conta a dimensão do mar português, a política de pescas deveria reforçar a capacidade e a quantidade de atividades pesqueiras por este país.»

Não considera a Comissão que, tendo em conta a dimensão do mar português, a política de pescas deveria reforçar a capacidade e a quantidade de atividades pesqueiras por este país?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(15 de abril de 2013)

O tamanho da Zona Económica Exclusiva de Portugal (zona de 200 milhas ou ZEE) não é indicativo da quantidade de recursos haliêuticos que podem ser encontrados e explorados nessas águas. Apesar de Portugal ter uma vasta Zona Económica Exclusiva, a maior parte da mesma situa-se em águas muito profundas, sendo a parte pouco profunda, a plataforma continental, relativamente pequena. Contudo, é na plataforma que se encontra a maioria das espécies reguladas por quotas fixadas anualmente a nível da UE. Existem igualmente quotas para espécies de profundidade, que podem ser encontradas para além da plataforma continental, mas essas atividades de pesca dizem respeito apenas a um número reduzido de espécies e, comparativamente, são menos significativas.

Por outro lado, nas águas territoriais de Portugal (zona de 12 milhas) vive uma grande diversidade de espécies, na maior parte das vezes pescadas por um elevado número de embarcações da pequena pesca, apesar da limitada extensão em comparação com a ZEE.

Os totais admissíveis de capturas (TAC) disponíveis para as unidades populacionais de peixes existentes em águas portuguesas estão estabelecidos de forma a garantir a exploração sustentável dos recursos naturais, com base em pareceres científicos, tendo em conta aspetos biológicos e socioeconómicos e assegurando, ao mesmo tempo, um tratamento equitativo entre setores das pescas. Uma vez que a frota portuguesa pesca dentro desses limites totais admissíveis de capturas, a Comissão não é de opinião que a política de pescas da UE deva aumentar as capacidades ([1]) de Portugal e a escala das suas atividades de pesca.

([1]) Ver o artigo 11.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 2371/2002 do Conselho, de 20 de dezembro de 2002, relativo à conservação e à exploração sustentável dos recursos haliêuticos no âmbito da Política Comum das Pescas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001992/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Fisheries policy II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Commission (E-004961/2012) on this issue.

In the light of the answer given by Maria Damanaki on behalf of the Commission, it is clear that whoever drafted the answer cannot have read the question, or at least read it properly.

In fact, the Commission was specifically asked whether it did 'not agree that, given the size of Portuguese territorial waters, the fisheries policy should increase Portugal's capacity and the scale of its fishing activities?'

Does the Commission not agree that, given the size of Portuguese territorial waters, the fisheries policy should increase Portugal's capacity and the scale of its fishing activities?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The size of Portugal's Exclusive Economic Zone (200 miles zone, or EEZ) is not indicative of the amount of fisheries resources that can be found and exploited in those waters. Despite the fact that Portugal has a large Exclusive Economic Zone, most of it is very deep water, whereas the shallower, continental shelf is relatively small. However, it is on the shelf that can be found most of the species regulated by the quotas fixed at EU level each year. There are also quotas for deep sea species, which can be found beyond the continental shelf, but such fishing activities concern only a very limited number of species and are comparatively less significant.

On the other hand, Portugal's territorial waters (12 miles zone) are home to a large diversity of species fished by a high number of mostly small-scale vessels, despite their limited extent when compared with the EEZ.

The total allowable catches (TACs) available for stocks occurring in Portuguese waters are established in order to ensure the sustainable exploitation of natural resources, based on scientific advice, taking into account biological and socioeconomic aspects whilst ensuring fair treatment between fishing sectors. Given that Portugal's fishing fleet is fishing within the limits of those total allowable catches, the Commission is not of the opinion that EU fisheries policy should increase Portugal's capacity ([1]) and the scale of its fishing activities.

([1]) See Article 11 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the common fisheries policy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001993/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Neonicotinóides: efeitos sobre as populações de abelhas

Os neonicotinóides são uma classe de inseticidas com um modo comum de ação que afeta o sistema nervoso central dos insetos, causando paralisias e a morte. Estudos recentes sugerem que a exposição a neonicotinóides pode ter um efeito negativo na saúde das abelhas e das suas colónias.

Num relatório recentemente divulgado pela Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança Alimentar referem-se «riscos elevados» no uso dos neonicotinóides e lacunas importantes nos dados disponíveis.

Considerando que:

— Um terço da nossa alimentação não poderia ser produzida se as abelhas e outros polinizadores desaparecessem;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Qual a posição da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada por Joe Borg em nome da Comissão
(27 de março de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta escrita E-000450/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001993/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Neonicotinoids: effects on the bee population

Neonicotinoids are a class of insecticides known to affect the central nervous system of insects, causing paralysis and death. Recent studies suggest that exposure to neonicotinoids can have a negative effect on the health of bees and their colonies.

A recent European Food Safety Authority report classes neonicotinoids as 'high risk' and highlights a significant lack of information on their use.

A third of our food could not be produced without bees and other pollinators.

What is the Commission's view on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question E-000450/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001994/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Mercosul apresenta até outubro propostas comerciais à UE

O Comissário europeu do Comércio, Karel de Gucht, afirmou recentemente que «o Mercosul fez uma proposta de consenso de que apresentará a proposta relativa a bens, serviços e produtos agrícolas até ao último trimestre do ano».

Os países do Mercosul anunciaram o seu compromisso de apresentar antes de outubro as primeiras propostas comerciais de acesso dos seus produtos ao mercado da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Sabendo que uma das maiores divergências entre os dois blocos relativamente ao Acordo de Associação é a agricultura, considera que, até à data prevista para apresentação das referidas propostas, estarão asseguradas todas as condições sanitárias e fitossanitárias exigidas pela UE?

Qual a expectativa da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

Na reunião ministerial entre a UE e o Mercosul, que teve lugar à margem da Cimeira UE-CELAC em 26 de janeiro, a UE e o Mercosul acordaram em prosseguir as negociações sobre um acordo ambicioso e exaustivo. Para o efeito, o Comissário De Gucht, responsável pelo Comércio, e os Ministros do Comércio do Mercosul comprometeram-se a trocar propostas de acesso ao mercado (de bens, serviços e contratos públicos), o mais tardar, até ao último trimestre do ano.

Recorde-se que, em conformidade com a legislação da UE e em consonância com as disposições do Acordo Sanitário e Fitossanitário da OMC, os produtos agrícolas importados de países terceiros devem cumprir as exigências da UE pertinentes ou obedecer a condições que oferecem garantias equivalentes, a fim de proteger a saúde pública, a saúde animal e a fitossanidade.

O nível de proteção sanitária e fitossanitária da UE, incluindo as normas de grande exigência relacionadas com a segurança dos alimentos, não é passível de negociações com países terceiros. Facultar ou propor o acesso ao mercado através da redução dos direitos aduaneiros a um parceiro de negociação em nada altera este facto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001994/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Mercosur to present trade proposals to the EU by October

EU Trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht recently confirmed that Mercosur has agreed to submit its proposal on agricultural goods, services and products by the last quarter of 2013.

The Mercosur countries have committed to submitting their first trade proposals on EU market access for their products by October.

Given that agriculture is one of the major sticking points between the two sides as regards the Association Agreement, does the Commission believe that all EU sanitary and phytosanitary standards will be met before the date set for the submission of these proposals?

What is its view on this matter?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

At the EU-Mercosur Ministerial meeting held on the margins of the EU- CELAC summit on 26 January, the EU and Mercosur agreed to continue negotiations on an ambitious and comprehensive agreement. To this end, Trade Commissioner De Gucht and Mercosur Trade Ministers committed to exchange market access offers (for goods, services and government procurement) not later than the last quarter of the year.

It should be recalled that in accordance with EU legislation and in line with the provisions of the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement, agriculture products imported from third countries shall comply with the relevant EU requirements or with conditions providing equivalent guarantees in order to protect public health, animal health and plant health.

The EU level of sanitary and phytosanitary protection, including high standards related to food safety, are not subject to negotiations with third countries. Providing or offering market access through the reduction of tariffs to a negotiating partner does in no way change this.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001995/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Brasil e UE criam comissão bilateral para ampliar investimentos comuns

Na declaração à imprensa após a VI Reunião de Cúpula Brasil-União Europeia, a presidente do Brasil, Dilma Roussef, referiu que foi definida uma comissão bilateral para tratar das relações entre ambos, em especial da questão dos investimentos.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Considera que a criação da referida comissão possa influenciar positivamente as negociações em curso do Acordo de Associação UE-Mercosul?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(8 de abril de 2013)

Na última Cimeira UE-Brasil, os líderes acordaram na criação de um grupo bilateral *ad hoc* para analisar de forma mais sistemática a possibilidade de reforçar os laços económicos, incluindo nos domínios do investimento e da competitividade. Na opinião da Comissão esta é uma solução pragmática para explorar a possibilidade de aprofundar mais ainda os importantes laços económicos já existentes entre o Brasil e a União Europeia.

A Comissão considera igualmente que este grupo de trabalho *ad hoc*, que conta com o contributo fundamental das comunidades empresariais de ambas as regiões, apesar de incidir em questões bilaterais pode também ajudar a compreender os domínios em que é necessário reforçar as relações UE-Mercosul.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001995/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Creation by Brazil and the EU of a bilateral committee for increasing joint investment

In a press release following the VI Brazil-EU Summit, the Brazilian President, Dilma Rousseff, announced that a bilateral commission had been set up to address relations between Brazil and the EU, particularly in terms of investment.

Does the Commission think that the creation of this committee could positively influence the negotiations under way on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

At the last EU-Brazil Summit the leaders agreed to create an ad-hoc bilateral working group to analyse more systematically the potential for further strengthening economic ties, including in the areas of investment and competitiveness. The Commission believes that this is a pragmatic way of looking at how we can further underpin the already important economic bonds between Brazil and the European Union.

The Commission believes that this ad hoc working group, including the crucial contribution of the business communities from the two sides, while concentrating on bilateral issues could also contribute to understanding the areas where EU-Mercosur relations need to be strengthened.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001996/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Balança comercial UE-Brasil

Segundo o Eurostat, a balança comercial entre a União Europeia e o Brasil atingiu níveis recorde em 2011, com as exportações para o país a chegarem aos 35,7 mil milhões de euros e as importações da UE aos 38,9 mil milhões.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que balanço faz da recente Cimeira Brasil-UE em Brasília?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(8 de abril de 2013)

A recente Cimeira UE-Brasil em Brasília veio confirmar a qualidade e o dinamismo da relação bilateral, assim como a vontade de ambas as partes de reforçar a parceria estratégica. A declaração comum da Cimeira reflete, nomeadamente, o alcance e o significado da relação, bem como o compromisso de prosseguir a nossa agenda bilateral e birregional, incluindo o processo de negociação entre a UE e a Mercosul.

Apesar da crise económica, as nossas relações económicas e comerciais com o Brasil continuaram a crescer. A UE é o destino principal para as exportações Brasileiras e a sua principal fonte de importações. Em conformidade com os dados dos primeiros trimestres de 2012, as exportações da UE para o Brasil continuavam a crescer significativamente, enquanto que as importações para a UE do Brasil decaíram, quando comparadas com o mesmo período em 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001996/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: EU-Brazil: balance of trade

According to Eurostat, the balance of trade between the European Union and Brazil reached record levels in 2011, with exports to the country amounting to EUR 35.7 billion and EU imports totalling EUR 38.9 billion.

What is the Commission's opinion on the recent EU-Brazil Summit in Brasília?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The recent EU-Brazil Summit in Brasilia confirmed the good and dynamic bilateral relationship and the willingness of both sides to further strengthen the Strategic Partnership. The Summit Joint Statement reflects, *inter alia*, the breadth and depth of the relationship and the commitment to advance in our bilateral and bi-regional agenda, including the EU-Mercosur negotiation process.

Despite the economic crisis, our economic and trade relations with Brazil have continued to grow. The EU is the main destination for Brazilian exports and the leading source of their imports. According to data for the first three quarters of 2012, EU exports to Brazil were still growing significantly, while EU imports from Brazil had declined as compared to the same periods in 2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001997/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Vinho: sugestão do FMI desastrosa para Portugal

Considerando que:

— No relatório que acompanha a sexta avaliação do programa de ajustamento português, o FMI refere que alguns dos bens e serviços que estão atualmente nas taxas de IVA reduzida e intermédia, tal como o vinho, devem sofrer um aumento, sugerindo que a taxa atualmente fixada em 13 % possa passar para os 23 %;

— A União Europeia ocupa um lugar preponderante no mercado mundial do vinho, com uma produção anual de 175 milhões de hectolitros, representando 45 % das superfícies vitícolas do globo, 65 % da produção, 57 % do consumo mundial e 70 % das exportações mundiais;

— A reforma adotada pelo Conselho em 2008 visa atingir objetivos como o aumento da competitividade dos produtores de vinho da UE, consolidar a reputação dos vinhos europeus e reconquistar partes de mercado na União Europeia e no resto do mundo;

— A produção de vinho em Portugal aumentou 9,2 % na campanha 2012/2013, para 6,14 milhões de hectolitros;

— O setor do vinho é um dos poucos setores em que Portugal é excedentário e com enorme potencial;

— A referida sugestão do FMI irá traduzir-se numa quebra imediata das vendas e penalizará sobretudo os produtores;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Sabendo que o FMI e o BCE são as entidades que, conjuntamente com a Comissão Europeia, levaram a cabo o resgate a Portugal e que o setor do vinho tem um peso importantíssimo para Portugal, nomeadamente para o controlo do défice e para que Portugal possa gerar riqueza para liquidar os compromissos assumidos, faz sentido a sugestão do FMI, querendo taxar o vinho português em 23 %?

Pondera empreender alguma diligência de forma a defender Portugal e o setor do vinho da UE?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão chama a atenção do Senhor Deputado para o facto de não formular observações relativamente a declarações de outras instituições internacionais.

A Comissão considera que o alargamento da matéria coletável do IVA, através da eliminação de taxas reduzidas e isenções, irá aumentar a eficiência graças à redução das distorções decorrentes do tratamento diferencial, gerando ao mesmo tempo mais receitas. As recentes alterações do regime do IVA em Portugal, cujo objetivo consiste em melhorar a eficácia deste imposto, alargando a matéria coletável sujeita à taxa normal, podem ser consideradas um passo na boa direção. Esta evolução deve igualmente ser vista no contexto da necessidade de Portugal realizar uma consolidação orçamental sustentável e reequilibrar a sua economia.

Além disso, Portugal aplica a taxa intermédia de 13 % ao vinho, ao passo que a grande maioria dos Estados-Membros aplica a taxa normal. O seguinte documento fornece informações sobre as taxas de IVA aplicadas a diversos bens e serviços nos Estados-Membros da UE:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/rates/vat_rates_en.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001997/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Wine: IMF suggestion would be disastrous for Portugal

In the report accompanying the sixth review of Portugal's adjustment programme, the IMF states that VAT should be increased on some goods and services currently subject to reduced and intermediate rates of VAT, such as wine, and suggests that the current rate of 13% could rise to 23%.

The European Union occupies a dominant position in the world wine market, with annual production amounting to 175 million hectolitres. The EU accounts for 45% of the world's winegrowing areas, 65% of production, 57% of world consumption and 70% of world exports.

The reform adopted by the Council in 2008 aimed to achieve objectives such as making EU wine producers more competitive, consolidating the reputation of European wines and winning back market share in the EU and the rest of the world.

Wine production in Portugal rose by 9.2% in the 2012/2013 season, to 6.14 million hectolitres. The wine sector is one of the few sectors in which Portugal produces a surplus, and its potential is huge. The above suggestion from the IMF would mean an immediate collapse in sales and penalise producers in particular.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

Bearing in mind that the IMF and ECB, together with the Commission, are responsible for the Portuguese rescue package, and the wine sector is extremely important for Portugal, especially in terms of controlling the deficit and enabling the country to generate wealth and meet its commitments, does the IMF suggestion that Portuguese wine be taxed at 23% make any sense?

Is the Commission considering taking any action to protect Portugal and the EU wine sector?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that it declines making comments on other international institutions' statements.

The Commission is of the view that a broadening of the VAT base, i.e. removing reduced rates and exemptions, would improve efficiency through reducing distortions generated by differential treatment, while at the same time generating more revenue. The recent changes to VAT in Portugal, aimed at improving VAT efficiency by extending the area of application of the standard rate, can be considered a step in the right direction. This also has to be seen against the background of the need for Portugal to achieve sustainable fiscal consolidation and to rebalance the Portuguese economy.

Furthermore, Portugal applies the parking rate of 13% to wine, whilst the vast majority of Member States apply the standard rate. The following document provides information on VAT rates applied to different goods and services in EU Member States:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/rates/vat_rates_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001998/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Descoberto novo tipo de colesterol

Segundo o Journal of the American College of Cardiology (JACC), «para além dos chamados "bom" e "mau" colesteróis — respetivamente, o colesterol HDL e o colesterol LDL —, existe um terceiro tipo, designado colesterol "feio". Este terceiro tipo, que quase ninguém conhece, é o "vilão" que mais faz aumentar o risco de bloqueio das artérias — a arteriosclerose, principal causa de enfarte cardíaco».

Børge Nordestgaard, da Universidade de Copenhaga, um dos principais autores do estudo em questão, refere que «fazemos periodicamente uma análise de sangue para conhecer o nosso colesterol total, bem como o "bom" (HDL, de alta densidade) e o "mau" colesterol (LDL, de baixa densidade). Mas a soma destes dois tipos de colesterol não é igual ao colesterol total. É nessa discrepância que se esconde o colesterol "feio", ou "remanescente", de densidade muito mais baixa do que o colesterol mau.»

Considerando que a Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) estima que as doenças cardiovasculares matam 17 milhões de pessoas por ano no mundo,

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento deste importante estudo?

Possui quaisquer dados que confirmem estas conclusões?

Não considera que este novo tipo de colesterol, tido como mais perigoso e com maior potencial de bloqueio das artérias, é suficientemente importante para que o seu despiste seja introduzido nas análises de sangue feitas na UE?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente dos esforços de investigação realizados na Dinamarca que abordam especificamente a hipótese de o colesterol remanescente estar relacionado de forma causal com o risco de doença coronária, conforme mencionou o Senhor Deputado ([1]). Este estudo clarifica o debate relativo às lipoproteínas ricas em triglicéridos e a aterosclerose ([2]), além de revelar que as lipoproteínas remanescentes são aterogénicas. O estudo refere igualmente que é necessária investigação mais aprofundada para que se possam confirmar estas conclusões.

Embora atualmente não estejam a ser apoiadas pelo Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (7.° PQ, 2007-2013) atividades de investigação especificamente relacionadas com o colesterol remanescente, foram consagrados 23 milhões de euros a dois projetos europeus em colaboração (Lipidomicnet ([3]) e Atheroremo ([4])) que estudam os lípidos, o colesterol, os genes relacionados e as proteínas, bem como o seu papel no desenvolvimento da aterosclerose.

É necessária mais investigação nesta área para verificar se o despiste do colesterol remanescente deve ser considerado nas análises de sangue.

([1]) Varbo A, Benn M, Tybjærg-Hansen A, Jørgensen AB, Frikke-Schmidt R, Nordestgaard BG. Remnant cholesterol as a causal risk factor for ischemic heart disease. J Am Coll Cardiol 2013;61:427-36.

([2]) Goldberg IJ, Eckel RH, McPherson R. Triglycerides and heart disease: still a hypothesis? Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol 2011;31:1716-25.

([3]) Lipidomicnet (Lipid droplets as dynamic organelles of fat deposition and release: Translational research towards human disease) (Gotículas lipídicas enquanto organelos dinâmicos de depósitos e libertação de gordura: Investigação translacional para o estudo da doença humana) (http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&ACTION=D&DOC=1&CAT=PROJ&QUERY=012f1f7a749c:7846:5a40f95c&RCN=88230).

([4]) Atheroremo (European Collaborative Project on Inflammation and Vascular Wall Remodelling in Atherosclerosis) (Projeto europeu em colaboração sobre a inflamação e a remodelação da parede vascular na aterosclerose) (http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&ACTION=D&DOC=1&CAT=PROJ&QUERY=012f1f8f79bf:fa0e:4bf73954&RCN=88216).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001998/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: New type of cholesterol discovered

The Journal of the American College of Cardiology (JACC) has reported that, in addition to the so-called good and bad types of cholesterol — HDL and LDL respectively — there is a third type, known as 'ugly' cholesterol. This third type, virtually unknown to most people, is the 'villain of the piece' and greatly increases the risk of clogged arteries — atherosclerosis — which are the main cause of heart attacks.

According to Børge Nordestgaard of the University of Copenhagen, one of the lead authors of this study, we have regular blood tests to find out our total cholesterol level, as well as our good cholesterol (high-density HDL) and bad cholesterol (low-density LDL). However, the sum of these two types of cholesterol is not the same as total cholesterol. It is this discrepancy that conceals the 'ugly' or 'remnant' cholesterol, which has a much lower density than bad cholesterol.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that cardiovascular disease kills 17 million people a year worldwide.

Is the Commission aware of this important study?

Does it have any data to substantiate these conclusions?

Does it not agree that this new form of cholesterol, considered to be more dangerous and to have greater potential for clogging arteries, is sufficiently significant to be screened for in blood tests done in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of research efforts undertaken in Denmark to specifically address the hypothesis that remnant cholesterol is causally related to coronary heart disease risk, as mentioned by the Honourable Member ([1]). This study provides clarification to the debate regarding triglyceride-rich lipoproteins and atherosclerosis ([2]) and provides evidence that remnant lipoproteins are atherogenic. The study also mentions that further research is needed to confirm these findings.

Although no specific research related to remnant cholesterol is currently supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), EUR 23 million have been devoted to two European collaborative projects (LIPIDOMICNET ([3]) and ATHEROREMO ([4])) that study lipids, cholesterol, related genes and proteins and their role in the development of atherosclerosis.

Further research in this area is needed to ascertain whether screening for remnant cholesterol in blood tests should be considered.

([1]) Varbo A, Benn M, Tybjærg-Hansen A, Jørgensen AB, Frikke-Schmidt R, Nordestgaard BG. Remnant cholesterol as a causal risk factor for ischemic heart disease. J Am Coll Cardiol 2013;61:427-36.

([2]) Goldberg IJ, Eckel RH, McPherson R. Triglycerides and heart disease: still a hypothesis? Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol 2011;31:1716-25.

([3]) LIPIDOMICNET (Lipid droplets as dynamic organelles of fat deposition and release: Translational research towards human disease) (http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&ACTION=D&DOC=1&CAT=PROJ&QUERY=012f1f7a749c:7846:5a40f95c&RCN=88230).

([4]) ATHEROREMO (European Collaborative Project on Inflammation and Vascular Wall Remodelling in Atherosclerosis) (http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&ACTION=D&DOC=1&CAT=PROJ&QUERY=012f1f8f79bf:fa0e:4bf73954&RCN=88216).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001999/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guerra contra a Al-Qaeda no Norte de África

O primeiro-ministro britânico, David Cameron, afirmou recentemente que os extremistas islâmicos no norte de África representam uma «grande ameaça».Esta foi uma reação à crise dos reféns na refinaria da Argélia.

Cameron afirmou que «será necessária uma resposta de anos, até décadas, e não de meses», e que «estamos diante de grupos extremistas islâmicos ligados à Al-Qaeda no Norte de África».

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente:

Que comentários faz às referidas declarações? Qual a posição da UE nesta matéria?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Estratégia da União Europeia para a Segurança e o Desenvolvimento do Sael ([1]), adotada pelo Conselho em março de 2011, reconhece que os problemas no Sael, incluindo o problema do terrorismo, ultrapassam as fronteiras e estão fortemente interligados. Somente uma abordagem regional, integrada e holística nos permitirá fazer progressos relativamente a qualquer um dos problemas específicos. A segurança reforçada e a capacidade de aplicação da legislação devem ser acompanhadas de instituições públicas mais fortes e governos mais responsáveis, capazes de prestar serviços de desenvolvimento de base às populações e de apaziguar as tensões internas. Os processos de desenvolvimento, a promoção da boa governação e a melhoria da situação em matéria de segurança devem ser levados a cabo numa sequência adequada e de forma coordenada com o objetivo de criar estabilidade sustentável na região.

A Estratégia da UE é revista periodicamente e a sua importância foi reafirmada pelo Conselho. Recentemente, o Conselho referiu novamente esta questão nas Conclusões que adotou sobre a situação no Mali em 18 de fevereiro de 2013.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/pt/11/st08/st08030.pt11.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001999/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — War against Al-Qaida in North Africa

In response to the hostage crisis at a refinery in Algeria, the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, recently said that Islamic extremists in North Africa posed a 'major threat'.

Mr Cameron claimed that 'it will require a response that is about years, even decades, rather than months' and that we face extremist, Islamic, al-Qaida-linked groups in North Africa.

What is the Vice-President's response to these statements? What is the EU's position on this issue?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The EU's Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel ([1]) adopted by the Council in March 2011, recognises that the problems in the Sahel, including the problem of terrorism, are cross-border and closely intertwined. Only a regional, integrated and holistic strategy will enable us to make progress on any of the specific problems. A reinforced security and law enforcement capacity must go hand-in-hand with more robust public institutions and more accountable governments, capable of providing basic development services to the populations and of appeasing internal tensions. Development processes, promotion of good governance and improvement of the security situation need to be carried out in appropriate sequence and in a coordinated manner in order to create sustainable stability in the region.

The EU Strategy remains under constant review, and its importance has been regularly reaffirmed by the Council, most recently in the Conclusions it adopted on the situation in Mali on 18 February 2013.

([1]) http://www.eeas.europa.eu/africa/docs/sahel_strategy_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002000/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: NASA: Alerta para tempestade solar do século em 2013

O Congresso dos Estados Unidos fez um alerta aos norte-americanos para estes se prepararem para aquilo que está a ser denominado como a «tempestade solar do século». Num documento elaborado pelos parlamentares, foi pedido às comunidades locais para se precaverem com os recursos necessários de modo a poderem abastecer as populações com um mínimo de energia, alimentos e água em caso de emergência.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

Existem algumas medidas de prevenção previstas para implementação no espaço comunitário? Quais?

Está previsto algum comunicado por parte da UE a este respeito?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente das potenciais ameaças para as infraestruturas espaciais e terrestres decorrentes de eventos meteorológicos espaciais, incluindo grandes tempestades solares.

A investigação em matéria de meteorologia espacial, financiada pela UE através do 7.° PQ ([1]), desenvolve conhecimentos científicos, bem como novas técnicas e modelos de previsão de eventos meteorológicos espaciais, tais como tempestades solares. Avaliar o impacto sobre os satélites em órbita terrestre, a receção GNSS, a rede elétrica e outros sistemas constitui um aspeto importante. Mais especificamente, a Comissão, em coordenação com as autoridades nacionais, os operadores de infraestruturas e a *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration* ([2]) nos EUA, está a estudar os possíveis efeitos de fenómenos meteorológicos espaciais extremos em várias infraestruturas industriais, com vista a ajudar os operadores a melhorar a capacidade de resiliência das infraestruturas em causa e evitar, assim, potenciais perturbações de funções societais importantes caso se verifique a ocorrência de um tal fenómeno. Por exemplo, a Comissão organizou um diálogo de alto nível com as principais partes interessadas, em outubro de 2011, no intuito de sensibilizar para a meteorologia espacial. A Comissão está a estudar a inclusão de alertas meteorológicos espaciais no seu «Sistema Mundial de Alerta e de Coordenação de Catástrofes» ([3]), uma das fontes de informação para os boletins de alerta diários (ECHO flash). Os riscos emergentes, tais como os devidos à meteorologia espacial, serão abordados num documento sobre a panorâmica do risco que a Comissão foi convidada a elaborar, com base nas avaliações de risco nacionais que os Estados-Membros estão a preparar. As atividades complementares, que visam a constituição de serviços europeus de meteorologia espacial, estão a ser conduzidas através de programas da AEE.

Não está previsto qualquer comunicado específico sobre esta questão.

([1]) O atual programa-quadro de investigação da UE.
([2]) NOAA.
([3]) Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002000/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: NASA's warning about the solar storm of the century in 2013

The United States Congress has warned the American public to prepare for what is being called the 'solar storm of the century'. In a document prepared by congressmen, local communities are called on to ensure that they are adequately equipped to supply populations with enough energy, food and water to get by in the event of an emergency.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Are there any plans to implement prevention measures in the EU? What are they?

Is the EU planning to make an announcement on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the potential threats to space-based and ground-based infrastructure posed by space weather events including major solar storms.

Space weather research, funded by EU through FP7 ([1]), develops scientific knowledge as well as new techniques and models for forecasting space weather events such as solar storms. Assessing the impact on Earth orbiting satellites, GNSS reception, the electric grid and other systems is an important aspect. More specifically, the Commission, in coordination with national authorities, infrastructure operators, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([2]) in the US, is studying the possible effects of extreme space weather events on various industrial infrastructures, with a view to helping operators to improve the resilience of the infrastructures concerned thus preventing potential disruptions of important societal functions should such an event occur. As one example, the Commission organised a high-level 'Space-Weather Awareness Dialogue' with major stakeholders in October 2011. The Commission is considering the inclusion of space weather alerts into its Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System ([3]), one of the sources of information for the daily alert flash (ECHO Flash). Emerging risks such as those due to space weather will be addressed in the risk overview that the Commission has been asked to compile based on national risk assessments that Member States are preparing. Complementary activities aiming at building up European space weather services are being conducted through ESA programmes.

No specific announcement is planned on this issue.

([1]) The current EU Framework Programme for Research.
([2]) NOAA.
([3]) GDACS.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002001/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Quimioterapia mais eficaz

Um investigador português descobriu uma forma de tornar a quimioterapia mais eficaz, minimizando os seus efeitos secundários.

O estudo, publicado na revista «Cancer Cell», traz, por isso, novas esperanças para os doentes com cancro.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta importante descoberta?

Sabendo que só em Portugal morrem de cancro por ano 20 a 25 mil pessoas, sendo a segunda causa de morte no país, poderá a investigação em causa beneficiar de apoio financeiro por parte da Comissão Europeia?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento da publicação referida pelo Senhor Deputado, da autoria de uma equipa liderada pelo Dr. Rodrigo Leite de Oliveira, na Universidade de Lovaina ([1]).

Através do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), a Comissão apoiou 22 projetos que incluem atividades de investigação sobre a formação de vasos sanguíneos em tumores, ascendendo o contributo total da UE a 27 milhões de EUR, no âmbito de iniciativas como NeoNaNo ([2]), Angiomet ([3]) e VNTME-Gavard ([4]).

O financiamento da União Europeia à investigação é concedido com base em convites anuais à apresentação de propostas, em regime de concurso. As propostas de projetos de investigação colaborativos apresentadas nesse âmbito são selecionadas por um processo independente de avaliação interpares, sendo a qualidade científica o critério prevalecente. O apoio financeiro é concedido às melhores propostas. Dado que o 7.° PQ está a chegar ao seu termo, não se prevê atualmente a realização de convites à apresentação de propostas no domínio em questão.

A proposta da Comissão «Horizonte 2020 — Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação (2014-2020) ([5])» proporcionará oportunidades de investigação no domínio das abordagens terapêuticas do cancro através do desafio societal «Saúde, evolução demográfica e bem-estar» e do objetivo «Liderança em tecnologias facilitadoras e industriais» do pilar «Liderança Industrial». É ainda prematuro tecer conjeturas quanto aos domínios de investigação específicos a abordar.

([1]) Leite de Oliveira et al. (2012) Cancer Cell.22(2):263-77.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13202220
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13107100
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=10571582&pid=146&q=2D2FAA8BD56D7B091CE67BB014675D61&type=adv
([5]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002001/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: More effective chemotherapy

A Portuguese researcher has discovered a way to improve the effectiveness of chemotherapy, while minimising its side effects.

The study published in the journal *Cancer Cell* has in turn brought new hope for cancer patients.

Is the Commission aware of this important discovery?

Given that 20 000 to 25 000 people each year die from cancer in Portugal alone, making it the second highest cause of death in the country, will it grant financial support to this research?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the publication mentioned by the Honourable Member, performed by a team led by Dr Rodrigo Leite de Oliveira at the University of Leuven ([1]).

The Commission has supported through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) 22 projects that include research activities on blood vessel formation in tumours for a total EU contribution of EUR 27 million such as NeoNaNo ([2]), ANGIOMET ([3]), VNTME-GAVARD ([4]).

European Union research funding is granted based on annual competitive calls for proposals. Collaborative research applications submitted to these calls are selected through an independent peer-review evaluation process with scientific excellence as the overriding criterion and financial support awarded to the best applications. As FP7 comes to an end, there are currently no more calls foreseen in this area.

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([5]), will offer opportunities for research on cancer therapeutic approaches through the 'Health, Demographic Change and Well-being' societal challenge and the 'Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies' objective of the pillar 'Industrial leadership'. It is yet too premature to ascertain which could be the specific research issues addressed.

([1]) Leite de Oliveira et al. (2012) Cancer Cell.22(2):263-77.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13202220.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13107100.
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=10571582&pid=146&q=2D2FAA8BD56D7B091CE67BB014675D61&type=adv.
([5]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002002/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: AEA — Descoberta de novos produtos poderá trazer efeitos negativos

A Agência Europeia do Ambiente considera que a descoberta de novos produtos pode aumentar a qualidade de vida, mas também trazer efeitos negativos para a saúde, nem sempre tidos em conta, mesmo depois de alertas dos cientistas.

Para chamar a atenção para estas situações, a Agência Europeia do Ambiente elaborou um livro que apresentou recentemente em Bruxelas a vários responsáveis comunitários do Parlamento Europeu e da Comissão Europeia e a organizações não governamentais do ambiente.

O livro abrange áreas tão diversas como os efeitos das radiações dos telemóveis, do chumbo na gasolina, das alterações climáticas, das espécies invasoras, de químicos como o DDT, o mercúrio, pesticidas e inseticidas ou o tabaco.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz do livro elaborado pela Agência Europeia do Ambiente? Qual a posição da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2013)

O relatório recentemente publicado pela Agência Europeia do Ambiente (AEA) intitulado «Lições tardias de alertas precoces — ciência, precaução, inovação» constitui o seguimento do relatório inicial ([1]) publicado há dez anos e que foi considerado na altura uma publicação fundamental sobre o princípio da precaução e a sua aplicação ao setor do ambiente.

Nos termos do Tratado (artigo 191.°), a política da União no domínio do ambiente terá por objetivo atingir um nível de proteção elevado e basear-se-á nos princípios da precaução e da ação preventiva; deverá igualmente ter em conta os dados científicos disponíveis. Por conseguinte, a Comissão considera que a publicação «Lições tardias de alertas precoces» contribui de forma positiva para o desenvolvimento de políticas cujo objetivo é proteger a saúde humana e o ambiente dos impactos nefastos.

A publicação inclui uma análise útil que aponta para a necessidade de reforçar o diálogo entre ciência e política e formas de fazer face aos riscos emergentes.

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/environmental_issue_report_2001_22

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002002/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: EEA — Discovery of new products may have negative impact

Despite the warnings issued by scientists, many have chosen to ignore reports by the European Environment Agency (EEA) that the discovery of new products may have a negative impact on health, regardless of the benefits they are said to have on quality of life.

In order to highlight its findings, the EEA published a paper that it recently presented in Brussels to various EU representatives from Parliament and the Commission and environmental non-governmental organisations.

The paper covers a wide range of issues such as the effects of radiation from mobile phones, leaded petrol, climate change, invasive species, chemicals such as DDT, mercury, pesticides and insecticides, and tobacco.

What is the Commission's assessment of the paper published by the EEA? What is its view on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The recently published report by the European Environment Agency (EEA) entitled, 'Late Lessons from Early Warnings — science, precaution, innovation' follows-up on the initial Report ([1]) released 10 years ago and considered at the time a land-mark publication on the precautionary principle and its application in the environment field.

Under the Treaty (Article 191) Union policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection and shall be based on the precautionary principle and on the principles of preventive action. It must also take account of available scientific data. The Commission therefore sees 'Late lessons from Early Warnings' as a useful contribution to the development of policies to protect human health and the environment from adverse impacts.

It contains useful analysis which suggests the need to strengthen the science-policy dialogue and ways to address emerging risks.

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/environmental_issue_report_2001_22.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002003/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Queda do investimento mundial em energias renováveis

Segundo notícia veiculada pela Lusa, um estudo da empresa Bloomberg New Energy Finance refere que os investimentos mundiais em energias renováveis desceram 11 % em 2012, devido a quedas em mercados como os EUA e a Europa.

Tendo em conta que a UE fixou uma meta de incorporação de 10 % de energias renováveis no setor dos transportes e a redução das emissões de gases com efeito de estufa dos combustíveis em 6 % até 2020, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento do estudo em questão?

Qual é o ponto de situação dos investimentos feitos até à data em energias renováveis no espaço comunitário? Pode avançar com alguma previsão para 2013?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(12 de abril de 2013)

1. A Comissão tem conhecimento do relatório publicado pela *Bloomberg New Energy Finance*, em janeiro de 2013, que, efetivamente, indica, para 2012, uma diminuição dos investimentos mundiais em energias renováveis.

2. Atualmente, os investimentos da UE em energias renováveis afiguram-se suficientes para acompanhar as fases iniciais da trajetória para as metas de 2020. Contudo, serão necessários esforços suplementares nos próximos anos para alcançar as metas finais de 2020. Para mais informações sobre a evolução das energias renováveis na Europa, o Senhor Deputado é convidado a consultar o relatório recentemente publicado pela Comissão e intitulado «Renewable energy progress report» (COM(2013) 175 final e SWD(2013) 102 final).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002003/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Decline in global investment in renewable energy

According to the Portuguese news agency Lusa, a study by Bloomberg New Energy Finance has found that global investment in renewable energy fell by 11% in 2012, due to market declines in parts of the world such as the United States and Europe.

Given that the EU has set a target of 10% for renewable energy in the transport sector and of 6% for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from fuels, to be achieved by 2020:

Is the Commission aware of this study?

What is the current status of investments made to date in renewable energy in the EU? Can the Commission provide any forecasts for 2013?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the report published by Bloomberg New Energy Finance in January 2013, which indeed indicates for 2012 a fall in global investments in renewable energy.

2. For the time being, EU investments in renewable energy appear sufficient to keep up with the early stages of the trajectory towards the 2020 targets. However, additional efforts will be needed in the forthcoming years in order to reach the final 2020 targets. For further details on the evolution of renewable energy in Europe, the Honourable Member is invited to consult the recently published Commission report 'Renewable energy progress report' COM(2013) 175 final and SWD (2013) 102 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002004/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Hérnias inguinais: portugueses desenvolvem nova técnica cirúrgica

Segundo notícias veiculadas pela comunicação social portuguesa, dois cirurgiões portugueses desenvolveram uma técnica cirúrgica pioneira para o tratamento de hérnias inguinais. O procedimento inovador, que permite realizar o dobro das cirurgias em menos tempo do que as técnicas convencionais, está a despertar o interesse de especialistas internacionais.

Os investigadores revelaram que, de acordo com os testes efetuados em quase mil doentes ao longo destes anos, a técnica «apresenta melhores resultados quanto à dor pós-operatória e crónica, complicações precoces e tardias, recorrências, menor tempo operatório, menor tempo de internamento, menor tempo necessário de retoma do trabalho e maior grau de satisfação do que os outros métodos utilizados».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta importante descoberta? Possui quaisquer dados que confirmem estas conclusões?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(4 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não tem estado a seguir qualquer desenvolvimento específico relativamente ao tratamento de hérnias inguinais e não possui qualquer informação específica sobre os relatórios citados pelo Senhor Deputado. As disposições do artigo 168.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia não conferem competência à UE para a gestão dos serviços de saúde e de cuidados médicos, tratando-se de uma competência exclusivamente dos Estados-Membros.

Para apoiar os Estados-Membros no acesso a diferentes tecnologias da saúde ao abrigo do Programa de Saúde da UE, a Comissão está a cofinanciar uma ação conjunta com os Estados-Membros no domínio da avaliação das tecnologias da saúde (EUnetHTA) ([1]). Esta ação conjunta conta com a colaboração das organizações europeias responsáveis pela avaliação da eficácia das tecnologias da saúde, incluindo dos procedimentos cirúrgicos. A rede «EUnetHTA» pretende gerar um valor acrescentado europeu, facilitando a utilização eficiente dos recursos disponíveis para as avaliações e partilhando e promovendo as boas práticas nos métodos e processos de avaliação.

([1]) www.eunethta.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002004/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Inguinal hernias: Portuguese develop new surgical procedure

According to reports in the Portuguese media, two Portuguese surgeons have developed a pioneering surgical procedure for treating inguinal hernias. This innovative procedure, which enables twice the number of operations to be performed in less time than conventional procedures, is attracting the interest of specialists around the world.

Tests carried out on almost 1 000 patients in recent years have shown that, compared with the other procedures in place, this procedure leads to a reduction in post-operative and chronic pain, early and late complications, relapses, operating times, hospitalisation time and recovery time, and an increase in patient satisfaction levels.

Is the Commission aware of this important discovery? Does it have any data that confirm these conclusions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

The Commission is not following specific development in treating inguinal hernias and it does not have specific data on the reports referred to by the Honourable Member. The provisions of Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union do not confer to the EU competence in the management of health services and medical care, which is an exclusive national competence.

To support Member States in assessing different medical technologies, under the EU Health Programme, the Commission is co-financing a Joint Action with the Member States on Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) ([1]). This Joint Action supports collaboration between European organisations responsible for assessing effectiveness of health technologies, including surgical procedures. The EUnetHTA network aims at bringing European added value through facilitating efficient use of resources available for assessments, and sharing and promoting good practice in assessment methods and processes.

([1]) www.eunethta.eu.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002005/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Dengue: pandemia mundial

Segundo um relatório recentemente divulgado pela Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS), «a dengue é a única doença tropical autónoma que se expandiu na última década e que tem potencial real para se converter numa epidemia mundial».

No documento, a OMS analisa o impacto que as doenças tropicais têm no mundo e sugere políticas públicas que poderiam ser aplicadas para reduzir ou erradicar a sua incidência. Das 17 doenças que integram o grupo de doenças tropicais autónomas, a OMS considera que a dengue é a que «representa uma ameaça global».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Concorda com a posição da OMS relativamente à possibilidade de a dengue se converter numa verdadeira pandemia mundial?

Qual ou quais as políticas adotadas pela UE de forma a reduzir e a erradicar a dengue do espaço comunitário? Pondera conceder apoios extraordinários aos países da UE afetados pela dengue?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia concorda com a avaliação da Organização Mundial de Saúde, segundo a qual a incidência global da dengue tem aumentado de forma dramática durante as últimas décadas e que a doença se encontra em climas tropicais e subtropicais no mundo inteiro, principalmente em zonas urbanas e semiurbanas.

As doenças transmitidas por vetores, nomeadamente a dengue, contam-se entre as doenças transmissíveis que devem ser comunicadas a nível da UE, em conformidade com a Decisão n.° 2119/98/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, que institui uma rede de vigilância epidemiológica e de controlo das doenças transmissíveis na Comunidade ([1]).

A Comissão proporciona apoio técnico e científico, através do Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças (CEPCD), aos países que são afetados pela dengue e por outras doenças transmissíveis, incluindo os Estados-Membros, como Portugal, atualmente afetados por surtos de dengue.

Além disso, o CEPCD criou a Vbornet ([2]), uma rede de médicos entomologistas e de especialistas de saúde pública ocupada em recolher dados sobre vetores em estudos científicos ou através de atividades de fiscalização locais. A fim de prestar informações sistemáticas sobre a distribuição dos vetores na Europa, o CEPCD desenvolveu orientações para a vigilância das espécies invasivas de mosquitos na Europa ([3]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998D2119:PT:HTML
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/diseaseprogrammes/emerging_and_vector_borne_diseases/Pages/VBORNET_maps.aspx
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/TER-Mosquito-surveillance-guidelines.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002005/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Dengue: global pandemic

According to a recent report published by the World Health Organisation (WHO), dengue is the only neglected tropical disease to have spread in the last decade and to represent a genuine global pandemic threat.

In the report, the WHO assesses the global impact of tropical diseases and suggests public policies that could be implemented in order to reduce or eradicate their incidence. Out of the 17 diseases included in the group of neglected tropical diseases, the WHO believes that dengue is the one that represents a global threat.

Does the Commission agree with the WHO's view that dengue really does have the potential to become a global pandemic?

What policy or policies has the EU adopted to reduce or eradicate the incidence of dengue in Europe? Does it plan to offer extraordinary support to EU countries affected by dengue?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The European Commission agrees with the World Health Organisation's assessment that the global incidence of dengue has grown dramatically in recent decades and that the disease is found in tropical and sub-tropical climates worldwide, mostly in urban and semi-urban areas.

Vector borne diseases, including dengue, are included among the communicable diseases to be reported at EU level under Decision 2119/98/EC of the Parliament and of the Council setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community ([1]).

The Commission offers technical and scientific support, through the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), to countries which are affected by dengue and other communicable diseases, including Member States, like Portugal, currently hit by dengue outbreaks.

In addition, the ECDC has established VBORNET ([2]), a network of medical entomologists and public health experts to collect data on vectors provided by scientific studies or local surveillance activities. In order to provide systematic information about vectors distribution in Europe, guidelines for the surveillance of invasive mosquito species in Europe have been developed by the ECDC ([3]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998D2119:EN:HTML
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/diseaseprogrammes/emerging_and_vector_borne_diseases/Pages/VBORNET_maps.aspx
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/TER-Mosquito-surveillance-guidelines.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002006/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: EUA: pedidos de subsídio de desemprego caem para mínimos de cinco anos

Recentemente, o Departamento Laboral dos Estados Unidos divulgou que os pedidos iniciais de subsídio de desemprego caíram em 37 mil para um total de 335 mil na semana que terminou a 12 de janeiro. No início de janeiro, o número de pessoas que beneficiam do subsídio de desemprego atingiu 3,21 milhões.

Recorde-se que os Estados Unidos fecharam o ano de 2012 com uma taxa de desemprego de 7,8 %.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como interpreta os números divulgados pelo Departamento Laboral dos EUA? Considera que estes números são o sinónimo de retoma económica no referido país?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(15 de abril de 2013)

Os recentes dados sobre emprego e desemprego, publicados pelo *US Department of Labor*, apontam para um sólido crescimento do emprego, em janeiro e fevereiro, e para a diminuição da taxa de desemprego para 7,7 %, em fevereiro, a mais baixa desde dezembro de 2008. A Comissão congratula-se com estes dados que comprovam a continuação da recuperação da economia dos EUA, embora a tendência para a redução do desemprego no país deva ser igualmente interpretada à luz do abandono do mercado de trabalho pelos desempregados no contexto de persistentes dificuldades neste mercado (ver Análise trimestral do emprego e da situação social na UE, março de 2013) ([1]).

A Comissão espera que os EUA prossigam a sua recuperação a breve trecho. O PIB real deverá crescer 1,9 % em 2013 e 2,6 % em 2014, graças a uma diminuição constante da taxa de desemprego — para 7,6 % em 2013 e 7,0 % em 2014.

As previsões do inverno dos serviços da Comissão, publicadas em 22 de fevereiro de 2013, apresentam uma panorâmica atualizada da situação ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee1_en.pdf — p. 98.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002006/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: United States: applications for unemployment benefits hit a five-year low

The United States Department of Labor has recently reported that initial applications for unemployment benefits have fallen by 37 000 to a total of 335 000 in the week ending 12 January 2013. At the start of January, 3.21 million people received unemployment benefits.

The United States' unemployment rate was 7.8% at the end of 2012.

How does the Commission interpret the figures published by the United States Department of Labor? Does it believe that these figures signify the country's economic recovery?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The recent figures on employment and unemployment published by the US Department of Labor indicate solid job growth in January and February, and the decline of the unemployment rate to 7.7% in February, the lowest since December 2008. The Commission welcomes these data as evidence of the continued recovery of the US economy, although the declining unemployment trend in the US should also be interpreted in the light of labour market withdrawal of unemployed people in a continuing difficult labour market (see EU Employment and Social situation quarterly review March 2013) ([1]).

In the near term, the Commission expects the US to continue its recovery. Real GDP is predicted to grow by 1.9% in 2013 and 2.6% in 2014 amid a steadily declining unemployment rate to 7.6% in 2013 and 7.0% in 2014.

The Commission Winter Forecast, published on 22 February 2013, provides an up-to-date picture ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee1_en.pdf; page 98

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002007/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Trans-European Energy Networks

The Commission's draft regulation on Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-E) is intended to create a regulatory framework for large-scale investment in energy infrastructure throughout the EU by 2020. As part of this process, Projects of Common Interest (PCI) will be selected for investment along 12 priority corridors and areas. The initial assessment of applicant projects was scheduled to begin in regional working groups in late September 2012.

In the light of the above, can the Commission kindly provide an update as to what progress has been made towards the selection of PCIs under the draft TEN-E regulation, including a breakdown by priority corridor and energy/project type?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

Work preparing the selection of projects of common interest (PCI) started in March 2012. The completion of the evaluation process of PCI is foreseen by June 2013.

Altogether, about 400 projects have been submitted throughout the process, of which around two thirds in electricity and one third in gas. Oil was only covered to a minor extent, due to the limited scope given by the regulation. For the sake of transparency and inclusiveness, the projects were submitted either directly through the working groups, or through the two online consultations carried out in spring and autumn 2012. The list of submitted projects is available at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/consultations/20120620_infrastructure_plan_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002008/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Protests in Northern Ireland

The people of my constituency, Northern Ireland, are deeply divided politically. In recent weeks many in my community have felt that their identity as British citizens is increasingly under threat because of the removal of the Union Flag from Northern Ireland's main civic building, the City Hall in Belfast. This has led to street demonstrations, with many unionists — particularly those living in socially and economically disadvantaged areas — disillusioned with the political situation in Northern Ireland.

Within this context, can the Commission kindly outline:

Whether any precedent exists for the EU providing emergency financial support to a Member State or region for the purposes of increasing political engagement and participation by a single identity group within a deeply divided society?

What relevant EU funding opportunities may exist for a forum or organisation that aims to bring together representatives of a single identity group in a Member State to discuss how their cultural, political, social and economic interests can be consolidated?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

Within the remit of EU competence there are no precedents of granting emergency funding to a single identity group in a Member State with the specific purpose of increasing its political engagement and participation within a divided society.

Single identity work is eligible under the current PEACE III programme in order to build confidence within communities. However, all projects are required to identify how they will promote reconciliation, enable communities to work more effectively together and demonstrate outcomes in terms of good relations and understanding. Detailed information on funding opportunities under PEACE III is available at the following website: www.seupb.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002010/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: TB eradication programme

In the Commission's view and from practical experience from within the EU, which Member State's bovine TB eradication programme has been most effective, and why, in reducing the incidences of bovine TB?

How does this programme deal with TB in wildlife?

Question for written answer E-002044/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Transmission of tuberculosis to cattle and the proposed cull of badgers in the UK

At the time of the last major outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the UK and other parts of northern Europe just over 10 years ago, a policy of vaccination of cattle was resisted by the UK farming community, in part because of fears that vaccinated animals could not be sold for export under EU food safety regulations. As a result, millions of cattle were slaughtered and then incinerated. In the Netherlands, by contrast, a policy of vaccination was applied, after EU regulations were lifted, allowing the meat from vaccinated animals to be sold. Can the Commission confirm that no untoward effects on human health have so far been reported as a result of the change in regulations?

Scientific research suggests that tuberculosis can be transmitted between cattle and badgers. The UK Government recently announced that a cull of badgers should take place and began operating a regionally based pilot scheme to that end. The cull has now been suspended. If the suspension is lifted the number of badgers affected is likely to be, tragically, tens of thousands. It is suggested by proponents of the cull that vaccination is ineffective as a method of control.

Can the Commission indicate whether or not the scientific advice it has received suggests that vaccination of cattle is effective against tuberculosis, whether it believes that meat from TB-vaccinated cattle presents any threat to human health, and whether current EU regulations prevent meat from TB-vaccinated cattle being either sold or exported?

Finally, can the Commission point to any scientific knowledge as to whether it is possible to vaccinate badgers effectively against tuberculosis either directly or indirectly, for example through food pellets?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

Foot-and-mouth disease is a viral disease of cloven-hoofed animals that has no public health importance and it poses no risk for food safety. This has always been fully taken into account in the EU legislation on vaccination against this disease.

As regards vaccination of cattle against tuberculosis (TB), reference is made to the answers to written questions E-000827/2011 ([1]) and E-005067/2012 ([1]). Further comprehensive information on the Commission's views on this issue is provided in a recent letter of Commissioner Borg to UK Secretary of State Paterson, that has been made available to the public on DEFRA website ([2]). Moreover, the Commission has given oral evidence on bovine TB vaccination before the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee of the House of Commons of the UK Parliament on 26 February 2013.

As regards vaccination of badgers, while there is no EU legislation in place to regulate it, EU financed research projects and field trials are ongoing. Preliminary data seems promising but full information that is necessary to properly assess their outcome is not yet available.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/files/bovinetb-letter-paterson.pdf

Many successful bovine TB eradication programmes have been implemented in the EU leading to the granting of the officially TB-free status to France (2001), Belgium (2003), Czech Republic (2004), Slovakia (2005), Slovenia (2009), Estonia (2010), Latvia (2011), or parts of Member States like Scotland in the UK (2009), regions of Italy (1999-2012) or Algarve in Portugal (2012). In none of these Member States did the occurrence of TB in wildlife cause an insurmountable problem to eradication of the disease from bovine animals.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002011/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Ban on first ploughing of carbon-rich soils

Has the Commission carried out a detailed assessment of the impact that a ban on first ploughing of carbon-rich soils would have on farmers, particularly as regards the area of land which would be affected, sward efficiencies and farmers' ability to meet changing market demands?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission has proposed to introduce a new Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) for the protection of wetland and carbon rich soil including a ban of first ploughing.

The Commission has considered the GAEC instrument in a broad context, in conjunction with the development of the environmental legislation and with the definition of green direct payments.

The Impact assessment accompanying the legal proposals for the CAP reform to 2020 ([1]) evaluated alternative scenarios for the evolution of the policy on the basis of quantitative and qualitative analysis, including the GAEC. The assessment clearly pointed out to the need of strengthening the scope of GAEC to address climate change concerns.

Based on the available data, the Commission would like to underline that the percentage of area concerned by the proposed GAEC 7 is not significant and consequently will not reduce the agricultural potential of the Member States. Although carbon rich-soils used for farming cover a relatively small surface, these areas are considered as hotspots of greenhouse emissions from agriculture. Emissions are highest when organic soils are ploughed for the first time and therefore the GAEC will contribute effectively to mitigating climate change.

The Commission wishes to highlight that the areas concerned are not usually the most productive and are often used as permanent pasture. In addition, the proposed measure will not prevent any agricultural activity but these areas can continue to be used for animal production.

([1]) Impact assessment for 'CAP towards 2020' of 12 October 2011, SEC(2011) 1153 final/2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002012/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(22 February 2013)

Subject: Suspension of neonicotinoids

What impact assessment has been carried out into the consequences for farmers of the Commission's proposal to suspend the use of three of the main neonicotinoids (imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam) and what alternatives are available if these products are suspended from use?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

According to the EU legislation on plant protection products, the risk assessment is conducted to ensure a high level of protection of both human and animal health and of the environment. The EU legislation does not foresee the conduct of an impact assessment in the procedure of authorisation of pesticide substances.

As regards to alternatives to the the use of the three neonicotinoids imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam, active substances approved according to Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]) are listed in the annex of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 ([2]). This Annex includes two other neonicotinoids (namely acetamiprid and thiacloprid) that present a lower acute toxicity for bees and that are not concerned by the ongoing review launched by the Commission under Article 21 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0001:0050:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:153:0001:0186:EN:PDF.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-002013/13
till kommissionen
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(25 februari 2013)

Angående: Regler för återkallelse av köttprodukter från butiker

Under de senaste veckorna har ett antal återförsäljare och livsmedelsproducenter återkallat livsmedel efter att det upptäckts att färdigrätter märkta som nötkött innehållit hästkött. En stor del av uppmärksamheten har på goda grunder riktats mot livsmedelsindustrins märkningsbedrägeri, vilket givetvis är ett oacceptabelt fall av missvisande information till konsumenter. Jag välkomnar de åtgärder som vidtagits av kommissionen för att förbättra kontrollen genom DNA-tester och samordning. Många EU-medborgare är också bekymrade över att en avsevärd mängd fullständigt ätlig mat slängs som ett resultat av dessa upptäckter.

Till exempel återkallade den svenska tillverkaren Findus alla sina felaktigt märkta produkter från butikerna. De kan därigenom ha brutit kylkedjan, vilket kan ha lett till att maten ruttnat. Företaget hävdar att de återkallade produkterna hanteras på ett hållbart sätt, men det skulle utan tvekan vara mycket mer hållbart ur ekonomisk, miljömässig och etisk synvinkel att ge konsumenterna möjlighet att konsumera dessa ätliga livsmedel. Detta är bara ett av många exempel på hur livsmedelsproducenter ur ett hållbarhetsperspektiv har fattat oproportionerliga beslut för att lösa en kris.

Sådan krishantering verkar fungera för att skydda företagets anseende snarare än att skydda konsumenterna och miljön. Det tycks även vara den billigaste lösningen för företagen. Om maten fortfarande är ätlig och inte kan medföra någon risk för människors hälsa borde det inte finnas någon anledning till att den återkallas. Istället skulle maten kunna märkas om korrekt, så att valet att äta hästkött ligger hos konsumenten. I Sverige och andra EU-länder finns det även företag och organisationer som samlar in ätliga livsmedel till välgörenhet. Detta skulle vara en lämpligare lösning för den ommärkta maten.

Jag anser att det är viktigt att låta konsumenterna bestämma, att höja deras medvetenhet och att ge dem möjlighet att äta säkra produkter om de så önskar. Det är helt uppåt väggarna om felaktig information och bedrägeri på förpackningen på fullständigt ätlig mat leder till stora mängder livsmedelsavfall.

Finns det någon EU-bestämmelse om livsmedelssäkerhet som tvingar livsmedelsproducenter och återförsäljare att omedelbart återkalla produkter från butiker om förpackningen har felaktig information? Finns det någon regel som hindrar att livsmedlen märks om och säljs eller lämnas till välgörenhet?

Är det bästa sättet att återfå konsumenternas förtroende och höja trovärdigheten för livsmedelskedjan att lösa bedrägeriproblemet genom att skapa avfallsproblem?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(10 april 2013)

Enligt EU:s livsmedelslagstiftning ([1]) ska livsmedelsföretagare dra tillbaka eller återkalla livsmedel som inte uppfyller kraven på livsmedelssäkerhet.

Kommissionen anser att om det inte finns några säkerhetsrisker med de aktuella livsmedlen, dvs. om de inte är hälsoskadliga eller otjänliga som människoföda, kan de felmärkta produkterna märkas om i enlighet med EU:s krav och under de behöriga myndigheternas överinseende. Sedan kan de korrekt märkta livsmedlen släppas ut på marknaden igen.

Man bör undvika bedräglig märkning som inte äventyrar livsmedelssäkerheten leder till ökat livsmedelsavfall.

([1]) Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EG) nr 178/2002 av den 28 januari 2002 om allmänna principer och krav för livsmedelslagstiftning, om inrättande av Europeiska myndigheten för livsmedelssäkerhet och om förfaranden i frågor som gäller livsmedelssäkerhet (EGT L 31, 1.2.2002, s. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002013/13
to the Commission
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Rules on withdrawal of meat products from stores

Over the passed few weeks a number of retailers and food manufacturers have withdrawn food from sale after the discovery of horsemeat in ready-made meals labelled as beef. A great deal of attention has justifiably been focused on labelling fraud in the food industry which of course constitutes an unacceptable case of misleading information for consumers. I welcome the measures taken by the Commission to strengthen control by DNA tests and coordination. Many EU citizens are also concerned that a lot of perfectly edible food is being thrown away as a result.

For instance, the Swedish producer Findus withdrew all their wrongly labelled products from shops. In doing so, they could have broken the cold chain and could therefore have contributed to rotting in food. They claim to sustainably manage the recalls, but it would no doubt be far more sustainable from an economical, environmental and moral point of view to give the choice to consumers of eating the edible food. This is just one example among others of how food manufacturers have taken disproportionate decisions from a sustainability point of view in response to a crisis.

Such crisis management seems to serve to protect the company's image, rather than the consumer and the environment. It also seems to be 'the cheapest way out' for companies. If the food is still edible and does not present any risk to people's health there should be no need to withdraw it. Instead, the food could be relabelled properly, leaving the choice with consumers of eating horsemeat. In Sweden and other EU countries, there are also companies and organisations that collect edible food for charity. This would seem a more appropriate solution for the relabelled food.

I believe it is important that we let the consumer choose, raise their awareness and give them the chance to eat safe products if they so wish. There is something terribly wrong if false information and fraud on the packaging of perfectly edible food generates large amounts of food waste.

Are there any EU food safety rules forcing food manufacturers and retailers to withdraw products from stores immediately in case of incorrect information on packaging? Does any rule stand in the way of them relabelling them, selling them or giving them to charity?

Is the best way of regaining consumer confidence and raising the credibility of the food supply chain to solve the problem of fraud by creating a waste problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

EU food legislation ([1]) requires food business operators to withdraw or recall a food in cases of its non-compliance with the food safety requirements.

The Commission considers that if there is no safety concern in the foods at issue, i.e. if they are not injurious to health or unfit for human consumption, the mislabelled food products can be re-labelled in accordance with Union requirements under the supervision of the competent authorities. Then these correctly re-labelled food products can be placed again on the market.

The generation of food waste should be avoided in cases of fraudulent labelling where there is no food safety problem.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002014/13
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: DNA testing of animal feed

The Commission has confirmed that in response to the recent discovery of horse DNA in the human food chain, there will be a reinforcement of DNA and phenylbutazone testing across the European Union. However, following some reports that dog meat was found in the dog food chain in Spain, will the Commission confirm that random DNA testing will be applied to animal feed too?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation) prohibits the use of dog meat or processed animal proteins derived from dog meat for the production of pet food.

In accordance with that regulation, dead pet animals, including dogs, should be declared as Category c materials which are prohibited for recycling and use in pet food. In addition, the feeding of terrestrial animals of a given species other than fur animals, with processed animal proteins derived from the bodies or parts of bodies of animals of the same species, is prohibited (ban on interspecies recycling).

The competent authorities in the Member States are responsible for verifying the correct implementation of Union legislation. Spain informed the Commission that the suspicion is being investigated and that tracing of any possible dispatch of such products to other Member States is ongoing. The Commission continues to follow this issue and awaits the conclusions of the pending investigations.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002015/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: The Ma'an Network and EU funding

1. In December 2008 the Ma'an Network in the West Bank was awarded EUR 600 000 from the EuropeAid budget line 'Maximising EU presence in the ENP and beneficiary countries'. Could the Commission confirm whether or not this contract has ended and whether additional funding has been provided to the Ma'an Network under this or any other EU budget line? If the project has ended, could the Commission provide me with a copy of the final report?

2. Is the Commission aware that the Ma'an News Agency, part of the Ma'an Network, recently published an article denying the Holocaust, presenting it as a Jewish lie and a 'myth'? They also denigrated the value of Holocaust Memorial Day calling it a 'so-called memorial day'.

3. Does the Commission agree with me that this is an insult to the 6 million Jews killed during the Holocaust?

4. If there is any ongoing funding to the Ma'an Network, does the Commission pledge to suspend such funding and to ensure that the Ma'an Network and the Ma'an News Agency are ineligible for future EU funding?

5. Will the European Union Technical Office for the West Bank and Gaza Strip issue a statement condemning the anti-Semitic statements by the Ma'an News Agency and monitor the Palestinian media for future instances of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, ensuring that none of the media involved are in receipt of EU funding?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The Commission's service contract with Ma'an Network entitled 'Maximising EU presence in the ENP ([1]) and beneficiary countries' ended in 2010. Under this contract Ma'an Network completed six media actions promoting EU activities in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). The final report of the contract was submitted in April 2010 and is attached.

In 2011, the Commission awarded a EUR 288 290 grant to Ma'an Network under the framework of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. The project entitled 'Mobilising Media to Empower Citizens and Civil Society for Human Rights, Democratic Reform, and Intra-Palestinian Reconciliation' focuses on improving press freedom, access to information and awareness of human rights issues in the oPt. The project is ongoing.

The EU does not provide global funding to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) but awards grants supporting specific projects and well-defined actions.

The EU is respectful of freedom of expression as a key feature of a democratic society. At the same time, the EU is firmly committed to the fight against incitement to hatred between ethnic or religious groups as well as to the expressions of racism, xenophobia, discrimination, anti-Semitism or Islamophobia, and will continue fighting these deplorable phenomena.

([1]) ENP = European Neighbourhood Policy.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002016/13
a la Comisión
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(25 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Iniciativa por el empleo de los jóvenes

Impulsada por el Grupo Parlamentario de los Socialistas y Demócratas en el Parlamento Europeo, se establece en las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo sobre el Marco Financiero Plurianual de la UE para el periodo 2014-2020 la aplicación de la «Garantía Juvenil», instrumento dirigido a reducir el alto nivel de paro que afecta actualmente a la juventud en toda Europa. Este instrumento prevé la «Iniciativa por el Empleo de los Jóvenes», que contaría con un fondo de 6 000 millones de euros para impulsar el empleo juvenil en aquellas regiones que tengan una tasa de paro juvenil por encima del 25 %.

El desempleo juvenil ha aumentado de manera espectacular como consecuencia de la crisis. En el conjunto de la UE, arroja una media de más del 22 % y llega a alcanzar el 50 % en algunos Estados miembros, como es el caso de España.

Los datos en la Comunidad Autónoma de Canarias resultan aun más alarmantes: la tasa de paro juvenil asciende hasta un 54 %, es decir, uno de cada dos jóvenes menores de 25 años no tiene empleo, lo que sitúa al archipiélago como la región con mayor tasa de paro juvenil en Europa.

¿Cómo tiene previsto la Comisión movilizar los recursos de este fondo y, en concreto, cuál será el porcentaje que se destinará a combatir el desempleo juvenil que sufre la Comunidad Autónoma de Canarias?

¿Cómo piensa la Comisión garantizar la plena compatibilidad de la aplicación de esta iniciativa con la prima anual de 1 100 euros por persona desempleada prevista en las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo y aplicable a las regiones en transición, entre las que se encuentra Canarias?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2013)

Uno de los principales problemas a los que se enfrenta España actualmente es su índice de desempleo, que ha alcanzado cotas no conocidas anteriormente (26,1 % a finales de 2012), y sobre todo el hecho de que el paro afecte a uno de cada dos jóvenes.

Todas las regiones (de nivel NUTS 2) con índices de desempleo superiores al 25 % en 2012 podrán acceder a los fondos asignados a la Iniciativa sobre Empleo Juvenil y la cofinanciación correspondiente del Fondo Social Europeo (FSE). El 12 de marzo la Comisión adoptó una Comunicación sobre este asunto ([1]) y aportó nuevas modificaciones a su propuesta de Reglamento del FSE para 2014-2020 ([2]).

Se propone que el cálculo de la asignación complementaria por Estado miembro se base en los datos estadísticos de Eurostat sobre las regiones de nivel NUTS 2 que en 2012 tenían índices de desempleo juvenil superiores al 25 %. Se prevé que estos datos estarán disponibles en abril de 2013. El reparto de fondos entre las regiones admisibles será proporcional al número de jóvenes desempleados de la región de que se trate con respecto al número total de jóvenes desempleados de todas las regiones admisibles.

El objetivo de la Iniciativa sobre Empleo juvenil es reforzar, pero no sustituir, las medidas que cuentan con el apoyo del FSE para combatir el desempleo juvenil. Se propone que esta Iniciativa se integre plenamente en la programación del FSE para el periodo 2014-2020.

En 2012 y 2013 ya se reasignaron créditos del FSE y del FEDER concedidos a España para el periodo 2007-2013 a fin de apoyar iniciativas en favor de los jóvenes relacionadas tanto con el empleo como con la educación.

([1]) COM(2013) 144.
([2]) COM(2013) 145 final, COM(2013) 146 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002016/13
to the Commission
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Youth Employment Initiative

The Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament campaigned for a Youth Guarantee, with the aim of driving down the current high rate of youth unemployment recorded across Europe. The European Council conclusions on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 state that the Council will soon be adopting this guarantee. A Youth Employment Initiative is also planned as part of the scheme, which would be allocated EUR 6 billion to boost youth employment in regions where over 25% of young people are out of work.

Youth unemployment has risen dramatically in the wake of the crisis; the EU average is over 22%, while the rate is as high as 50% in some Member States such as Spain.

The figures for the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands are even more alarming: here the rate has reached 54%, which means that one in two under-25s are without a job, making it the region with the highest rate of youth unemployment in Europe.

How does the Commission intend to mobilise the financial resources set aside for this initiative and, more specifically, what percentage will be allocated to tackle the youth unemployment problem in the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands?

How does the Commission intend to ensure that applying this initiative will be fully compatible with the plan presented in the European Council conclusions to allocate an annual premium of EUR 1 100 for every unemployed person, and how will it be applied to transition regions such as the Canary Islands?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

One of the main challenges Spain currently faces is the record high unemployment rate (26.1% at the end of 2012) and especially the fact that one in two young people are unemployed today.

All EU regions (at NUTS level 2) with youth unemployment rates in 2012 of more than 25% will be eligible for the budget allocated to the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the corresponding European Social Fund (ESF) co-funding. The Commission adopted on the 12th of March a communication ([1]) on this matter and made further amendments to its proposal for an ESF regulation for 2014-2020 ([2]).

The calculation of the top-up allocation per Member State is proposed to be based on the Eurostat statistical data on NUTS 2 level regions that have youth unemployment rates of more than 25% in 2012. These data are expected to become available in April 2013. The allocation corresponding to each eligible region will be made proportionally to the number of young unemployed persons in the eligible region and the total number of young unemployed persons referred in all eligible regions.

The YEI is aimed to enhance and not replace the measures supported by the ESF in the fight against youth unemployment. It is proposed that the YEI is fully integrated in ESF programming for the 2014-2020 period.

Already in 2012 and 2013 credits from the ESF and ERDF allocated to Spain for the 2007-13 period were reallocated to the support of initiatives that benefit youth both related to employment as well as education.

([1]) COM(2013) 144.
([2]) COM(2013) 145 final, COM(2013) 146 final.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002017/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(25. februar 2013)

Om: Mulig dumping af torsk fra Norge

Ifølge danske medier (herunder Maritime Denmark, 21. januar 2013) har Norge fra starten af 2013 sænket mindstepriserne på salg af torsk samtidig med en parallel forøgelse af landets torskekvote med op til 30 %.

Forøgelsen af den norske kvote, der er 25 gange større end den samlede danske torskekvote, sker samtidig med, at Norge sender store mængder fisk ud på verdensmarkedet. Det har blandt andet medført et fald i prisen på torsk i Danmark (nogen steder fra 22 DKK ned til 11 DKK kiloet).

Norge har tidligere øget importværnet på andre vigtige fødevareprodukter — som kød, ost og blomster — med forhøjede priser på det europæiske marked som følge.

Vil Kommissionen i betragtning af ovenstående tage stilling til, om Norge dumper fisk på andre landes markeder for ikke at skade indtjeningen på dets hjemmemarked for torsk? Vil Kommissionen endvidere vurdere, om Norges adfærd kan være i strid med EØS-aftalen, der pålægger landet at følge love om EU's Indre Marked? Vil Kommissionen eventuelt tage skridt til at indføre en straftold på import af torsk fra Norge i henhold til EØS-aftalen?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Karel De Gucht
(22. april 2013)

I tilfælde hvor international handel med forarbejdede varer fordrejes af illoyal konkurrence, og udlignings- eller dumpingpraksis skader EU-erhvervsgrenen, kan der indføres antisubsidie- eller antidumpingtold, efter at Kommissionen har undersøgt forholdene nærmere.

Kommissionen kan overveje at begynde en antisubsidie- eller antidumpingundersøgelse, når den har tilstrækkelige umiddelbare beviser for, at dumping eller subsidiering finder sted, og at EU-erhvervsgrenen lider væsentlig skade, der forårsages af de dumpede eller subsidierede importer. Hvis Kommissionen får sådanne beviser, vil den analysere alle fakta grundigt og kan påbegynde en undersøgelse, hvis alle juridiske betingelser er opfyldt.

EU's torskesektor kan frit indgive en klage, og, hvis der er tilstrækkelige beviser, er Kommissionen juridisk forpligtet til at påbegynde en undersøgelse, hvis de relevante krav fra WTO og EU er opfyldt.

Endelig vil Kommissionen gerne understrege, at, da aftalen om Det Europæiske Økonomiske Samarbejdsområde (EØS-aftalen) ikke omfatter den fælles fiskeripolitik, dækker den relevante lovgivning vedrørende EU's indre marked ikke fiskevarer, der importeres fra Norge.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002017/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Possible dumping of cod from Norway

According to the Danish media (including Maritime Denmark, 21 January 2013), since the beginning of 2013 Norway has been lowering the minimum sale price for cod while at the same time increasing its cod quota by up to 30%.

The increase of the Norwegian quota, which is 25 times larger than the total Danish cod quota, coincides with Norway releasing large quantities of fish on to the world market. This has led to a drop in the price of cod in Denmark (in some places from DKK 22 to DKK 11 per kg).

In the past Norway has raised an import barrier on foodstuffs such as meat and cheese, and on flowers, resulting in higher prices on the European market.

In the light of the above, will the Commission state its view on Norway's dumping of fish on other countries' markets so as to protect the income of its domestic cod market? Will the Commission state whether Norway's behaviour conflicts with the EEA Agreement, which requires the country to comply with the EU's internal market legislation? Will the Commission take any steps to introduce an anti-dumping duty on the import of cod from Norway under the EEA Agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

In cases where international trade in manufactured goods is distorted by unfair competition, in so far as countervailing and/or dumping practices cause injury to the Union industry, anti-subsidy and/or anti-dumping duties may be imposed after investigation by the Commission.

The Commission can consider opening an anti-subsidy and/or an anti-dumping investigation when it has sufficient prima facie evidence that dumping or subsidisation takes place and the Union industry is suffering material injury, caused by the dumped or subsidised imports. If the Commission obtains such evidence, it will carefully analyse all facts and may initiate an investigation if all legal conditions are met.

The EU cod industry is free to bring a complaint and if there is sufficient evidence, the Commission is under a legal obligation to initiate an investigation if the relevant World Trade Organisation (WTO) and EU conditions are met.

Finally, the Commission would like to underline that, because the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement does not include the common fisheries policy, the relevant legislation on the EU's internal market does not extend to fish products imported from Norway.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002018/13
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(25. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Computersoftware Microsoft

Die neue Version für ein Computerprogramm eines der größten Softwareunternehmen (Microsoft) kann im Vergleich zu den älteren Versionen nur noch auf einen einzigen PC gespielt werden. Es handelt sich hierbei um eine Dauerlizenz, die nicht auf andere Geräte übertragbar ist. Es gibt ebenfalls die Möglichkeit, die besagte Version als Abonnement zu erwerben. Entscheidet man sich für das Abonnement, kann das Programm auf 5 Geräte gespielt werden. Das Abonnement gilt für ein Jahr, müsste jährlich erneuert werden und ist nicht billig, denn es kostet 100 EUR pro Jahr. Das Unternehmen nutzt offensichtlich seine Monopolstellung aus. Der/die Konsumentin muss entweder einen hohen Preis für das Programm bezahlen, oder in Kauf nehmen, dass das Programm nur auf einem einzigen Gerät und ohne Möglichkeit einer Lizenzübertragung angewendet werden kann oder aber, dass man mit einer alten Version arbeiten muss.

1. Gibt es innerhalb der Europäischen Union ein Gesetz, das die Lizenzvergabe von Softwareprogrammen regelt? Wenn ja, welches?

2. Können die Unternehmen in der Europäischen Union allein über die Produktpolitik entscheiden (Preis, Gültigkeit, Lizenzen, etc) oder gibt es diesbezüglich Vorschriften?

3. Besteht irgendeine Möglichkeit, gegen diese Regelung der Lizenzvergabe vorzugehen? Wenn ja, welche?

4. Sollte es nicht ein Gesetz geben, um derartige Monopolbildungen großer Konzerne zu unterbinden, damit die Konsumentinnen vor unfairen und überteuerten Preisen geschützt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(30. April 2013)

Nach den Artikeln 101 und 102 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union ist es untersagt, dass Unternehmen wettbewerbswidrige Vereinbarungen abschließen oder ihre beherrschende Stellung auf einem bestimmten Markt missbrauchen. Die Kommission stellt sicher, dass alle Marktteilnehmer, einschließlich jener aus der Softwarebranche, diese Vorschriften befolgen.

In der Softwarebranche ist es gängige Praxis, dass Software-Unternehmer je nach Bedarf ihrer Kunden verschiedene Arten von Softwarelizenzen anbieten und die Preise entsprechend festsetzen. Ein solches Vorgehen allein gibt keinen Anlass zu wettbewerbsrechtlichen Bedenken, da die Konsumenten selbst die Lizenzpakete zu Preisen auswählen, die am ehesten ihren Bedürfnissen entsprechen.

Die Verbraucherschutzvorschriften der EU gelten auch für den Verkauf von Softwareprogrammen an Verbraucher in der EU. So sind Händler insbesondere durch die Fernabsatzrichtlinie 97/7/EG verpflichtet, Verbrauchern vor dem Kauf eines Produkts umfassende Informationen bereitzustellen, einschließlich Informationen zu den wesentlichen Eigenschaften und zum Preis des Produkts sowie zur Vertragsdauer ([1]). Nach der Richtlinie 2005/29/EG über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken sind unter anderem irreführende Praktiken und Unterlassungen durch Händler hinsichtlich der wesentlichen Merkmale von Produkten verboten. Außerdem dient die Richtlinie (1993/13/EG) über missbräuchliche Vertragsklauseln dem Schutz der Verbraucher vor missbräuchlichen Vertragsklauseln seitens der Händler ([2]).

Verbraucher, die sich in ihren Rechten verletzt sehen, können sich bei den nationalen Durchsetzungsbehörden, die für den Verbraucherschutz zuständig sind, beschweren oder vor einem nationalen Gericht rechtliche Schritte gegen das betreffende Unternehmen einleiten. Sie können sich zudem an nationale Verbraucherschutzorganisationen wenden, um mehr über ihre Rechte und Rechtsschutzmöglichkeiten zu erfahren.

([1]) Ab dem 13. Juni 2014 wird diese Richtlinie durch die Richtlinie 2011/83/EU über die Rechte der Verbraucher ersetzt, die zu einer erhöhten Transparenz führen soll, indem Händler verpflichtet werden, unter anderem Informationen zu der Funktionsweise und Interoperabilität ihrer digitalen Inhalte bereitzustellen.

([2]) Diese Richtlinie gilt auch für die Vertragsklauseln in Lizenzverträgen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002018/13
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Microsoft computer software

The new version of a computer program from one of the largest software companies (Microsoft) can, in contrast to older versions, only be run on a single computer. The licence for this version is a perpetual licence that cannot be transferred to other devices. There is also an option of obtaining the aforementioned version on subscription. If someone opts for the subscription, the program can be run on five devices. The subscription is valid for one year, has to be renewed annually and is not cheap, as it costs EUR 100 per year. The company is clearly exploiting its monopoly position. Consumers either have to pay a high price for the program or accept the fact that the program can only be used on a single device with no possibility of transferring the licence or that they will have to use an old version.

1. Is there any legislation within the European Union governing the licensing of software programs? If so, what legislation?

2. Can companies in the European Union decide entirely for themselves on their product policy (price, validity, licences, etc.), or are there any rules applying in this regard?

3. Is it possible to take any sort action against this licensing arrangement? If so, what action can be taken?

4. Should there not be legislation to prevent large companies forming monopolies like this so that we can protect consumers from unfair and extortionate prices?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union prevent companies from entering into anti-competitive agreements, or from abusing their dominant position within a particular market. The Commission ensures that all market players, including those in the software industry, abide by these rules.

It is common practice in the software industry that software vendors offer various types of software licences in accordance with customer needs and price them accordingly. This practice does not, in itself, give rise to competition concerns, as it allows consumers to choose the licensing package at prices which best suit their needs.

EC law on consumer protection also applies to the sale of software programs to consumers in the EU. In particular, the Distance Selling Directive 97/7/EC requires traders to provide consumers with comprehensive information before the purchase, including on the main characteristics and price of the product and the duration of the contract ([1]). The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC prohibits, amongst others, misleading actions and omissions by traders regarding the main characteristics of a product. Moreover, the Unfair Contract Terms Directive (1993/13/EC) protects consumers against unfair contract terms imposed by traders ([2]).

Consumers who believe that their rights have been violated can complain to the national enforcement authorities responsible for consumer protection, or take legal action against a trader before a national court. Consumers may also seek assistance from a national consumer organisation to learn more about their rights and options to receive redress.

([1]) As from 13 June 2014 this directive will be replaced by the Consumer Rights Directive 2011/83/EU, which enhances transparency by requiring traders to display, amongst others, information on the functionality and interoperability of digital content they offer.

([2]) This directive applies also to terms included in licensing agreements.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002019/13
an die Kommission
Daniel Caspary (PPE) und Michael Gahler (PPE)
(25. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Einfuhrverbot für von in Laogai-Lagern hergestellten Erzeugnissen in die EU

Die Kommission kündigte in ihrer Antwort (E-011909/2011) auf unsere schriftliche Anfrage am17.2.2012 an, dass der dafür eingerichtete Arbeitskreis überprüfen wird, ob eine EU-Gesetzgebung zur Durchsetzung eines Einfuhrverbots von Waren, die in Zwangs- und Gefangenenarbeit in der Volksrepublik China eingestellt wurden, sowohl machbar als auch wirtschaftlich sei.

Da seither einige Zeit vergangen ist, wäre es interessant zu erfahren, zu welchen Schlüssen die Arbeitsgruppe nach ihren bisherigen Untersuchungen gelangt ist. In diesem Zusammenhang wird insbesondere um Beantwortung folgender Fragen gebeten:

1. Ergaben die Untersuchungen Anhaltspunkte, wonach solch eine Gesetzgebung auf EU- Ebene wirtschaftlich sinnvoll und machbar ist? Falls ja, konnten potenzielle juristische Schwierigkeiten bei der Umsetzung einer solchen Gesetzgebung identifiziert werden?

2. Welche weiteren Maßnahmen hat die Kommission getroffen, um den Import mutmaßlicher Laogai-Produkte zu unterbinden?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

Bei dem von den Herren Abgeordneten genannten „Arbeitskreis" handelt es sich um eine dienststellenübergreifende Gruppe zum Thema Zwangsarbeit in Gefängnissen. Sie hat die Aufgabe, die Tragweite dieses Themas in Drittländern zu ermitteln und zu untersuchen und anschließend zu prüfen, wie die EU sich in dieser Frage verhalten sollte.

Bei einem möglichen Verbot von in Zwangs- oder Gefangenenarbeit hergestellten Waren müssen die Regeln der Welthandelsorganisation (WTO) beachtet werden, so auch das Gebot der Nichtdiskriminierung. Deshalb gehört es unter anderem zu den Aufgaben der dienststellenübergreifenden Gruppe, das Ausmaß der Zwangsarbeit in Gefängnissen in Drittländern sowie einige Schwierigkeiten beim Umgang mit dieser komplexen Frage zu ermitteln — wie z. B. die Tatsache, dass Zwangsarbeit in Gefängnissen von solcher Arbeitspflicht in Gefängnissen zu unterscheiden ist, die zulässig ist, sofern bestimmte Kriterien gemäß international anerkannten Standards erfüllt sind. Alle diese Aspekte sind im Hinblick auf Laogai von wesentlicher Bedeutung, und wenn Anlass dazu besteht, werden Maßnahmen zu gegebener Zeit geprüft.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002019/13
to the Commission
Daniel Caspary (PPE) and Michael Gahler (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Ban on the import into the EU of products manufactured in Laogai camps

In its answer (E-011909/2011) to our question for written answer, the Commission stated on 17 February 2012 that the Task Force set up for the purpose would examine both the feasibility and the cost-effectiveness of EU legislation enforcing an import ban on goods produced by forced and prison labour in the People's Republic of China.

As some time has elapsed since then, it would be interesting to discover what conclusions the Task Force has reached following its investigations so far. In view of this, we would like to ask the following questions in particular:

1. Did the investigations produce evidence of the cost-effectiveness and feasibility of such legislation at EU level? If so, was it possible to identify potential legal problems in connection with the implementation of such legislation?

2. What additional measures has the Commission taken to prevent the import of products that are presumed to have been produced in the Laogai camps?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The 'Task Force' referred to by the Honourable Members is the Inter Service Group on forced prison labour. This is tasked with identifying and analysing the scope of the issue of forced prison labour in third countries, and to subsequently review the EU response to the issue accordingly.

Any potential ban of goods produced by forced or prison labour must respect World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, including non-discrimination. Part of the Inter Service Group's (ISG) work is therefore to identify the scope of forced prison labour in third countries, as well as some of the obstacles in dealing with this complex issue, which include *inter alia* distinguishing forced prison labour from the forms of compulsory prison labour that is allowed if certain criteria are met according to internationally recognised standards. All of these issues are central to the Laogai issue, and consideration of measures, if warranted, will be made in due course.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002020/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Στοιχεία για την εκτέλεση του Προγράμματος Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης της Ελλάδας 2007-2013

Το πρόγραμμα αγροτικής ανάπτυξης της Ελλάδας (Αλέξανδρος Μπαλτατζής), για την προγραμματική περίοδο 2007-2013, συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Γεωργικό Ταμείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και αποτελεί τη μοναδική δυνατότητα επενδύσεων στον αγροτικό τομέα. Δεδομένης της ιδιαίτερα δυσμενούς οικονομικής κατάστασης της ελληνικής οικονομίας και των παραγωγών γεωργικών και κτηνοτροφικών προϊόντων, της αύξησης του κόστους παραγωγής και της συνεχούς πτώσης διαθέσιμου εισοδήματος,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η ετήσια μεταβολή του κόστους εισροών και του εισοδήματος των παραγωγών στην Ελλάδα τα τελευταία 5 χρόνια; Υπάρχουν συγκριτικά στοιχεία για το ίδιο διάστημα και για τις άλλες χώρες μέλη;

2. Γνωρίζει ποια είναι η μέχρι σήμερα πορεία υλοποίησης (νομικές δεσμεύσεις — απορρόφηση) του προγράμματος «Αλέξανδρος Μπαλτατζής» ανά μέτρο και άξονα; Υπάρχουν συγκριτικά στοιχεία για τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη; Ποια είναι τα σημαντικότερα προβλήματα στην ομαλή εκτέλεση και απορρόφηση του προγράμματος;

3. Ποια σημαντικά έργα απεντάχθησαν με δεδομένη την αύξηση της κοινοτικής συγχρηματοδότησης;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2013)

1. Στοιχεία σχετικά με το κόστος εισροών και εισοδήματος στην Ελλάδα διαθέτει η Eurostat. Κατά την περίοδο 2005-2012 ο ετήσιος ρυθμός μεταβολής του κόστους εισροών για την Ελλάδα ήταν -1,4% ενώ το εισόδημα ανά ετήσια μονάδα εργασίας μειώθηκε ετησίως κατά -0,4%.

2. Το ελληνικό Πρόγραμμα Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης 2007-2013 (GR-ΠΑΑ) προχωρά ικανοποιητικά όσον αφορά τις μέχρι σήμερα δαπάνες, με ποσοστό υλοποίησης της τάξης του 51,59%:

Συνολική συνεισφορά του ΕΓΤΑΑ σε ευρώ	Προκαταβολή σε ευρώ	Ενδιάμεσες πληρωμές σε ευρώ	Ποσοστό υλοποίησης
3.906.228.424	273.435.990	1.741.606.600	51,59%

Το μέσο ποσοστό υλοποίησης των ΠΑΑ της ΕΕ27 ανέρχεται σε 61,29% (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των προκαταβολών) και κυμαίνεται από 34,73% έως 94,24%.

Στο παράρτημα I παρατίθεται το ποσοστό υλοποίησης ανά μέτρο για το ελληνικό ΠΑΑ και τα ΠΑΑ της ΕΕ27. Το ποσοστό υλοποίησης ενός μέτρου εξαρτάται από πολλούς παράγοντες (μεταξύ άλλων, από τη δομή παράδοσης, το θεσμικό πλαίσιο, τις εθνικές διαδικασίες, το συμφέρον των δικαιούχων), οι οποίοι ποικίλλουν σημαντικά μεταξύ των περιφερειών και των κρατών μελών.

Οι εκθέσεις προόδου που εκπονούνται ετησίως από τη διαχειριστική αρχή περιγράφουν, μεταξύ άλλων, τα προβλήματα υλοποίησης και τις προτεινόμενες λύσεις. Όσον αφορά την Ελλάδα, οι εκθέσεις αυτές είναι διαθέσιμες στον ιστότοπο http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/index.php?obj=c731077c04035ac9.

Δεν υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα στοιχεία σε επίπεδο Επιτροπής σχετικά με νομικές δεσμεύσεις σε επίπεδο προγράμματος.

3. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στοιχεία σχετικά με τα έργα που θα μπορούσαν να έχουν απενταχθεί λόγω της αύξησης του ποσοστού συγχρηματοδότησης του προγράμματος. Ο κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1698/2005 ([1]) (άρθρο 7) του Συμβουλίου ορίζει ότι τα κράτη μέλη είναι αρμόδια για την εφαρμογή των προγραμμάτων αγροτικής ανάπτυξης (ΠΑΑ). Συνεπώς, η επιλογή και ο αποκλεισμός των έργων εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα κάθε κράτους μέλους και η διαχειριστική αρχή κάθε κράτους μέλους διαθέτει τα σχετικά στοιχεία.

([1]) ΕΕ L 277 της 21.10.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002020/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Data on the implementation of the 2007-2013 Greek Rural Development Programme

The Greek Rural Development Programme ('Alexandros Baltatzis') for the programming period 2007-2013 is co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and represents the only possibility for investing in the agricultural sector. Given the particularly difficult situation of the Greek economy and of producers of agricultural and livestock products, increased production costs and the steady decline in disposable income, will the Commission say:

1. What has the annual change in input costs and income been for producers in Greece over the last five years? Are any comparative data available for the same period for the other Member States?

2. Does it know the state of implementation to date (legal commitments — take-up) of the 'Alexandros Baltatzis' programme by measure and axis? Are any comparative data available for the other Member States? What are the main problems preventing the smooth implementation and take-up of the programme?

3. What important projects have been excluded, given the increase in Community co-funding?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

1. Data on input costs and income in Greece are available at Eurostat. During 2005-2012 the annual rate of change for input costs for Greece has been -1.4% while income per annual working unit has decreased annually by -0.4%.

2. The Greek 2007-13 Rural Development Programme (GR-RDP) advances satisfactorily in terms of expenditure until now with an implementation rate of 51,59%:

Total EAFRD allocation EUR	Payment on Account EUR	Interim Payments EUR	Implementation rate
3.906.228.424	273.435.990	1.741.606.600	51,59%

The average implementation rate of the EU-27-RDPs is 61,29% (including payments on account) ranging from 34,73% to 94,24%.

Annex I shows the implementation rate per measure for the GR-RDP and the EU-27-RDPs. The implementation rate of a measure depends on many factors (amongst others, delivery structure, institutional framework, national procedures, interest of beneficiaries), which vary considerably between Regions and Member States.

Progress reports prepared annually by the Managing Authority describe amongst others, the implementation problems and solutions proposed. For Greece, these reports can be consulted at http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/index.php?obj=c731077c04035ac9

No information is available at Commission level on legal commitments at programme level.

3. The Commission does not have any information on projects that might have been excluded due to the increase of co-financing rate of the programme. Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1]) (Article 7) stipulates that Member States shall be responsible for implementing their RDPs. Therefore, selection and exclusion of projects fall under the competence of each Member State and relevant information is available at the Member State's Managing Authority.

([1]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002021/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(25 februari 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — De sancties tegen Iran die de toegang tot levensreddende geneesmiddelen blokkeren

Volgens recente berichten in de internationale pers (*The New York Times* ([1]) en *The Guardian* ([2])) verhinderen de westerse sancties tegen Iran dat Iraanse burgers levensreddende geneesmiddelen kunnen kopen, zoals chemotherapiemedicatie voor kankerpatiënten en bloedstollingsmiddelen voor hemofiliepatiënten, hetgeen gevolgen voor de gezondheid van honderdduizenden Iraniërs kan hebben. Volgens de berichten kunnen de reeds bestaande ontheffingen op het sanctieregime niet toegepast worden gezien de strenge en verreikende sancties die aan internationale financiële instellingen zijn opgelegd met betrekking tot het faciliteren van het betaalverkeer met en naar Iran, waardoor betalingen in feite onmogelijk zijn. Bovendien dwingen de restricties op de uitvoer van goederen voor tweeërlei gebruik die ook aangewend zouden kunnen worden voor het Iraanse nucleaire programma, de Iraanse patiënten om gesmokkelde producten te kopen. Zo staan de zaken ervoor, hoewel het verklaarde doel van de EU het voorkomen van het lijden van het Iraanse volk is.

1. Kan de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter ervoor zorgen dat de EU al het mogelijke zal doen, in volledige samenwerking met haar internationale partners, met name de P5+1-groep, om ervoor te zorgen dat Iraniërs zo spoedig mogelijk toegang hebben tot essentiële geneesmiddelen en dat ze — in vergelijking met het bewind zelf — niet onevenredig door de internationale sancties worden getroffen?

2. Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter bereid om, indien nodig, het huidige sanctieregime van de EU tegen het Iraanse bewind aan te passen door de restricties op de uitvoer van geneesmiddelen naar Iran tot een minimum te beperken, ondanks en rekening houdend met de aanhoudende en geloofwaardige bezorgdheid over het nucleaire programma van Iran?

3. Kan de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter een overzicht geven van de situatie aangaande de uitvoer van humanitaire goederen nadat lidstaten uitdrukkelijk uitvoervergunningen hebben verleend voor bepaalde geneesmiddelen en aldus in feite de ontheffingen op het sanctieprogramma toegepast hebben, zodat er onderzocht kan worden of het Iraanse bewind mogelijk de invoer en distributie van geneesmiddelen in Iran belemmert? Zo niet, waarom niet?

4. Weet de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter of de vertegenwoordigingen van de lidstaten in Iran het tekort aan geneesmiddelen hebben aangekaart bij het Iraanse bewind en hierover een gesprek zijn aangegaan? Zo ja, wat was het antwoord van het bewind?

5. Kan de Commissie, gebruikmakend van humanitaire of ontwikkelingsmiddelen, medische noodvoorraden leveren aan Iraniërs die daar dringend behoefte aan hebben en beoordelen of het Iraanse bewind dit soort rechtstreekse medische hulp zal accepteren?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(24 april 2013)

1. De sancties van de EU zijn gericht tegen het nucleaire programma van Iran, tegen degenen die dit programma steunen, en tegen de inkomsten die Iran gebruikt om het programma te financieren, niet tegen het Iraanse volk. Alles wordt in het werk gesteld om ervoor te zorgen dat de onbedoelde effecten van de EU-sancties zo beperkt mogelijk blijven.

2. De sancties van de EU bevatten uitdrukkelijke bepalingen die garanderen dat transacties om humanitaire redenen mogelijk blijven, met zo weinig mogelijk beperkingen. Hoewel de geldoverdracht van en naar Iran inderdaad moeilijker is geworden omdat belangrijke Iraanse banken zijn aangewezen, zijn er nog steeds kanalen voor financiële transacties die open blijven en ervoor zorgen dat legaal betalingsverkeer met Iran mogelijk blijft.

([1]) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/03/world/middleeast/iran-sanctions-take-toll-on-medical-imports.html?pagewanted=all & _r=0.
([2]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jan/13/iran-lifesaving-drugs-international-sanctions.

3-4. Aangezien de uitvoering van sancties onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten valt, kan de EU geen overzicht geven van de uitvoer van hulpgoederen die afkomstig zijn uit de lidstaten. Een tekort aan beschikbare medicijnen of andere essentiële goederen in Iran is echter voornamelijk te wijten aan de ondoelmatige toewijzing van de bestaande economische middelen door de Iraanse regering. Aangezien het bespreken van sanctievraagstukken buiten het E3/EU+3-onderhandelingskader op dit moment gevoelig ligt, is deze kwestie nog niet met Iran besproken.

5. De Commissie verleent op dit moment geen humanitaire of ontwikkelingssteun die de rechtstreekse levering van medische noodhulp of medicijnen aan Iran inhoudt. De huidige, beperkte steun van de Commissie aan Iran wordt via internationale organisaties en niet-gouvernementele organisaties (ngo's) verstrekt en is voor het Iraanse volk bedoeld.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002021/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sanctions against Iran blocking access to life-saving medicine

It has recently been reported in the International press (the *New York Times* ([1]) and the *Guardian* ([2])) that Western sanctions against Iran forbid Iranian citizens from purchasing life-saving drugs such as chemotherapy drugs for cancer patients and blood-clotting agents for haemophiliacs, thus potentially affecting the health of hundreds of thousands of Iranians. According to the reports, the waivers that are already in place in the sanctions regime cannot be applied given the strict and wide-ranging sanctions imposed on international financial institutions regarding facilitating payments with/to Iran, which effectively make payments impossible. In addition, restrictions on the export of dual-use items which could also be used for Iran's nuclear programme are forcing Iranian patients to buy smuggled products. Such is the case although the EU's stated goal is to prevent Iranian people from suffering.

1. Can the HR/VP ensure that the EU will do its utmost, in full cooperation with its international partners, particularly the P5+1 team, to ensure that Iranians have access to essential medicines as soon as possible and are not disproportionately targeted — as compared with the Iranian regime itself — by the international sanctions regime?

2. Is the HR/VP willing, if necessary, to adapt the current EU sanctions regime to the Iranian regime so as to minimise the restrictions on exports of medicines to Iran, despite and taking account of the ongoing and credible concern over Iran's nuclear programme?

3. Can the HR/VP give an overview of the situation regarding exports of humanitarian goods subsequently to Member States having explicitly granted export licences for certain medicines, thus effectively applying the waivers in the sanctions programme, with a view to analysing whether the Iranian regime might hamper imports and distribution of medicines in Iran? If not, why not?

4. Does the HR/VP know whether the Member States' representations in Iran have addressed and discussed the shortage of medicines with the Iranian regime? If so, what has been the regime's reply?

5. Can the Commission provide emergency medical supplies to Iranians in dire need using humanitarian or development funds, and assess whether the Iranian regime will accept this kind of direct medical assistance?

Answer given by High-Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

1. The EU's sanctions are targeted at Iran's nuclear programme and at those supporting this programme, and at revenues Iran is using to fund this programme, not at the Iranian people. Every effort possible is made to ensure that any unintended effects of the EU's sanctions are minimised as much as possible.

2. The EU's sanctions contain explicit provisions guaranteeing that transactions for humanitarian purposes remain possible with as few restrictions as possible. And while transfer of money to and from Iran has indeed become more difficult as important Iranian banks have been designated, there are still a number of channels for financial transactions which remain open and which ensure that legitimate transactions with Iran can continue.

3-4. As the implementation of sanctions rests with the Member States, the EU is not in a position to give an overview of the situation regarding exports of humanitarian goods originating in the Member States. Any shortage of available medicines or other essential goods inside Iran is however mainly due to the inadequate allocation of existing economic resources by the Iranian Government. The issue has not been discussed with Iran, in view of the sensitivity of discussing any sanctions issues outside of the E3/EU+3 negotiations framework at this stage.

5. The Commission is currently providing no humanitarian or development assistance implying direct delivery of emergency medical assistance and medicines to Iran. The Commission's current and limited assistance to Iran is provided through international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and is targeting people in Iran.

([1]) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/03/world/middleeast/iran-sanctions-take-toll-on-medical-imports.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
([2]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jan/13/iran-lifesaving-drugs-international-sanctions

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002023/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(25 février 2013)

Objet: Ouverture des négociations UE-États-Unis: faciliter dès aujourd'hui la convergence et la cohérence des règles et pratiques dans le secteur automobile

Les États-Unis sont notre premier partenaire, et nos échanges sont structurants pour l'ensemble du commerce mondial: nos deux régions représentent à elles seules la moitié du PIB mondial et près d'un tiers des échanges.

L'ouverture des négociations entre les États-Unis et l'Union européenne est donc une bonne nouvelle. La conclusion d'un accord transatlantique global sur le commerce et les investissements, c'est la promesse d'une croissance renforcée et de nombreuses créations d'emplois des deux cotés de l'Atlantique.

Les dirigeants américains et européens ont manifesté leur ambition politique forte au soutien de la conclusion d'un tel accord: cette ambition doit s'inscrire dans la durée et se manifester dès aujourd'hui par des actions concrètes.

Le groupe de travail de haut niveau invite à rechercher des résultats ambitieux en matière d'accès au marché, de barrières réglementaires et non-tarifaires, et pour créer de nouvelles formes de coopération. L'un des secteurs où ces besoins se font le plus sentir est celui de l'automobile.

Le Parlement européen et le Conseil étudient actuellement plusieurs textes qui concernent ce secteur, comme par exemple sur les émissions de CO_2 ou les carburants. Il est donc évident que les réflexions et les négociations interinstitutionnelles devront désormais prendre en compte nos objectifs en commun avec les États-Unis.

Pour garantir que ce dialogue prenne place, il faut faciliter dès aujourd'hui l'émergence de groupes resserrés d'échanges UE-États-Unis, réunissant les représentants des autorités publiques, de l'industrie et de la société civile, qui pourraient devenir de véritables forces de propositions et des plates-formes essentielles de transmission de l'information. La Commission envisage-t-elle la mise en place de tels groupes à court terme?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(29 avril 2013)

L'Union européenne et les États-Unis devraient engager des négociations concernant un accord global sur le commerce et les investissements d'ici la fin du mois de juillet 2013. L'une des priorités sera d'aborder les questions liées à la réglementation dans plusieurs secteurs clés, comme celui de l'automobile. Dans le rapport final du groupe de travail de haut niveau sur l'emploi et la croissance, publié le 11 février 2013, les deux parties ont convenu de travailler sur des dispositions permettant de favoriser la compatibilité réglementaire dans certains secteurs de biens et de services, afin de réduire les coûts liés à des divergences inutiles en matière de réglementation.

La Commission est consciente que pour pouvoir atteindre ce but, il est important, comme l'a souligné l'Honorable Parlementaire, d'établir un processus efficace impliquant toutes les forces concernées et reposant sur des objectifs communs. Ce processus a déjà été lancé. Les industries automobiles de l'UE et des États-Unis s'y investissent et ont formulé plusieurs suggestions quant à la façon de remédier aux barrières non tarifaires dans le contexte d'éventuelles négociations commerciales. Elles ont présenté leurs propositions communes à la Commission et aux autorités réglementaires américaines lors du forum UE-USA de haut niveau pour la coopération réglementaire (qui s'est tenu du 10 au 12 avril 2013 à Washington D.C.). Le forum a aussi donné l'occasion à un groupe plus vaste d'acteurs d'exprimer leurs opinions, notamment des représentants des consommateurs et de la société civile.

Le travail des régulateurs et des experts commerciaux bénéficiera du soutien des parties prenantes et sera examiné périodiquement à haut niveau par l'UE et les États-Unis, afin que les négociations permettent d'atteindre des résultats ambitieux. Le Parlement sera tenu informé, de manière immédiate et exhaustive, à tous les stades des négociations, en particulier par l'intermédiaire de sa commission du commerce international.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002023/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Launch of EU-US trade negotiations: immediate steps to make rules and practices in the automotive industry more consistent

The United States is our most important trading partner and trade between us has a decisive bearing on patterns of world trade overall: together, we account for half of world GDP and nearly a third of world trade.

The launch of trade negotiations between the United States and the European Union is good news, therefore. A transatlantic trade and investment agreement holds out the promise of growth and many new jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

Both American and European leaders have signalled their strong support for the conclusion of this agreement, but this support must be sustained over time and be reflected in practical measures which are needed now.

The High-Level Working Group is calling for ambitious targets to be set in areas such as market access and regulatory and non-tariff barriers and for new forms of enhanced cooperation to be developed. The automotive industry is one of the sectors where these needs are being felt most keenly.

Parliament and the Council are currently considering several documents relevant to the automotive industry, dealing for example with CO_2 emissions and fuel. It is clear, therefore, that interinstitutional discussions and negotiations must from now on take account of the objectives we share with the US.

If we want a genuine dialogue, steps must be taken now to set up working groups on EU-US trade, bringing together representatives of the public authorities, industry and civil society, with very specific remits. These groups could develop into think tanks, devising proposals and channelling information. Does the Commission have any plans to set up such groups in the near future?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2013)

The EU and the United States (US) are expected to launch negotiations for a comprehensive trade and investment agreement by the end of July 2013. Tackling regulatory issues, including in a number of key sectors such as the automotive sector, will be a priority. In the Final Report of the High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth of 11 February 2013, both sides agreed to aim for provisions promoting regulatory compatibility in specific goods and services sectors, to reduce costs from unnecessary regulatory differences.

The Commission is aware of the importance signalled by the Honourable Member to establish an effective process involving all constituencies concerned, based on shared objectives, to deliver on this goal. This process is already underway. The EU and US automobile industries are engaged and have submitted a number of suggestions on how to address non-tariff barriers in the context of a possible trade negotiation. They presented their joint proposals to the Commission and US regulators during the EU-US High Level Regulatory Cooperation Forum held on 10-12 April 2013 in Washington D.C. The Forum also gave an opportunity for a larger stakeholder group to present their views, including consumer representatives and civil society.

Work by regulators and trade experts will be supported by stakeholders and periodically reviewed by the EU and the US at senior levels to achieve ambitious outcomes by the end of the negotiations. Parliament will be immediately and fully informed at all stages of the negotiations, in particular through its Committee on International Trade.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002024/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(25 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Pericolose emissioni nocive nell'aria nel Nord-est d'Italia a causa dei falò dell'Epifania, in violazione delle direttive «Aria» 2008/50/CE e «Rifiuti» 2008/98/CE

In base ad un'antica tradizione, per festeggiare l'Epifania, nella notte tra il 5 e il 6 gennaio di ogni anno in varie località delle Regioni del Veneto e del Friuli-Venezia Giulia — su iniziativa di «Pro loco», associazioni locali, gruppi parrocchiali, aziende e privati — vengono accesi all'aperto migliaia ([1]) di falò propiziatori con combustione di ramaglie e materiali eterogenei.

Questi roghi rappresentano un vero e proprio attentato alla salute della popolazione locale, a causa della produzione di ingenti quantità di polveri e prodotti della combustione.

A fronte del limite di 50 µg/mc stabilito dalla direttiva «Aria» 2008/50/CE, il 6 gennaio 2013 nei principali capoluoghi di provincia del Veneto ([2]) e del Friuli Venezia Giulia ([3]) sono stati registrati eccezionali valori medi di PM10: Venezia 313 µg/mc (microgrammi per metro cubo), Treviso 273 µg/mc con picco a 679 µg/mc, Rovigo 228 µg/mc, Padova 172 µg/mc, Verona 166 µg/mc Vicenza 148 µg/mc e Pordenone 144 µg/mc.

Oltre alle polveri (non solo PM10, ma anche PM2,5), tali falò liberano nell'aria pericolose quantità di diossina, nonché altre sostanze inquinanti, quest'ultime a causa della combustione di ingenti quantità di tralci di vite trattati con pesticidi e della grave abitudine di approfittare di tali fuochi per smaltire illecitamente ogni genere di rifiuto. L'atteggiamento degli Enti locali in merito a tale anacronistica e pericolosa usanza è da sempre connotato da approvazione e benevolenza; questo fenomeno, infatti, non è stato ancora adeguatamente regolamentato e contenuto e non sono stati predisposti puntuali controlli, nonostante le crescenti e diffusissime lamentele dei cittadini, costretti a proteggersi a gran fatica dai fumi chiudendosi nelle proprie abitazioni ([4]).

Come già segnalato nella propria interrogazione E-007561/2012, stante la continua violazione della direttiva «Aria» da parte dell'Italia, che ha portato alla recente condanna dell'Italia stessa da parte della Corte di Giustizia UE del 19.12.2012 (causa C-68/11), e in considerazione del fatto che il 2013 è l'anno dell'Aria, può la Commissione rispondere al seguente quesito:

— quali iniziative intende intraprendere per reagire a tali esorbitanti violazioni della direttiva «Aria» e della direttiva «Rifiuti» 2008/98/CE, che si ripetono con cadenza annuale e che causano gravi problemi di salute ai cittadini delle succitate province?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2013)

Con sentenza del 19 dicembre 2012 (causa C-68/11) la Corte ha rilevato che, avendo omesso di provvedere affinché le concentrazioni di PM10 nell'aria ambiente non superassero i valori limite fissati dalla normativa dell'Unione europea sulla qualità dell'aria, la Repubblica italiana è venuta meno agli obblighi ad essa incombenti. La sentenza riguarda 55 zone e agglomerati, tra cui diverse zone nel nord-est dell'Italia cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare nella sua interrogazione. Se, sulla base dell'ultima relazione disponibile, i valori si rivelassero ancora superiori ai limiti, la Commissione intende adottare ulteriori provvedimenti, come annunciato nel comunicato stampa del 24 gennaio 2013 ([5]).

Per quanto riguarda la direttiva 2008/98/CE ([6]) sui rifiuti, la Commissione ritiene che eventuali conseguenze nocive dovute alla presunta combustione illegale dei rifiuti siano affrontate nel quadro della normativa UE sulla qualità dell'aria e che, pertanto, non vi sia necessità di ulteriori azioni in tal senso.

([1]) Addirittura 145 falò nel solo comune di Vittorio Veneto (TV) che ne ha effettuato la ricognizione.
([2]) Vedere dati ARPAV (Agenzia regionale per la prevenzione e protezione ambientale del Veneto): http://goo.gl/p6Os7.
([3]) Vedere dati ARPA FVG (Agenzia regionale per la protezione dell'ambiente del Friuli-Venezia Giulia): http://goo.gl/igZ7D.
([4]) Tali proteste sono state inoltrate al Corpo nazionale dei Vigili del Fuoco e anche allo scrivente Deputato.
([5]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-47_en.htm
([6]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

Cionondimeno, la Commissione continua a sorvegliare attentamente gli sforzi attualmente prodigati dalle autorità italiane al fine di rispettare la sentenza della Corte del 26 aprile 2007 (C-135/05) per inadempimento della normativa dell'Unione europea relativa allo smaltimento sicuro dei rifiuti e all'identificazione e alla registrazione degli scarichi contenenti rifiuti pericolosi. Le autorità italiane hanno riferito regolarmente in merito ai progressi compiuti nella bonifica del sito della discarica cui la sentenza si riferisce.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002024/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Hazardous and harmful emissions into the air of north-eastern Italy due to Epiphany bonfires, breaching Directives 2008/50/EC on air quality and 2008/98/EC on waste

On the basis of a long-standing tradition, during the night between 5 and 6 January each year, Epiphany is celebrated by lighting thousands ([1]) of propitiatory bonfires in the open air in various places in the Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia regions, at the initiative of Pro Loco, local associations, parish groups, businesses and private individuals, and branches and other miscellaneous materials are burned on them.

These fires are a real threat to the health of local people, because they produce huge quantities of particulates and combustion products.

Whereas Directive 2008/50/EC on air quality sets a limit of 50 µg/mc, on 6 January 2013 exceptionally high mean values of PM10s were registered in the main provincial towns in Veneto ([2]) and Friuli Venezia Giulia ([3]): Venice 313 µg/mc (micrograms per cubic metre), Treviso 273 µg/mc with a peak of 679 µg/mc, Rovigo 228 µg/mc, Padua 172 µg/mc, Verona 166 µg/mc, Vicenza 148 µg/mc and Pordenone 144 µg/mc.

In addition to particulates (not only PM10s but also PM2.5s), such bonfires release into the air dangerous quantities of dioxins, as well as other toxic substances, the latter as a result of the combustion of huge quantities of vine branches which have been treated with pesticides and the highly undesirable custom of taking advantage of such fires to dispose illicitly of all kinds of waste. The attitude of local authorities to this anachronistic and hazardous custom has always been one of approval and benevolence; this phenomenon has not yet been adequately regulated and brought under control, and ad hoc checks have not been organised, despite the growing and very widespread complaints from members of the public, who are forced to protect themselves with great difficulty against the smoke by shutting themselves inside their homes ([4]).

I have already raised the issue of air quality in my Question E-007561/2012. In view of the ongoing breaches by Italy of the directive on air quality, which led to the recent finding against Italy by the Court of Justice of the EU on 19 December 2012 (Case C-68/11), and bearing in mind that 2013 is the Year of Air:

— what steps will the Commission take in response to these serious breaches of the directive on air quality and of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, which recur every year, causing serious health problems to people living in the above provinces?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

In its judgment of 19 December 2012 (Case C-68/11) the Court found that, by failing to ensure that concentrations of PM10 in ambient air did not exceed the limit values set in the EU legislation on air quality, the Italian Republic had failed to fulfil its obligations. The ruling concerns 55 zones and agglomerations including several zones in North-Eastern Italy, to which the Honourable Member refers in his question. Were limit values still being exceeded according to the latest available report, the Commission intends to take further steps as announced in it press release of 24 January 2013 ([5]).

As regards Directive 2008/98/EC ([6]) on waste, the Commission understands that any harmful consequences due to the alleged illegal burning of waste are being addressed under the EU air quality legislation and therefor sees no grounds for further action.

([1]) No fewer than 145 bonfires in the commune of Vittorio Veneto (Treviso Province) alone, which has monitored them.
([2]) Cf. data from ARPAV (Veneto Regional Environmental Protection Agency): http://goo.gl/p6Os7.
([3]) Cf. data from ARPA FVG (Friuli-Venezia Giulia Regional Environmental Protection Agency): http://goo.gl/igZ7D.
([4]) These protests were forwarded to the National Fire Service Department and also to the tabler of this question.
([5]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-47_en.htm
([6]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

Nevertheless the Commission continues to monitor closely the ongoing efforts of the Italian authorities to comply with the Court's ruling of 26 April 2007 (C-135/05) in respect of non-compliance with EU legislation concerning the safe disposal of waste and the identification and registration of discharges containing hazardous waste. The Italian authorities have been reporting regularly on progress in cleaning up the landfill sited to which the ruling relates.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002025/13
alla Commissione
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(25 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Frodi alimentari e tutela del consumatore

La decisione della Nestlè di ritirare dagli scaffali dei supermercati europei le confezioni di ravioli e tortellini di manzo dopo il ritrovamento di tracce di Dna di carne di cavallo (pari all'1 %) ha scatenato la dura reazione delle associazioni di categoria e dei consumatori.

I cittadini sono giustamente preoccupati e si domandano se possono ancora fidarsi di quanto riportato sulle etichette dei cibi che acquistano quotidianamente. I cittadini devono poter conoscere ciò che va sulle loro tavole. La fiducia dei consumatori è un patrimonio che l'Europa non può permettersi di perdere, essi devono essere tutelati soprattutto in un periodo di crisi economica durante il quale sono costretti a risparmiare sull'alimentazione.

Un'indagine Coldiretti/SWG rivela che il 60 % dei cittadini italiani considera inoltre più gravi le frodi alimentari rispetto a quelle fiscali e agli scandali finanziari e chiede un inasprimento delle pene.

Alla luce di questa situazione può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali misure intende adottare per migliorare la trasparenza dell'informazione al consumatore per evitare nuovi fenomeni di frode?

2. quali misure intende adottare per rendere più efficace il sistema di controllo delle regole sull'etichettatura e la tracciabilità dei prodotti destinati ad uso alimentare?

3. per evitare che episodi simili si ripetano, intende accompagnare a tali misure interventi normativi come l'obbligo di indicare in etichetta le provenienza di tutti i tipi di alimenti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2013)

A livello unionale esiste già un sistema ben articolato di regole in materia di sicurezza alimentare, ([1]) comprese disposizioni quanto alle responsabilità degli operatori del settore alimentare e alla tracciabilità degli alimenti di origine animale. ([2]) È grazie a questo sistema che l'origine e l'entità delle frodi in questione sono state rapidamente identificate.

È possibile ovviare alle pratiche ingannevoli assicurando un'adeguata applicazione della legislazione della UE, per l'essenziale tramite controlli ufficiali regolari condotti dalle autorità nazionali competenti sulla base di un'appropriata analisi del rischio nonché tramite l'imposizione di sanzioni efficaci e dissuasive conformemente al regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 sui controlli ufficiali. ([3])

La Commissione coordina attivamente a livello sia politico che tecnico le indagini in corso negli Stati membri interessati. Sulla base del regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 la Commissione ha adottato di recente una raccomandazione ([4]) che sollecita controlli su scala unionale a livello della vendita al dettaglio per identificare l'entità delle prassi fraudolente, come ad esempio la presenza o meno di carni bovine, e individuare eventuali residui di fenilbutazone, un medicinale veterinario il cui uso è consentito soltanto negli animali non destinati alla produzione alimentare. Una sintesi di tutti i risultati sarà disponibile entro l'aprile 2013.

L'imminente proposta della Commissione sui controlli ufficiali mira anche a rafforzare ulteriormente il sistema esistente, comprese le disposizioni in tema di sanzioni.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 28 gennaio 2002, che stabilisce i principi e i requisiti generali della legislazione alimentare, istituisce l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare e fissa procedure nel campo della sicurezza alimentare, GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002, pag. 1.

([2]) Regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 931/2011 della Commissione, del 19 settembre 2011, relativo ai requisiti di rintracciabilità fissati dal regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio per gli alimenti di origine animale, GU L 242 del 20.9.2011, pag. 2.

([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo ai controlli ufficiali intesi a verificare la conformità alla normativa in materia di mangimi e di alimenti e alle norme sulla salute e sul benessere degli animali, GU L 165 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1.

([4]) Raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 febbraio 2013, relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo volto a stabilire la prevalenza di pratiche fraudolente nella commercializzazione di determinati prodotti alimentari (2013/99/UE), GU L 48 del 21.2.2013, pag. 28.

Un'etichettatura d'origine obbligatoria non è uno strumento atto a prevenire le frodi da parte di operatori malintenzionati. Lo scandalo attuale si sarebbe verificato anche se l'etichettatura d'origine fosse stata obbligatoria per i prodotti alimentari in questione. Tuttavia, nel contesto del regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori ([5]), sono previste diverse azioni di follow-up in tema di etichettatura d'origine.

([5]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004 della Commissione, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 18. Il regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 diventa applicativo il 13 dicembre 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002025/13
to the Commission
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Food fraud and consumer protection

Trade associations and consumers have reacted strongly to Nestlé's decision to withdraw pre-packaged beef ravioli and tortellini meals from European supermarkets after they were found to contain traces of horse DNA (1% horsemeat).

The public are rightly concerned and wonder whether they can still believe what they read on the labels of the foodstuffs they purchase in their everyday lives. They have to be able to find out what is in the food they are putting on their tables. Consumer confidence is an asset that Europe cannot afford to lose, and special protection must be afforded to consumers in a period of economic crisis in which they are having to economise on food.

A survey conducted by Coldiretti/SWG has shown that 60% of Italians feel food fraud to be more serious than tax fraud and financial scandals, and would like severer penalties to be applied to it.

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

1. What measures it plans to adopt to improve the transparency of consumer information in order to avoid further cases of food fraud?

2. What measures it plans to adopt to increase the efficiency of the checks on the rules on the labelling and traceability of products intended for use in foodstuffs?

3. Whether, in order to avoid a repeat of these events, it plans to introduce new rules to accompany these measures, such as the requirement that food labels must show the origins of all foodstuffs?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

A comprehensive system of food safety rules is already in place at Union level ([1]), including provisions on responsibilities of food business operators and traceability requirements for foods of animal origin ([2]). It is because of this system that the origin and the extent of the fraudulent actions in question were quickly identified.

Deceptive practices can be eliminated by appropriate enforcement of EU legislation mainly by means of regular official controls by national competent authorities based on appropriate risk analysis and the imposition of effective dissuasive sanctions, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls ([3]).

The Commission is actively coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned both on a political and a technical level. On the basis of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, the Commission recently adopted a recommendation ([4]) which calls for EU-wide controls at retail level to identify the scale of the fraudulent practices as to the presence of beef as well as to detect possible residues of phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug, whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013.

The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will also aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1.

([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 of 19 September 2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin, OJ L 242, 20.9.2011, p. 2.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

([4]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

Mandatory origin labelling is not a tool to prevent fraud by malicious operators. The present scandal could have occurred even if origin labelling was mandatory for the foods in question. However, in the context of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, ([5]) a number of follow-up actions on the issue of origin labelling are foreseen.

([5]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18. Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 enters into application on 13 December 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002026/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(25 februari 2013)

Betreft: Uniforme regelgeving rond gezonde vloerbekleding

Nadat Duitsland (Bauregelliste B Teil 1, Ausgabe 2012/1) en Frankrijk (Décret n° 2011-321 du 23.3.2011 relatif à l'étiquetage des produits de construction ou de revêtement de mur ou de sol et des peintures et vernis sur leurs émissions de polluants volatils) strenge wettelijke normen hebben uitgevaardigd waaraan de vloerbekleding moet voldoen, bekijkt nu ook de Belgische overheid welke wettelijke initiatieven zij kan nemen (Ontwerp koninklijk besluit tot vaststelling van de drempelniveaus voor de emissies naar het binnenmilieu van bouwproducten voor bepaalde beoogde gebruiken). De Europese sector is voorstander van zulke reglementering. De sector blijft trouwens ruim onder de strenge normen die worden opgelegd.

Voor (inter)nationale producenten van vloerbekledingen is de interne markt een belangrijke afzetmarkt. Het lijkt daarom verstandig dat de normering op Europees niveau vastgelegd wordt. De Commissie heeft het mandaat met betrekking tot het CE-merk voor vloerbekledingen (EN 14041) aangepast met identieke voorwaarden, maar deze zijn nog niet doorgevoerd.

Daarom volgende vragen:

1. Zijn er binnen de Commissie plannen om uniforme normen op te leggen voor gezonde vloerbekleding?

2. Zo ja, binnen welke termijn zal dit gerealiseerd worden?

3. Zo neen, zullen andere maatregelen overwogen worden en welke?

4. Tot er een Europese regeling is voor de normen, welke stappen zal de Commissie nemen om de verscheidenheid tussen nationale wetgevingen te beperken zodat invoeren naar EU-landen niet geblokkeerd wordt door nationale beperkingen?

4. Welke stappen zullen genomen worden om de strengheid van de normen te bepalen?

5. Zullen er controles gekoppeld worden aan het opleggen van deze normen? Zo ja, hoe zal dit concreet in zijn werk gaan?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(30 april 2013)

1-2. De Commissie heeft momenteel geen plannen voor EU-brede emissienormen voor vloerbedekkingen.

3. De Commissie heeft een groep van deskundigen bijeengebracht, die de lidstaten en de belanghebbenden vertegenwoordigt inzake de luchtkwaliteit in gesloten ruimten. De groep deskundigen zoekt naar zowel wetgevende als niet-wetgevende oplossingen om chronische ademhalingsziekten en vormen van kanker ten gevolge van milieuvervuiling binnenshuis te verminderen. De activiteiten van de groep deskundigen variëren van bijstellingen van het beleid van de lidstaten tot de uitwisseling van beste praktijken en het delen van de resultaten van EU-projecten inzake luchtkwaliteit in gesloten ruimten ([1]).

4. In het kader van de bouwproductenverordening ([2]) ontwikkelt de Europese normalisatieorganisatie CEN geharmoniseerde productnormen, ook voor vloerbedekkingen. Aan de hand van nieuwe mandaten die alle gemelde nationale voorschriften betreffende de uitstoot van gevaarlijke stoffen in de lucht in gesloten ruimten bestrijken, nemen de technische comités binnen het CEN in alle toepasselijke normen verwijzingen op naar Europese testmethoden om daarmee de technische belemmeringen voor de handel in bouwproducten weg te nemen.

5. De binnen het CEN ontwikkelde testmethoden zijn in overeenstemming met de beproefde CEN-regels, die de kwaliteit van zijn normen waarborgen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/expert_group/index_en.htm
([2]) Nr. 305/2011.

6. In de bouwproductenrichtlijn ([3]) zijn reeds duidelijke regels vastgesteld om betrouwbare productverklaringen te waarborgen (met inbegrip van controle door derden waar dat nodig wordt geacht) en de regels die zijn vastgelegd in de bouwproductenverordening, die de richtlijn op 1 juli 2013 zal vervangen, zijn nog preciezer en strenger.

([3]) 89/106/EEG.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002026/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Uniform regulations concerning healthy floor coverings

Now that Germany (Bauregelliste B Teil 1, Ausgabe 2012/1) and France (Décret n° 2011-321 du 23.3.2011 relatif à l'étiquetage des produits de construction ou de revêtement de mur ou de sol et des peintures et vernis sur leurs émissions de polluants volatils) have adopted strict statutory standards which floor coverings must comply with, the Belgian authorities are also considering what legislative initiatives they can take (Proposal for a Royal Decree establishing ceilings on emissions into the indoor environment from construction products for certain intended uses). The European sector advocates such regulation. However, that sector continues to fall well short of the strict standards which are being imposed.

For national and international producers of floor coverings, the internal market is an important sales market. It therefore seems sensible for standards to be set at European level. The Commission has adapted the mandate with regard to the CE mark for floor coverings (EN 14041) with identical conditions, but they have not yet been implemented.

1. Do any plans exist within the Commission for imposing uniform standards for healthy floor coverings?

2. If so, within what time frame will they be carried out?

3. If not, will other measures be considered, and what?

4. Until there is European regulation of these standards, what steps will the Commission take to limit the differences between national laws so that imports into EU Member States are not blocked by national restrictions?

4. What steps will be taken to ascertain the strictness of the standards?

5. Will the imposition of these standards be accompanied by monitoring? If so, what form will this take, precisely?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

1-2. The Commission does not currently have plans for EU wide standards regarding emissions from floor coverings.

3. The Commission is running a Member States' and stakeholders' expert group on indoor air quality which seeks to reduce chronic respiratory diseases and cancer due to indoor environmental pollutants by looking at both legislative and non-legislative solutions. The expert group activities range from Member States' policy updates to exchange of best practice and sharing results from EU projects on indoor air quality ([1]).

4. In the framework of the Construction Products Regulation ([2]) harmonised product standards are developed by the European Standardisation Organisation CEN, including for floor coverings. Based on new mandates covering all notified national requirements regarding the emissions of dangerous substances into indoor air, the Technical Committees in CEN are including references to European test methods in all relevant standards, and therefore removing technical barriers to trade for construction products.

5. The test methods developed in CEN are following the well-established CEN rules in ensuring the robustness of its standards.

6. While the Construction Products Directive ([3]) has already established clear rules to ensure reliable product declarations (including third party control wherever deemed necessary) the Construction Products Regulation which will replace the directive on 1 July 2013 has set even more precise and stringent rules.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/expert_group/index_en.htm
([2]) No 305/2011.
([3]) No 89/106/EEC.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002027/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(25 februari 2013)

Betreft: Registratieplicht zonnepanelen

Onlangs stelde de Commissie voor dat alle zonnepanelen die uit China komen verplicht geregistreerd moeten worden door de douane. Dit besluit hangt samen met de antidumpingcampagne die de Europese Unie op dit moment voert rondom (Chinese) zonnepanelen. Hierdoor zouden volgens berichten van Reuters afnemers van Chinese zonnepanelen belast worden, en mogelijk ook met terugwerkende kracht belasting moeten betalen op zonnepanelen, die kan oplopen tot 60 % of hoger. De aankondiging en berichtgevingen hebben reeds tot grote onzekerheid op de markt voor zonnepanelen geleid.

Daarnaast kan de maatregel volgens onderzoek van het bondgenootschap voor betaalbare zonne-energie (AFASE) tot fors banenverlies leiden: bij een heffing van 60 % zullen in de EU 242 000 banen verloren gaan.

1. Is de Commissie voornemens de registratieplicht te laten volgen door een heffing op zonnepanelen?

2. Is het waar dat deze heffing ook met terugwerkende kracht ingevoerd zal worden? Kan de Commissie garanderen dat mensen die eerder in zonnepanelen geïnvesteerd hebben niet getroffen worden?

3. Erkent de Commissie dat de maatregel een protectionistische aard heeft? Waarom wel/niet? Hoe gaat de Commissie voorkomen dat dit een precedent schept voor meer protectionisme?

4. Erkent de Commissie dat de maatregelen leiden tot banenverlies? Hoe zal dit verlies opgevangen worden?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(26 april 2013)

De Commissie heeft inderdaad, bij Verordening 182/2013 van 1 maart 2013 ([1]) een registratieplicht vastgesteld voor de invoer van zonnepanelen (cellen en wafers) uit China, zulks met ingang van 5 maart 2013. De registratie heeft als doel de nationale douane-autoriteiten in de EU in staat te stellen het invoervolume van deze producten op de voet te volgen in verband met de mogelijke dreiging van massale invoer en/of opslag, voorafgaand aan de mogelijke instelling van rechten. Deze registratie voldoet aan de regels van de Wereldhandelsorganisatie. In sommige derde landen is registratie een automatisch onderdeel van alle onderzoeken. De EU-regelgeving inzake onderzoeken naar anti-dumping en anti-subsidie voorziet in de mogelijkheid van registratie en het met terugwerkende kracht instellen van rechten tot maximaal 90 dagen voorafgaand aan de voorlopige maatregelen. Deze laatste zouden rond 6 juni 2013 kunnen worden ingesteld. Of enige rechten met terugwerkende kracht worden ingesteld, zal worden beslist in het definitieve stadium van het onderzoek; indien definitieve maatregelen worden ingesteld, zou dat op 6 december 2013 gebeuren. In dit stadium van de procedure kan de Commissie nog niet beoordelen of er rechten worden ingesteld en op welk niveau/in welke mate, noch of er met terugwerkende kracht rechten zullen worden ingesteld.

Het effect van mogelijke maatregelen (waaronder mogelijk banenverlies) hoger in de bedrijfskolom (voornamelijk wie zonnepanelen installeert) en lager in de bedrijfskolom (producenten van apparatuur en grondstoffen) alsmede op de producenten van zonnepanelen in de Unie wordt momenteel geanalyseerd op basis van onder andere de door deze partijen verstrekte informatie.

([1]) Verordening (EU) nr. 182/2013 van de Commissie van 1 maart 2013 tot onderwerping van de invoer van fotovoltaïsche modules van kristallijn silicium en de belangrijkste componenten daarvan (cellen en wafers) van oorsprong uit of verzonden uit de Volksrepubliek China aan registratie, PB L 61 van 5.3.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002027/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Registration requirement for solar panels

The Commission recently proposed that all solar panels originating in China should be subject to compulsory registration by the customs authorities. This decision was prompted by the antidumping campaign which the European Union is currently carrying out with regard to solar panels from China. As a result, according to reports by Reuters, purchasers of Chinese solar panels would be subject to a levy, and would possibly even have to pay the levy retrospectively, the amount being up to 60% or even more. The announcement and reports have already caused serious uncertainty on the solar panel market.

In addition, research by the Alliance for Affordable Solar Energy (AFASE) shows that the measure could cause substantial job losses: with a 60% levy, 242 000 jobs would be lost in the EU.

1. Does the Commission intend to follow up the registration requirement with a levy on solar panels?

2. Is it true that this levy will also be introduced retrospectively? Can the Commission guarantee that people who have previously invested in solar panels will not be affected?

3. Does the Commission acknowledge that the measure is of a protectionist nature? Why/why not? How will the Commission ensure that this does not set a precedent for more protectionism?

4. Does the Commission acknowledge that the measures will lead to job losses? How will these losses be compensated?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

Through Commission Regulation 182/2013 of 1 March 2013 ([1]), the Commission has indeed introduced the registration of imports of solar panels, cells and wafers from China as of 5 March 2013. Registration serves to ensure that national customs in the EU keep track of the volumes of such imported products and deals with a plausible threat of massive imports and/or stockpiling prior to the possible imposition of duties. Registration is in line with the World Trade Organisation rules. In fact in some third countries registration is automatic in all investigations. EU legislation which regulates anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations foresees the possibility of registration and the retroactive application of duties up to 90 days before provisional measures. The latter might be imposed around 6 June 2013. Whether to apply any duty retroactively will be decided at the definitive stage of the investigations, should definitive measures be imposed, by 6 December 2013. At this stage of the proceedings, the Commission cannot anticipate whether duties will be imposed and at which level, or whether duties will indeed be applied retroactively.

The impact of possible measures (including possible job losses) on the downstream (mainly solar panels installers) and upstream (machinery and raw material producers) markets as well as on the Union producers of solar panels is currently being analysed based, *inter alia*, on the information submitted by these parties.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 182/2013 of 1 March 2013 making imports of crystalline silicon photovoltaic modules and key components (i.e. cells and wafers) originating in or consigned from the People's Republic of China subject to registration, OJ L 61, 5.3.2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-002028/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Νέο κούρεμα του Ελληνικού χρέους

Νέο «κούρεμα» του ελληνικού χρέους το 2014, μόλις υπάρξουν τα πρώτα σημάδια ανάπτυξης στην οικονομία, προτείνει ο Επίτροπος της ΕΕ για την Ενέργεια, Günther Oettinger, σε συνέντευξη που παραχώρησε στην Ελληνική κρατική τηλεόραση ΝΕΤ.

Πιο συγκεκριμένα δήλωσε: «Πιστεύω ότι μια χώρα με μια οικονομία σαν αυτή της Ελλάδας δεν μπορεί να δεχτεί και δεν μπορεί να διαχειριστεί περισσότερο από το 100% του χρέους σε σχέση με το ΑΕΠ και θα πρέπει να υπάρξουν κουρέματα το 2014».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν συμμερίζεται την άποψη που εξέφρασε ο Επίτροπος Oettinger και ποια είναι η θέση της σχετικά με αυτή την εκτίμηση.

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Ευρωομάδα έχει ήδη αναλάβει ουσιαστική δράση ώστε το χρέος της Ελλάδος να καταστεί βιώσιμο. Στις 27 Νοεμβρίου 2012, η Ευρωομάδα συμφώνησε σε ένα ευρύ φάσμα πρωτοβουλιών για τη διασφάλιση μιας βιώσιμης πορείας του χρέους. Στις πρωτοβουλίες αυτές περιλαμβάνεται η μείωση, κατά 100 μονάδες βάσης, του επιτοκίου που εφαρμόζεται στην Ελλάδα για τα δάνεια που χορηγήθηκαν στο πλαίσιο της δανειακής διευκόλυνσης για την Ελλάδα (ΔΔΕ), η μείωση, κατά 10 μονάδες βάσης, του τέλους που επιβάλλεται σε δάνεια του ΕΤΧΣ, η παράταση των προθεσμιών λήξης των διμερών δανείων και των δανείων του ΕΤΧΣ, η αναστολή της καταβολής των τόκων για τα δάνεια του ΕΤΧΣ και η μεταφορά, στην Ελλάδα, εισοδήματος που συγκεντρώνεται σε εθνικές κεντρικές τράπεζες βάσει του προγράμματος ΠΑΑ. Επιπλέον, τα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ δήλωσαν ότι θα εξετάσουν τη δυνατότητα για περαιτέρω μέτρα και βοήθεια, εάν κριθεί αναγκαίο, για την επίτευξη περαιτέρω αξιόπιστης και διατηρήσιμης μείωσης του ελληνικού δείκτη χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ, όταν η Ελλάδα επιτύχει ετήσιο πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα.

Ωστόσο, η περαιτέρω βοήθεια θα εξαρτηθεί από την πλήρη εφαρμογή όλων των όρων που περιέχονται στο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής και που αποσκοπούν στη διασφάλιση ότι η Ελλάδα θα επιτύχει δείκτη του χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ στο 124% του ΑΕΠ ως το 2020 και ότι θα μειώσει τον δείκτη του χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ σημαντικά κάτω από το ποσοστό 110% ως το 2022.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002028/13
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Further Greek debt 'haircut'

In an interview with the Greek state television channel NET, Günther Oettinger, the EU Energy Commissioner, proposed that there should be a further Greek debt 'haircut' in 2014, as soon as the first shoots of growth appeared in the economy.

More specifically, he said that he believed that a country with an economy like that of Greece could not accept or manage a debt ratio of more than 100% in relation to GDP and there should therefore be a debt 'haircut' in 2014.

Does the Commission share the view expressed by Commissioner Oettinger and what is its position on his assessment of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The Eurogroup has already taken substantive action to sustainably reduce Greece's debt burden. On 27 November 2012 the Eurogroup agreed on a range of initiatives to ensure a sustainable debt trajectory. These initiatives included a lowering by 100 bps of the interest rate charged on the Greek Loan Facility (GLF), a lowering by 10 bps of the fee charged on EFSF loans, an extension of the maturities of bilateral and EFSF loans, a deferral of EFSF interest payments and the transfer to Greece of income accruing to national central banks under the SMP programme. Moreover, the euro area Member States declared that they will consider further measures and assistance, if necessary for achieving a further credible and sustainable reduction in the Greek debt-to GDP ratio, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus.

Further assistance, however, will depend on full implementation of all conditions contained in the economic adjustment programme aimed at ensuring that Greece will reach a debt-to-GDP ratio of 124% of GDP in 2020, and a debt-to-GDP ratio substantially lower than 110% in 2022.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-002029/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κατώτατος μισθός στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με το νόμο 4093 ([1]) που αφορά στην έγκριση του μεσοπρόθεσμου πλαισίου δημοσιονομικής πολιτικής, ότι ο κατώτατος μεικτός μισθός στην Ελλάδα για τους υπαλλήλους άνω των 25 ετών ορίζεται στο ποσό των 586,08 ευρώ, και για τους υπαλλήλους μικρότερης ηλικίας στο ποσό των 510,95 ευρώ, όπου βάσει ερμηνευτικής εγκυκλίου ([2]) οι νέοι μισθοί είχαν αναδρομική ισχύ από την 14η Φεβρουαρίου 2012. Ο ίδιος νόμος προβλέπει την αναθεώρηση του ύψους του κατώτατου μισθού το 2014, με σκοπό τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας. Την ίδια στιγμή, παρουσιάζοντας σχετικά στοιχεία ([3]) με ημερομηνία επικαιροποίησης την 7.2.2013, η Eurostat εμφανίζει παραδόξως για την Ελλάδα το ποσό των 876,62 ευρώ ως μεικτό κατώτατο μισθό, με έτος αναφοράς το 2012. Ωστόσο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει επικαιροποιημένα στοιχεία σχετικά με το ύψος των μεικτών κατώτατων μισθών στην ΕΕ; Αν ναι, ποιο είναι το επίπεδο κατάταξης των χωρών-μελών; Ποια η θέση της Ελλάδας και πόσο ανταγωνιστικός κρίνεται ο ελληνικός κατώτατος μισθός συγκριτικά με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη-μέλη της ευρωζώνης στην ΕΕ των 27; Έχει συμβάλλει στους στόχους ανταγωνιστικότητας;

2. Ως προς τον καθαρό κατώτατο μισθό, τι στοιχεία διαθέτει και σε ποια θέση κατατάσσεται η Ελλάδα συγκριτικά με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη-μέλη;

3. Δεδομένου ότι το κόστος ζωής στην Ελλάδα παρέμενε μάλλον υψηλό σε σχέση με τα εισοδήματα του πληθυσμού ([4]) το 2012 και λαμβάνοντας πάντοτε υπόψη την ανάγκη τόνωσης της απασχόλησης και της ανταγωνιστικότητας αλλά και των βασικών προτύπων διαβίωσης του εργατικού δυναμικού, τι είδους αναθεώρηση του ύψους του κατώτατου μισθού προβλέπει και προς ποια κατεύθυνση;

4. Πιστεύει ότι υπάρχουν περιθώρια μείωσης του μισθού αυτού για την ελληνική κοινωνία και οικονομία, αλλά και για το πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής και ανάκαμψης, με δεδομένο ότι ο «χαμηλός» μισθός δεν αποτελεί το βασικό όπλο ανάπτυξης και έλξης επενδύσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Eurostat δημοσιεύει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τις κατώτατες αποδοχές των κρατών μελών (ΚΜ) της ΕΕ, στα οποία οι κατώτατες εθνικές αποδοχές επιβάλλονται από τη νομοθεσία ή από συλλογική σύμβαση και εφαρμόζονται στο σύνολο της οικονομίας ([5]). Τα στοιχεία των ακαθάριστων μηνιαίων κατώτατων αποδοχών παρουσιάζονται εδώ με τρεις τρόπους: σε ευρώ, σε μονάδες αγοραστικής δύναμης (ΜΑΔ) και ως αναλογία επί των μέσων μηνιαίων αποδοχών. Από στοιχεία του Ιανουαρίου του 2013 προκύπτει ότι σε τιμές εκφραζόμενες σε ευρώ ή σε ΜΑΔ, η Ελλάδα βρίσκεται στο μέσον των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ, κοντά στην Ισπανία. Τα τελευταία στοιχεία για τον κατώτατο μισθό ως ποσοστό του μέσου όρου των αποδοχών είναι από το 2011, και η Ελλάδα κατείχε ένα ποσοστό περίπου στο 50% — το υψηλότερο στην ΕΕ.

Στο πλαίσιο των όρων για το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής που συμφωνήθηκε με την ΕΕ και το ΔΝΤ, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση δεσμεύτηκε να προβεί σε επανεξέταση του πλαισίου των κατώτατων αποδοχών ως τον Μάρτιο του 2014 με σκοπό, ενδεχομένως, τη βελτίωση της απλότητας και αποτελεσματικότητας του. Στόχος είναι να αναλυθεί το ζήτημα, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη την οικονομική κατάσταση και την κατάσταση της αγοράς εργασίας που παρατηρήθηκαν ως το χρονικό αυτό σημείο, και οι προοπτικές για το μέλλον, με στόχο τη διευκόλυνση της δημιουργίας θέσεων απασχόλησης έτσι ώστε να αντιμετωπιστούν τα πολύ υψηλά επίπεδα ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα. Οι κοινωνικοί εταίροι θα διαδραματίσουν σημαντικό ρόλο στην εν λόγω επανεξέταση. Δεν υπάρχει προειλημμένη απόφαση σχετικά με το αποτέλεσμα της επανεξέτασης αυτής. Η Επιτροπή είναι της άποψης ότι επιβάλλεται όντως να πραγματοποιηθεί ανάλογη εμπεριστατωμένη ανάλυση πριν τη λήψη οποιασδήποτε απόφασης.

([1]) http://goo.gl/YjwVD
([2]) http://www.slideshare.net/taxalia/2012-11983989
([3]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00155&plugin=1
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?lang=el&acro=living&catId=8700&parentId=7812&countryId=GR&langChanged=true
([5]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/earnings/database και http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Minimum_wage_statistics/el

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002029/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: The minimum wage in Greece

Law No 4093 ([1]) on the adoption of the medium-term fiscal policy framework sets the gross minimum wage in Greece for employees over 25 years of age at EUR 586.08 and for younger employees at EUR 510.95. A subsequent interpretative circular ([2]) ruled that these new wage levels should apply retrospectively from 14 February 2012. The same law provides for a review of the level of the minimum wage in 2014, with the aim of improving competitiveness. At the same time, Eurostat data ([3]), updated to 7 February 2013, curiously gives the figure of EUR 876.62 as the gross minimum wage for Greece, with 2012 as the year of reference.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. Does it have any updated information on the gross minimum wage in the EU? If so, how are Member States ranked? What position does Greece occupy and how competitive is the Greek minimum wage compared to that of other Eurozone Member States in EU-27? Has it contributed to the objectives of competitiveness?

2. As for the net minimum wage, what information does it have and what position does Greece occupy relative to other Member States?

3. Since the cost of living in Greece remained relatively high compared to the income of the population ([4]) in 2012, and bearing in mind the need to stimulate employment and competitiveness, but also to raise the basic standard of living of the workforce, what kind of review of the minimum wage is in the offing and is it likely to be revised upwards or downwards?

4. Does it believe that there is any scope in Greek society and the Greek economy, but also in the adjustment and recovery programme, for reducing the minimum wage, given that 'low' wages not the key means of promoting growth and attracting investments?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

Eurostat publishes data on minimum wages for the EU Member States (MS) where there is a nationwide minimum wage enforced by law or by collective agreement applicable to the entire economy ([5]). The gross monthly minimum wage data are presented therein in three ways: in euro terms; in purchasing power standards (PPS); and, as a proportion of average monthly earnings. Data for January 2013 show that in euro terms or of PPS, Greece is in the middle of the EU MS, close to Spain. The latest data for the minimum wage as a share of the average earnings are from 2011, and Greece had a figure at around 50% the highest in the EU.

As part of the conditionality associated to the economic adjustment programme agreed with the EU and the IMF, the Greek Government has committed to carry out a review of the minimum wage framework by March 2014 with a view to possibly improve its simplicity and effectiveness. The objective is to analyse the issue taking into account the economic and labour market situation observed up to that moment and the prospects going forward, in order to favour employment creation to help Greece overcoming the very high levels of unemployment. Social partners have a role to play in this review. There is no pre-judgment on the outcome of that review and the Commission's position is that such a solid analysis should indeed precede any decision.

([1]) http://goo.gl/YjwVD
([2]) http://www.slideshare.net/taxalia/2012-11983989
([3]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00155&plugin=1
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?lang=el&acro=living&catId=8700&parentId=7812&countryId=GR&langChanged=true
([5]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/earnings/database
and http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Minimum_wage_statistics

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-002030/13
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(25 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Aflatossine nel mais

L'andamento climatico della scorsa estate, caratterizzato da temperature molto elevate per un lungo periodo e siccità prolungata fino a 90 giorni, ha presentato caratteristiche particolarmente favorevoli per una forte contaminazione da aflatossine (tossine prodotte da un fungo, Aspergillus) sul mais coltivato in pianura padana, Veneto ed Emilia in particolare. La produzione di mais, in queste aree, è stata fortemente ridotta e una parte importante di questa presenta tenori di aflatossine superiore al limite di 0,02 mg/Kg previsto, per le materie prime per mangimi, dal regolamento (UE) n. 574/2011.

Pur considerando essenziali i limiti imposti dalla normativa dell'UE, data la pericolosità di tali tossine, sostanze «sicuramente cancerogene» nel caso di aflatossina B1 presente nella granella di mais e di «probabilmente cancerogene» nel caso di M1, tossina di elaborazione dalla B1 nel fegato animale e presente nel latte prodotto da animali cui sia stato somministrato mangime contaminato, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se ha attivato studi di valutazione degli eventuali residui e il tenore di tossicità di tale tossina nelle carni di bovini, suini e polli adulti;

2. se è possibile richiedere all'EFSA una valutazione di impatto riguardo alla possibilità d'innalzare i limiti stabiliti dall'UE sulle aflatossine presenti nel mais destinato all'alimentazione animale, limitatamente alle specie da carne summenzionate?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(5 aprile 2013)

La Commissione non ha avviato di recente alcuno studio per valutare il livello di carry-over nella carne di bovini, suini e polli adulti dell'aflatossina B1 presente nei mangimi. Tuttavia è risaputo che il carry-over nella carne e altri alimenti di origine animale dell'aflatossina B1 presente nei mangimi è estremamente limitato, ad eccezione del latte. Questo è stato confermato da uno studio realizzato nel 1999 dal laboratorio di riferimento dell'Unione europea (EURL) sulla presenza di residui di micotossine, comprese le aflatossine, negli alimenti di origine animale ([1]).

La Commissione per il momento non intende sottoporre tale questione all'esame dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA).

([1]) Jonker, M. A., Van Egmond, H. P., and Stephany, R. W. (1999) Microtossine in alimenti di origine animale. Relazione del laboratorio europeo di riferimento sui residui, documento EURL 389002 095, RIVM-National Institute of Public Health and Environment, Bilthoven, Paesi Bassi.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002030/13
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Aflatoxin in corn

Last summer's climatic conditions, characterised by very high temperatures over a long period and a prolonged drought lasting up to 90 days, were particularly favourable to heavy aflatoxin contamination (a toxin produced by a fungus, *Aspergillus*) of corn grown in the Po Valley, Veneto and Emilia Romagna, in particular. Corn production in these areas has been greatly reduced and a substantial part of it has aflatoxin levels above the limit of 0.02 mg/kg prescribed, for feed materials, by Regulation (EU) No 574/2011.

The limits imposed by EC law are vital, given the danger of these toxins, which are 'definitely carcinogenic' in the case of aflatoxin B1, present in corn grain, and 'probably carcinogenic' in the case of M1, a toxin that is processed from B1 by animal livers and is present in the milk produced from animals which have been given contaminated feed.

Can the Commission, however, answer the following questions:

1. Has it launched any studies to assess the possible residues and level of toxicity of this toxin in the meat of cattle, pigs and adult chickens?

2. Would it be possible to ask the EFSA for an impact assessment regarding the possibility of raising the limits set by the EU on aflatoxins in corn used for animal feed, restricted to the meat species mentioned above?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission has not launched recently a study to assess the carry-over of aflatoxin B1 present in feed to the meat of cattle, pigs and adult chickens. However it is known that the carry-over of aflatoxin B1 in feed to meat and other food of animal origin, with the exception of milk, is very limited. This was confirmed by a study performed in 1999 by the European Union Reference Laboratory (EURL) on residues on the occurrence of mycotoxins, including aflatoxins, in food of animal origin ([1]).

The Commission has for the time being not the intention to address such a question to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

([1]) Jonker, M. A., Van Egmond, H. P., and Stephany, R. W. (1999) Mycotoxins in food of animal origin. Report EU Reference Laboratory on Residues, EURL document 389002 095, RIVM-National Institute of Public Health and Environment, Bilthoven, the Netherlands.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002032/13
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(25. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Arbeitsrecht bei kirchlichen Trägern

Die Kirche ist in Deutschland einer der größten Arbeitgeber für den Bereich der sozialen Dienstleistungen im Bereich Kinderbetreuung und Pflege. Die ca. 1,3 Mio. Angestellten der kirchlichen Träger in Deutschland unterschreiben in ihrem Arbeitsvertrag, dass die Einrichtung, in der sie arbeiten, sich als Teil der Kirche begreift und ihrem sogenannten Sendungsauftrag dient und dass sie als katholische Mitarbeiter deshalb auch ihr eigenes Leben im Sinne der christlichen Glaubenslehre führen werden. Ein Verstoß dagegen kann zu arbeitsrechtlichen Konsequenzen führen.

Anfang des Jahres 2012 wurde beispielsweise die Leiterin eines Kindergartens in katholischer Trägerschaft entlassen, weil sie sich von ihrem Ehemann trennte und mit einem anderen Mann zusammenlebte.

Solche und ähnliche Fälle sind aufgrund des Arbeitsvertrags der kirchlichen Arbeitgeber in Deutschland häufig. Hinzu kommt, dass auch die in kirchlicher Trägerschaft befindlichen sozialen Einrichtungen nahezu vollständig aus öffentlichen Mitteln finanziert werden.

1. Verstößt ein Arbeitsvertrag, der Arbeitnehmer auf christliche Lebensführung verpflichtet, gegen die Richtlinie 2000/78/EG des Rates vom 27. November 2000 zur Festlegung eines allgemeinen Rahmens für die Verwirklichung der Gleichbehandlung in Beschäftigung und Beruf?

2. Welche Möglichkeiten sieht die Kommission, gegen die massive Diskriminierung von MitarbeiterInnen, die sich nicht an kirchliche oder religiöse Regeln halten, vorzugehen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2013)

Der Kommission sind die besonderen Bestimmungen in Arbeitsverträgen der katholischen Kirche in Deutschland bekannt. Sie hat diese Frage bei der Bewertung der Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2000/78/EG im „Allgemeinen Gleichbehandlungsgesetz" (AGG) sorgfältig analysiert.

Artikel 4 der Richtlinie sieht für Tätigkeiten in Kirchen eine Ausnahme vor. Diesem Artikel zufolge kann — im Hinblick auf die Art der Tätigkeiten oder die Umstände ihrer Ausübung — die Religion oder Weltanschauung einer Person in diesen Einrichtungen eine wesentliche und gerechtfertigte berufliche Anforderung darstellen. Diese Ausnahmeklausel trägt der Erklärung Nr. 11 zum Vertrag von Amsterdam Rechnung, derzufolge der Status der Kirchen gemäß den jeweiligen nationalen Rechtsvorschriften geachtet wird (s. Erwägungsgrund 24 der Richtlinie), eine jetzt in Artikel 17 EUV verankerte Garantie. Kirchen haben somit nach Auffassung der Kommission grundsätzlich das Recht, entsprechend ihren religiösen Prinzipien besondere ethische berufliche Anforderungen festzulegen.

Jede Ausnahmeklausel muss allerdings fallweise unter Berücksichtigung der Art und der Umstände der beruflichen Tätigkeit restriktiv ausgelegt werden, um festzustellen, ob ihre Anwendung mit den in der Richtlinie spezifizierten Bedingungen übereinstimmt.

Wenn sich eine Person durch eine spezifische berufliche Anforderung diskriminiert fühlt, muss sie bei den zuständigen nationalen Gerichten Rechtsmittel einlegen. Sollten Zweifel hinsichtlich der Vereinbarkeit der Anwendung einer Ausnahmeklausel mit dem EU-Recht bestehen, kann das nationale Gericht dem Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union die Frage zur Vorabentscheidung vorlegen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002032/13
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Labour law in relation to church institutions

In Germany, the church is one of the largest social service employers in the area of childcare and nursing care. The approximately 1.3 million employees in church institutions in Germany sign an employment contract which states that the institution in which they work sees itself as part of the church and serves its mission and that, as Catholic employees, they will therefore also lead their own lives in accordance with the Christian doctrine. A violation of this can lead to consequences under labour law.

At the beginning of 2012, for example, the head of a Catholic nursery school was dismissed because she had separated from her husband and lived with another man.

Cases like this, and similar ones, are common in Germany on account of the employment contract provided by church employers. In addition, social institutions belonging to the church are financed almost entirely from public funds.

1. Does an employment contract that obliges employees to live a Christian lifestyle contravene Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation?

2. What options does the Commission see for taking action against the enormous discrimination against employees who do not comply with church or religious rules?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of special provisions in employment contracts concluded with the Catholic Church in Germany and carefully analysed this issue when assessing the German transposition of Directive 2000/78/EC in the 'Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz' (AGG).

Article 4 of the directive provides for an exception as to occupational activities within churches. It allows that — with regard to the specific activities or of the context in which they are carried out — in these institutions a person's religion or belief might constitute a genuine legitimate and justified occupational requirement. This exception clause takes account of the Declaration 11 in the Amsterdam Treaty respecting the status of the churches under the respective national law (see Recital 45 of the directive), a guarantee enshrined now in Article 17 TEU. Churches therefore according to the assessment of the Commission in principle have a right to specify ethical occupational requirements according to their religious principles.

However, any exception clause has to be interpreted in a restrictive way taking account of the individual circumstances of each specific case and the nature and context of the occupational activities in order to determine if the use made of the exception clause complies with the conditions specified in the directive.

If a person feels discriminated against by a specific occupational requirement she or he will have to seek legal redress before the competent national courts. In case of doubt as to application of an exception clause in conformity with EC law, the national court can refer a preliminary question to the Court of Justice of the European Union

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002033/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος απώλειας κατοικίας για χιλιάδες δανειολήπτες Οργανισμού Εργατικής Κατοικίας

Η ελληνική ανεξάρτητη αρχή «Συνήγορος του Πολίτη» κρούει τον κώδωνα του κινδύνου για χιλιάδες δανειολήπτες που κινδυνεύουν να βρεθούν αντιμέτωποι με υψηλότερα τραπεζικά επιτόκια και μεγαλύτερες δόσεις δανείων, καθώς τα μειωμένα επιτόκιά που επιδοτούνταν από τον Οργανισμό Εργατικής Κατοικίας (ΟΕΚ) ο οποίος καταργήθηκε, δεν μεταφέρονται στα νέα δάνεια που θέλουν να συνάψουν με τις Τράπεζες τη στιγμή που ήδη αδυνατούν να αποπληρώσουν τα υφιστάμενα.

Σημειώνεται ότι, ο εν λόγω Οργανισμός διαχειριζόταν χρήματα προερχόμενα από τις συνεισφορές των εργαζομένων γι αυτόν ακριβώς τον σκοπό. Δικαιούχοι των συγκεκριμένων στεγαστικών προγραμμάτων του ΟΕΚ ήταν ευάλωτες κοινωνικά ομάδες, με αποδεδειγμένη οικονομική αδυναμία (άνεργοι, πολύτεκνοι, μονογονεϊκές οικογένειες κ.α.) ακόμα και προ κρίσης. Για το λόγο αυτό, λάμβαναν επιδότηση επιτοκίου πρώτης κατοικίας στα δάνειά τους και, υπό τις παρούσες συνθήκες, αφού έχασαν τις δουλειές τους ή μεγάλο μέρος του μισθού τους, κινδυνεύουν να χάσουν και τα σπίτια τους.

Παράλληλα, καταγγελίες πολιτών στην Ανεξάρτητη Αρχή κάνουν λόγο για εκβιαστική στάση τραπεζών οι οποίες, προκειμένου να αποδεχθούν ρύθμιση των εν λόγω δανείων, υποχρεώνουν τους δανειολήπτες να υπογράψουν νέες συμβάσεις χωρίς επιδότηση, αφού αφ' ενός δεν υφίσταται νομοθετικό πλαίσιο που να καθιστά υποχρεωτική τη διατήρηση της επιδότησης και αφ' ετέρου έχει καταργηθεί ο ΟΕΚ.

Βάσει των παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια ρύθμιση-λύση βάσει της ευρωπαϊκής εμπειρίας θα προέκρινε προκειμένου να διατηρηθεί το πρόγραμμα της στεγαστικής συνδρομής που ίσχυε για τους εν λόγω δανειολήπτες ώστε, αφενός να προστατέψουν τις κατοικίες τους, και αφετέρου να αποφευχθεί τυχόν παύση πληρωμών;

2. Ποιες τελικά οι δικλείδες ασφαλείας γι' αυτούς τους δικαιούχους, οι οποίοι ανήκουν σε ευάλωτες ομάδες, έχουν συνάψει μια συγκεκριμένη συμφωνία δανειοδότησης και σήμερα καλούνται όχι μόνο να ανταποκριθούν στο ήδη δυσβάσταχτο χρέος του δανείου τους, αλλά και να το αυξήσουν προκειμένου να προχωρήσουν σε κάποιες αναγκαίες ρυθμίσεις με τις τράπεζες (π.χ. επιμήκυνση);

3. Διαθέτει πληροφορίες και καλές πρακτικές για αντίστοιχα προγράμματα επιδότησης δανείων πρώτης κατοικίας για ευάλωτες ομάδες; Πώς έχει διασφαλιστεί η απρόσκοπτη εφαρμογή τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2013)

Τον Μάρτιο του 2012, οι ελληνικές αρχές πρότειναν μειώσεις των συντελεστών κοινωνικών εισφορών με σκοπό τη μείωση του εργατικού κόστους, τη στήριξη της απασχόλησης και τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας. Οι αρχές έκλεισαν τα ταμεία ΟΕΕ και ΟΕΚ, προκειμένου να αντισταθμιστούν εν μέρει οι δημοσιονομικές συνέπειες από τις χαμηλότερες εισφορές κοινωνικής ασφάλισης. Η νομοθεσία προβλέπει ότι, μολονότι δεν θα αναληφθούν περαιτέρω δεσμεύσεις, οι υφιστάμενες συμβατικές υποχρεώσεις θα γίνουν σεβαστές. Συγκροτήθηκε μια προσωρινή διοικητική επιτροπή, προκειμένου να ασχοληθεί με τις εκτελεστικές λεπτομέρειες για τη ρύθμιση των εκκρεμών υποχρεώσεων και δικαιωμάτων. Οι αρμοδιότητες των δύο οργανισμών μεταβιβάστηκαν στον ΟΑΕΔ ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει πολύ καλά τη δυσχερή οικονομική κατάσταση των νοικοκυριών λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης. Για να εξευρεθεί ισορροπημένη λύση όσον αφορά τον δανεισμό των νοικοκυριών, προβλέπεται ([2]) ότι οι αρχές θα αναθεωρήσουν το υφιστάμενο πλαίσιο για τα υπερχρεωμένα νοικοκυριά. Η διαδικασία αυτή περιλαμβάνει τροποποιήσεις της ισχύουσας νομοθεσίας ([3]), και την ενδεχόμενη θέσπιση νέων μέτρων για την προστασία των νοικοκυριών που αντιμετωπίζουν δυσχέρειες. Βρίσκονται επί του παρόντος υπό συζήτηση με τις ελληνικές αρχές νέα μέτρα για την προστασία των νοικοκυριών, ως μέρος της τρέχουσας τριμηνιαίας επανεξέτασης του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής. Εξετάζονται οι βέλτιστες πρακτικές στην Ευρώπη και παγκοσμίως, προκειμένου να εξευρεθεί ισορροπημένη λύση για τη διασφάλιση των δικαιωμάτων των νοικοκυριών, χωρίς να προκληθούν ηθικοί κίνδυνοι ή άλλοι δυνητικοί περιορισμοί στον τραπεζικό δανεισμό.

([1]) Ο Οργανισμός Απασχόλησης Εργατικού Δυναμικού. Ειδικές ερωτήσεις επί του θέματος θα πρέπει, άρα, να απευθύνονται στις ελληνικές αρχές.
([2]) Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης του Δεκεμβρίου 2012, σημείο 3.6.
([3]) Νόμος 3869/2010.

Η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της σχετικά με τα εθνικά μέτρα όσον αφορά τις διαδικασίες κατάσχεσης ([4]). Σκοπός του εγγράφου είναι να επιστήσει την προσοχή των κρατών μελών στους διάφορους μηχανισμούς που υπάρχουν σε εθνικό επίπεδο, ούτως ώστε να αναπτυχθούν ορθές πρακτικές.

([4]) SEC(2011) 357.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002033/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Thousands of Greek Workers' Housing Organisation (OEK) borrowers face repossession of their homes

The Greek Ombudsman, an independent authority, has warned that thousands of borrowers are facing higher interest rates and higher bank mortgage repayments, since the reduced interest rates subsidised by the Workers' Housing Organisation, which has now been dissolved, are not being transferred to the new loans they wish to contract with the banks and they are already unable to pay existing ones.

It should be noted that the OEK used to manage money from workers' contributions for that very purpose. The beneficiaries of the OEK's housing programmes were socially vulnerable groups with a proven lack of economic resources (the unemployed, large families, single-parent families, etc.) even before the crisis. For this reason, they received an interest subsidy for a mortgage on their first homes; under present circumstances, since they may have lost their jobs or a large part of their salaries, they risk also losing their homes.

Moreover, citizens' complaints to the Independent Authority of the Ombudsman refer to 'blackmail' by the banks which, in order to agree to these loans, require borrowers to sign new contracts without any subsidy, since on the one hand there is no legislative framework making it mandatory to maintain the subsidy and, on the other hand, the OEK has been abolished.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What solution or arrangement based on EU experience in these matters would it choose in order to maintain the housing assistance programme that applied to the borrowers in question in order, firstly, to protect their homes and, secondly, to avoid any suspension of payments?

2. What safeguards ultimately exist for those beneficiaries belonging to vulnerable groups who have entered into a specific loan agreement and are now required not only to meet their already unsustainable mortgage repayments, but also to increase them in order to be able make necessary arrangements with banks (e.g. extension of duration of mortgage)?

3. Does it have any information, including best practices, about similar loan subsidy schemes for first homes for vulnerable social groups? If so, what has been done to ensure that these schemes work properly?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

In March 2012, the Greek authorities proposed reductions in social contribution rates to reduce labour costs underpin employment and improve competitiveness. The authorities closed the OEE and OEK funds to partly offset the budgetary consequences of lower social security contributions. The legislation foresaw that whilst no further commitments would take place, existing contractual obligations would be respected. A temporary administrative committee was set up to carry out the operational modalities for the settlement of outstanding operational obligations and rights. The responsibilities of the two organisations were transferred to OAED ([1]).

The Commission is very well aware of the difficult financial situation of households due to the economic crisis. In order to find a balanced solution for household indebtedness, it is envisaged ([2]) that the Authorities will revise the existing framework for indebted households. This process includes amendments to the current legislation ([3]) and the possible introduction of new measures to safeguard households in difficulties. New measures to safeguard households are currently being discussed with Greek Authorities, as part of the ongoing quarterly review of the economic adjustment programme. Best practices in Europe and worldwide are being reviewed in order to find a balanced solution to safeguard the rights of households, without creating moral hazards or other potential constraints on bank lending.

([1]) The Employment Organisation. Specific questions on this issue therefore need to be addressed to the Greek authorities.
([2]) Memorandum of Understanding, December 2012, paragraph 3.6.
([3]) Law 3869/2010.

The Commission published a staff working paper on national measures concerning foreclosure ([4]). Its purpose is to draw MS attention to the different mechanisms in place at national level so that best practices are developed.

([4]) SEC(2011)357.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002034/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έφοδοι ελληνικής Επιτροπής Ανταγωνισμού σε κατασκευαστικές εταιρίες

Η Ελληνική Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού, ενεργώντας σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες κατόπιν πιέσεων από την Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Καταπολέμησης της Απάτης (OLAF), προέβη σε αιφνιδιαστικούς ελέγχους στα γραφεία μεγάλων κατασκευαστικών ομίλων, ύστερα από καταγγελίες για πρακτικές καρτέλ κατά τη διάρκεια δημοπρασιών.

Πιο συγκεκριμένα, υπήρξαν καταγγελίες για προσυμφωνημένες πρακτικές μεταξύ των εταιριών ως προς τις προσφορές τους στους διαγωνισμούς δημοσίων έργων, αλλά και ως προς την κατανομή των έργων αυτών ανά γεωγραφική περιοχή ή τομέα δραστηριότητας.

Με δεδομένο ότι το σύνολο σχεδόν των έργων που έχουν αναλάβει οι εταιρίες αυτές, είναι συγχρηματοδοτούμενα,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι γνωρίζει για το θέμα αυτό; Ποιο ήταν το περιεχόμενο των καταγγελιών που δέχθηκαν οι αρμόδιες αρχές; Ποιες παραβιάσεις ερευνούν; Για ποια έργα;

2. Τι πληροφορίες μπορεί να παράσχει η Επιτροπή, απ' όσα έχουν προκύψει μετά τους ελέγχους και την κατάσχεση εγγράφων, σκληρών δίσκων, κ.λπ.;

3. Τι προβλέπει η νομοθεσία σε περίπτωση που αποδειχθεί η ύπαρξη καρτέλ, για τα έργα που έχουν περατωθεί αλλά και για τα έργα τα οποία βρίσκονται σε εξέλιξη;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι η Ελληνική Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού διερευνά στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος. Ενόσω εκκρεμεί η υπόθεση, δίδονται οι κάτωθι γενικές εξηγήσεις.

Η Επιτροπή και οι εθνικές αρχές ανταγωνισμού έχουν παράλληλες αρμοδιότητες στην εφαρμογή των κανόνων ανταγωνισμού της ΕΕ (άρθρα 101 και 102 της ΣΛΕΕ). Όταν ενεργούν με βάση τα άρθρα 101 και 102 της ΣΛΕΕ, οι εθνικές αρχές ανταγωνισμού πρέπει, με βάση το άρθρο 11 του κανονισμού 1/2003 ([1]), να ενημερώσουν την Επιτροπή πριν ή αμέσως μετά την έναρξη του πρώτου μέτρου επίσημης έρευνας.

Οι εθνικές αρχές ανταγωνισμού πρέπει επίσης να ενημερώσουν την Επιτροπή σχετικά με τις ενδεχόμενες αποφάσεις τους για παύση παράβασης, αποδοχή δεσμεύσεων ή την ανάκληση του ευεργετήματος απαλλαγής κατά κατηγορία του κανονισμού το αργότερο 30 ημέρες πριν τη λήψη των εν λόγω αποφάσεων. Πέραν της ενδεχόμενης απόφασης, η Επιτροπή μπορεί να ζητήσει πρόσβαση σε άλλα έγγραφα που χρειάζεται για να αξιολογήσει την υπόθεση.

Το άρθρο 11 του κανονισμού 1/2003 παρέχει επίσης την εξουσία στην Επιτροπή να κινήσει η ίδια διαδικασίες και άρα να αφαιρέσει τις αρμοδιότητες εθνικής αρχής ανταγωνισμού όσον αφορά τον χειρισμό συγκεκριμένης υπόθεσης.

Οι πληροφορίες που παρέχουν οι εθνικές αρχές ανταγωνισμού με βάση το άρθρο 11 του κανονισμού 1/2003 καλύπτονται από τους κανόνες για το επαγγελματικό απόρρητο του άρθρου 28 του κανονισμού 1/2003, το οποίο προβλέπει ότι η Επιτροπή και οι εθνικές αρχές ανταγωνισμού δεν μπορούν να δημοσιοποιούν πληροφορίες που αποκτούν ή ανταλλάσσουν σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό, οι οποίες λόγω της φύσης τους καλύπτονται από την υποχρέωση του επαγγελματικού απορρήτου. Συνεπώς, η Επιτροπή δεν δημοσιοποιεί τέτοιες πληροφορίες, διότι όλες οι πληροφορίες προς το κοινό διατίθενται από την αρμόδια εθνική αρχή.

Εάν η Ελληνική Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού κρίνει ότι υπάρχει καρτέλ κατά παράβαση των άρθρων 101 και 102 της ΣΛΕΕ ή/και του ελληνικού νόμου περί ανταγωνισμού, μπορεί να επιβάλει κυρώσεις. Όσοι έχουν ζημιωθεί από τα καρτέλ μπορούν επίσης να ζητήσουν αποζημίωση στα εθνικά δικαστήρια.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2003 του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Δεκεμβρίου 2002, για την εφαρμογή των κανόνων ανταγωνισμού που προβλέπονται στα άρθρα 81 και 82 της συνθήκης, ΕΕ L 1 της 4.1.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002034/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Spot checks on construction companies by the Hellenic Competition Commission

The Hellenic Competition Commission, acting reportedly under pressure from the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), has carried out spot checks at the offices of major construction groups, following allegations of cartel practices during tendering.

More specifically, complaints were made about practices agreed upon beforehand between the companies involving their bids for public works contracts, and also the distribution of these projects by geographical region and sector of activity.

Given that almost all of the projects undertaken by these companies are co-funded by the EU:

Will the Commission say:

1. What does it know about this issue? What was the content of the complaints received by the competent authorities? Which violations are they investigating? What projects are involved?

2. What information can it provide about what the inspections and seizure of documents, hard disks, etc. have revealed?

3. What measures does the law provide for, if the existence of cartels is proven, in respect of projects that have been completed and projects that are still in progress?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission is aware that the Hellenic Competition Commission (HCC) is investigating the case referred to. As the case is pending, the following general explanations can be given.

The Commission and the national competition authorities (NCAs) have parallel competences to apply the EU competition rules (Articles 101 and 102 TFEU). When acting under Articles 101 and 102 TFEU, NCAs are required, under Article 11 of Regulation 1/2003 ([1]), to inform the Commission before or without delay after commencing the first formal investigative measure.

NCAs also have to inform the Commission of their envisaged decisions requiring that an infringement be brought to an end, accepting commitments or withdrawing the benefit of a block exemption Regulation no later than 30 days before the adoption of such decisions. In addition to the envisaged decision, the Commission can request access to other documents it needs to assess the case.

Article 11 of Regulation 1/2003 also gives the Commission the power to initiate proceedings itself and thereby end the competence of a NCA to deal with a given case.

Information provided by NCAs under Article 11 of Regulation 1/2003 is covered by the rules on professional secrecy in Article 28 of Regulation 1/2003, which provide that the Commission and NCAs may not disclose information acquired or exchanged by them pursuant to the regulation and of the kind covered by the obligation of professional secrecy. Accordingly, the Commission does not disclose such information, any relevant public information being available from the NCA.

If the HCC finds that a cartel exists in violation of Articles 101 and 102 TFEU and/or Greek competition law, it may impose sanctions. Victims of cartels can also seek damages in national courts.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty, OJ L 1, 4.1.2003.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002035/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Στοιχεία για «Διαχείριση Οικιακών και Βιομηχανικών Αποβλήτων» του ΠΕΠ Πελοποννήσου

Στο Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα Δυτικής Ελλάδας-Πελοποννήσου-Ιονίων Νήσων, υπό τον Κωδικό 44, περιγράφονται έργα «Διαχείρισης Οικιακών και Βιομηχανικών Αποβλήτων», για τα οποία έχουν δεσμευθεί 59 742 450 ευρώ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι τα έργα που έχουν ενταχθεί και χρηματοδοτούνται υπό τον ανωτέρω Κωδικό; Τι απορρόφηση υπάρχει στο σύνολο αλλά και στα επιμέρους έργα;

2. Με δεδομένη και την αύξηση του ποσοστού της κοινοτικής συμμετοχής στα συγχρηματοδοτούμενα μέσω ΕΣΠΑ έργα, υπάρχουν έργα που απεντάχθησαν από τη «Διαχείριση Οικιακών και Βιομηχανικών Αποβλήτων», εξ αιτίας αυτού του γεγονότος;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Απριλίου 2013)

Βάσει της αρχής της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης, οι εθνικές και περιφερειακές αρχές είναι υπεύθυνες για την επιλογή, την υλοποίηση και την παρακολούθηση των συγχρηματοδοτούμενων έργων. Με εξαίρεση τα «μεγάλα έργα», δηλαδή έργα ο συνολικός προϋπολογισμός των οποίων υπερβαίνει τα 50 εκατομμύρια ευρώ, τα κράτη μέλη δεν διαβιβάζουν στην Επιτροπή μελέτες σκοπιμότητας ή άλλες μελέτες.

Καθώς κάθε έργο που εμπίπτει στον θεματικό κωδικό 44 για τις περιφέρειες της Δυτικής Ελλάδας, της Πελοποννήσου και των Ιόνιων Νήσων κυμαίνεται κάτω από το όριο των 50 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ, περαιτέρω πληροφορίες σχετικά με το όνομα των εγκεκριμένων έργων, το ποσοστό απορρόφησης των εν λόγω έργων και το ποσοστό απορρόφησης του θεματικού κωδικού 44 στο σύνολό του, καθώς και σχετικά με τον αριθμό των έργων που έχουν ενδεχομένως αποσυρθεί από τον προαναφερθέντα θεματικό κωδικό, λόγω του αυξημένου ποσοστού συγχρηματοδότησης, μπορούν να παρασχεθούν από τις Ενδιάμεσς Διαχειριστικές Αρχές των περιφερειών Δυτικής Ελλάδας, Πελοποννήσου και Ιονίων Νήσων:
ΕΔΑ Δυτικής Ελλάδας: Ν.Ε.Ο. Πατρών — Αθηνών 28, 26441 Πάτρα. egeorgiou@mou.gr
ΕΔΑ Πελοποννήσου: Τέρμα Ερυθρού Σταυρού, 22100. tasskou@mou.gr
ΕΔΑ Ιονίων Νήσων: Εθνική Παλαιοκαστρίτσας, Αλυκές Ποταμού, 49100 Κέρκυρα. poikonomou@mou.gr

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002035/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Data on the 'Management of Domestic and Industrial Waste' in the Peloponnese ROP

In the Operational Programme for Western Greece — The Peloponnese — The Ionian Islands, Code 44 sets out 'Management of Domestic and Industrial Waste' projects, for which EUR 59 742 450 has been committed.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What are the projects that have been included and are being funded under this Code? What is the take-up rate overall and in respect of individual projects?

2. Given also the increasing percentage of Community participation in projects co-funded through the NSRF, have any projects been excluded from the Management of Domestic and Industrial Waste' programme due to this?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

Under the shared management principle, national and regional authorities are responsible for the selection, implementation and monitoring of co-funded projects. With the exception of 'major projects', i.e. projects whose total cost exceeds EUR 50 million, Member States do not send the Commission feasibility or other studies.

As each of the projects under thematic code 44 for the regions of Western Greece, Peloponnesus and the Ionian Islands is below the threshold of EUR 50 million, further information regarding the name of approved projects, the absorption rate of each of these projects and the absorption rate of thematic code 44 as a whole, as well as the number of projects that have possibly been withdrawn from the aforementioned thematic code due to the increased co-financing rate, could be provided by the intermediate managing authorities of Western Greece, Peloponnesus and Ionian Islands:
IMA of Western Greece: Neo patron-Athinon 28, 26441 Patra. egeorgiou@mou.gr
IMA of Peloponnesus: Terma Erythrou Stavrou, 22100 Tripolis. tasskou@mou.gr
IMA of Ionian Islands: Ethn. Palaiokastritsas, Alykes Potamou, 49100 Kerkyra. poikonomou@mou.gr

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002036/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: ΦΠΑ στις υπηρεσίες εστίασης στην Ελλάδα

Παρά τις προειδοποιήσεις, και δεδομένης της οικονομικής κρίσης, ότι ενδεχόμενη αύξηση του ΦΠΑ στον τομέα της εστίασης θα είχε αρνητικές συνέπειες. Από 1.9.2011 η Ελληνική κυβέρνηση αύξησε τον ΦΠΑ στις υπηρεσίες εστίασης σε 23% (από 13% και 8% που ήταν πριν 3 χρόνια), τούτο δε για καθαρά δημοσιονομικούς λόγους.

Με δεδομένη την εμπειρία που αποκτήθηκε και τα στοιχεία που συλλέχθηκαν με την εφαρμογή του μέτρου από το 2011,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Αυξήθηκαν τα έσοδα του κράτους από τον ΦΠΑ στον τομέα εστίασης στην Ελλάδα; Αν ναι, μπορεί να παράσχει σχετικά στοιχεία για τα έτη 2011-12 σε σύγκριση με τα αντίστοιχα έσοδα του 2010; Πως σχολιάζει η Επιτροπή το αίτημα πολλών στην Ελλάδα για επαναφορά του ΦΠΑ εστίασης στο προηγούμενο επίπεδο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2013)

Τον Ιούλιο του 2011, η αύξηση του συντελεστή ΦΠΑ στον τομέα των εστιατορίων εκτιμήθηκε ότι θα αποφέρει 300 εκατ. ευρώ το 2011 (εφόσον το μέτρο τέθηκε σε ισχύ από την 1η Σεπτεμβρίου) και επιπλέον 700 εκατ. ευρώ από το 2012 και μετά ([1]). Η εκτίμηση στη συνέχεια αναθεωρήθηκε προς τα κάτω σε 400 εκατ. ευρώ για την περίοδο από το 2012 και μετά, έπειτα από συμφωνηθείσα με τις αρχές εκτίμηση που βασίστηκε σε νέα στοιχεία. Πιο πρόσφατα, οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής ζήτησαν συμπληρωματικά στοιχεία από τις αρχές προκειμένου να εκτιμήσουν τις δημοσιονομικές επιπτώσεις από την αύξηση του ΦΠΑ στον τομέα των υπηρεσιών εστίασης με μεγαλύτερη ακρίβεια.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/sp2012_cyprus_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002036/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: VAT on catering services in Greece

Despite the warnings that, given the economic crisis, any increase in VAT on catering services would have negative consequences, the Greek Government went ahead and increased VAT on catering services from 13% to 23% as of 1 September 2011; three years ago it had been 8%. The government did so purely for budgetary reasons.

In the light of the experience gained and data gathered about the implementation of this measure since 2011, will the Commission say:

Has state revenue from VAT on catering services in Greece increased? If so, can it provide the relevant data for the years 2011-12 compared to revenue for 2010? How does it view the widespread demand in Greece for a return of VAT on catering to its previous level?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

In July 2011 the increase of the VAT rate for restaurants was estimated to yield EUR 300 million in 2011 (as the measure entered into force as of 1 September) and additional EUR 700 million from 2012 onwards ([1]). The estimate was subsequently revised downwards to EUR 400 million from 2012 onwards following an agreed assessment with the Authorities based on updated information. More recently, the Commission services have requested additional information from the authorities in order to assess the budgetary impact of the increase of VAT on catering services more accurately.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/sp2012_cyprus_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002037/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Kalahari Bushmen in Botswana

It is over six years since the Botswana High Court unanimously found the eviction in 2002 of the Kalahari Bushmen from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) to be illegal and unconstitutional. However, very few Bushmen have since been allowed to return to the reserve, and the government is still preventing them from hunting.

1. Can the Commission provide an update on the situation of the Kalahari Bushmen in Botswana?

2. Is the Commission taking any action to encourage the government of Botswana to rectify this situation?

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

The EU is well aware of the situation of the Botswana Bushmen, or Basarwa. The Court ruling of 2006 allowed the Basarwa to return to the CKGR ([1]), but did not compel the Botswanan Government to provide for basic services that were delivered before the evictions. Access to water through boreholes is provided for, in line with a 2011 Court ruling that obliged the Botswanan Government to provide water for the settlements to be viable. But since no permanent structures can be erected in the CKGR by law, the Botswanan Government does face difficulties in providing basic services. Moreover, the non-issuance of hunting licences and entry permits (for Basarwa entering the reserve to visit relatives), render life in the CKGR very difficult for the remaining circa 600 Basarwa. Also, the lack of proper access to Anti-Retroviral Drugs poses a real concern in view of HIV/AIDS. Access to education is provided through boarding schools outside of the central zone, though no particular impetus is given to the teaching of minority languages.

The EU is closely following the situation and is regularly addressing the issue of ethnic minorities in dialogue with the Botswanan Government on Human Rights. While the Botswanan Government is reluctant to differentiate regarding its populations and favours a 'we are all Batswana' approach, the EU will continue to express support to the protection of rights of indigenous groups and welcomes dialogue between the Botswanan Government and the Basarwa to ensure a sustainable solution. The EU is also interacting with Civil Society in relation to this issue. EU funding is available under the EIDHR ([2]), with the possibility of capacity-building of local organisations involved in rights of indigenous groups.

([1]) CKGR = Central Kalahari Game Reserve.
([2]) EIDHR = European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-002038/13
komissiolle
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE) ja Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(25. helmikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Kansalaisten suojeleminen valosaasteen haittavaikutuksilta

Päivittäinen 24 tunnin valon ja pimeän kierto muodostaa perustan kaikkien kasvien ja eläinten, myös ihmisten, luonnolliselle toiminnalle. Tämä vuorokausirytmi mahdollistaa, että organismit pystyvät ennakoimaan ja valmistautumaan täsmällisiin ja säännöllisiin muutoksiin ympäristössä, ja se on tärkeä muun muassa sisäisen aineenvaihdunnan säätelylle ja koordinoinnille.

On olemassa entistä enemmän näyttöä siitä, että altistuminen valolle yöllä häiritsee luonnollista vuorokausirytmiä ja aiheuttaa terveydellisiä haittavaikutuksia. Lääketieteelliset tutkimukset ovat osoittaneet, että öinen valoaltistus lisää tietyn tyyppisiä syöpiä, erityisesti rintasyöpää. Lisäksi vuorokausirytmin häiriöt edistävät mahdollisesti liikalihavuutta ja diabetesta. Tutkimuksissa on lisäksi esitetty, että liiallinen altistuminen keinotekoiselle valolle varhaislapsuudessa saattaa edistää ihmisillä riskiä sairastua masennukseen tai muihin mielialahäiriöihin.

Edellä mainittuihin tutkimuksiin kuuluvat Stevensin tutkimus rintasyövästä (PMID: 20336819), Kloogin ja muiden tutkimus miesten sairastamista syövistä (DOI: 10.1080/07420520802694020) sekä Reiterin ja muiden tutkimus liikalihavuudesta (PMID: 21668294).

Kyseisten tutkimusten tuloksien perusteella on pyydetty käsittelemään ongelmaa. Esimerkiksi American Medical Association -ammattijärjestö on vaatinut lisätutkimuksia terveysriskeistä, jotka aiheutuvat ympäristöstä johtuvasta öisestä valoaltistumisesta.

Mihin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä vähentääkseen valosaasteen aiheuttamia terveysriskejä EU:n kansalaisille?

Komission jäsenen Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(17. huhtikuuta 2013)

Komissio viittaa kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-1454/2012 ([1]) antamaansa vastaukseen. Komissio on tietoinen siitä, että valoaltistus voi vaikuttaa uneen ja että sillä voi olla merkitystä vuorokausirytmin sääntelyn kannalta, millä puolestaan voi olla vaikutus terveyteen.

Toimenpiteet epätoivotun valon torjumiseksi kuuluvat jäsenvaltioiden viranomaisten vastuualueeseen. Komissiolla ei ole tällä hetkellä jatkosuunnitelmia tämän asian suhteen, eikä jatkoarviointia ole suunniteltu.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002038/13
to the Commission
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE) and Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Protecting the public against the adverse effects of light pollution

The 24-hour daily cycle of light and darkness forms the basis of natural functioning for all plants and animals, including humans. This circadian cycle allows organisms to anticipate and prepare for precise and regular environmental changes and is important for, among other things, regulating and coordinating internal metabolic processes.

There is growing evidence that exposure to light at night disrupts the natural circadian cycle in a manner that has adverse impacts on health. Medical research has indicated that exposure to light at night increases the incidence of certain types of cancer, most notably breast cancer. Furthermore, circadian disruption potentially contributes to obesity and diabetes. Studies have also suggested that excessive artificial light exposure early in life may contribute to an increased risk of depression and other mood disorders in humans.

Such studies include one on breast cancer by Stevens (PMID: 20336819), one on cancer in men by Kloog et al. (DOI: 10.1080/07420520802694020) and one on obesity by Reiter et al. (PMID: 21668294).

Based on such research findings, a number of calls have been made for action to address the problem. For example, the American Medical Association has called for further study into the health risks of environmental exposure to light at night.

What steps does the Commission intend to take to reduce the health risks posed by light pollution for EU citizens?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission refers to its answer to Written Question E-1454/2012 ([1]). The Commission recognises that light exposure can affect sleep and play a role in regulating circadian rhythms which may in turn have an impact on health.

Measures to control unwanted light are the responsibility of the authorities in Member States. The Commission currently has no further plans on this matter and no further assessment is planned.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002039/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(25 februari 2013)

Betreft: Hervorming van de huidige eigen middelen uit de btw

Kan de Commissie, wat betreft haar voorstel van 9 december 2011:

1. ter vervanging van de huidige eigen middelen uit de btw met één EU-tarief van 1 % op alle goederen en diensten waarop momenteel in alle lidstaten een normaal btw-tarief van toepassing is; en

2. ter invoering van een systeem waarbij het tarief voor de nieuwe bron van eigen middelen de huidige nationale btw-tarieven niet zal verhogen, maar er een onderdeel van zal zijn,

en gelet op de conclusies van de Raad van 15 mei 2012, voor alle lidstaten een spreadsheet maken met een overzicht van de volgende elementen:

1. bnp;

2. brutobijdrage;

3. nettobijdrage, zowel inclusief als exclusief gebouwen en agentschappen;

4. inkomsten uit btw;

5. verwachte inkomsten voor de EU?

Antwoord van de heer Lewandowski namens de Commissie
(30 april 2013)

De nieuwe aanpak van de eigen middelen uit de btw die in de voorstellen tot hervorming van de eigen middelen van 9 november 2011 is opgenomen, zou de berekeningsmethode ervan drastisch vereenvoudigen, de eigen middelen uit de btw beter afstemmen op de beginselen van het btw-beleid van de EU en voldoende flexibiliteit bieden om toekomstige wijzigingen op te vangen. In deze nieuwe methode wordt niet langer gebruikgemaakt van de huidige, op statistieken gebaseerde, artificiële belastinggrondslag, maar wordt enkel rekening gehouden met goederen en diensten waarop in elke EU-lidstaat een normaal btw-tarief van toepassing is.

Aangezien er in dit stadium nog te veel onbekende elementen zijn, zijn er geen gegevens beschikbaar voor toekomstige begrotingen na een hervorming van het systeem. De verdere werkzaamheden met betrekking tot het stelsel van eigen middelen waarover de Raad en het Parlement mogelijk overeenstemming zullen bereiken in de context van het MFK 2014-2020, kunnen hierin meer duidelijkheid brengen. Over het huidige systeem zijn wel gegevens beschikbaar.

Voor vragen 1, 2 en 4: de meest recente gegevens over het bnp, de brutobijdrage en de btw per lidstaat zijn beschikbaar op pagina 36 van dit verslag: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/financialreport/index_en.html

Wat vraag 3 betreft: informatie over de inkomsten en het netto exploitatiesaldo per lidstaat voor begrotingsjaren tot 2011 is beschikbaar op http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm.

Vraag 5: Zoals hierboven reeds is opgemerkt, zijn er nog geen gegevens voor de toekomst beschikbaar. Er moet worden benadrukt dat deze hervormingen niet zijn bedoeld om de omvang van de begroting te vergroten. De voorstellen inzake eigen middelen zullen waarschijnlijk resulteren in een vermindering van het bedrag dat wordt opgehaald uit de eigen middelen die de begroting in evenwicht houden, namelijk de op het bni gebaseerde eigenmiddelenbijdragen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002039/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Reform of the current VAT own resource

With regard to the proposal made by the Commission on 9 December 2011:

1. to replace the current VAT own resource with a single EU rate of 1 percentage point on all goods and services currently subject to the standard rate in all Member States; and

2. to introduce a system whereby the rate applicable for the new resource will not be added to the current national VAT rates but will be integrated into them,

and taking account of the Council conclusions of 15 May 2012, can the Commission provide a spreadsheet, for all the Member States, setting out the following:

1. GNP;

2. gross contribution;

3. net contribution, both including and excluding buildings and agencies;

4. VAT revenues;

5. proposed revenue for the EU?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The new approach to the VAT own resource included in the proposals to reform Own Resources made on 9 November 2011 would drastically simplify the calculation method, better align the VAT own resource with EU VAT-policy principles and deliver sufficient flexibility to absorb future changes. Rather than using the present statistically constructed artificial tax base, the new method would only take into account those supplies subject to the standard-rate of VAT in every Member State in the EU.

Data are not available for future budgets under a reformed system, as too many elements remain unknown at this stage. However, the further work on the own resource system which may be agreed between Council and Parliament in the context of the MFF 2014-2020 may result in further light being shed on this. Data is available on the current system.

For questions 1, 2 & 4: latest data on GNP, gross contribution and VAT, broken down by Member State are accessible under (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/financialreport/index_en.html, page 36);

Concerning question 3, information on revenue plus the net operating balances by MS for budget years up to 2011 is accessible under http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm.

And question 5. As explained above data are not yet available for the future. It should be stressed that these reforms are not designed to increase the size of the budget. The likely outcome of all the own resource proposals would be to reduce the amount raised from the balancing own resource — that based on GNI.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002040/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Box retailers, primary deforestation, eco-certification and the political economy of timber

Peter Dauvergne and Jane Lister are the authors of 'Timber', a book documenting the increasing complexity of global trade in timber and the increasing power of 'big box' retailers at the expense of traditional timber multinationals. The rise of China (now the second biggest wooden furniture maker and paper producer after the United States) as a major timber importer and processor, and the implications for large scale use of illegal and unsustainably resourced timber are examined, as well as the giving over of primary forests in countries like Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia and Gabon to soybean (22 million hectares in Brazil) and palm oil production, and the impact of cattle ranching, currently the largest driver of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest. Allegedly many of these timber products find their way onto the shelves of the hypermarkets of industrialised countries.

Developed economies dominate the global retail sector and, through the high-volume/low-margin discount trading model, this has contributed to a disposable consumerism in timber products and the externalisation of the true costs of deforestation in developing countries. Suppliers of raw and manufactured timber jostle to ensure their place in supply chains of 'big box' retailers whether the final product is flat-packed furniture or the paper packaging that now accounts for half the world's paper. Eradicating supplies of illegal and unsustainable timber production is clearly a major priority, as is reducing the disposable packaging (including wooden pallets) that is dumped on municipal land fields after being used just once, but which now accounts for one quarter of global timber consumption.

Does the Commission regard, for example, the WWF-led Global Forest and Trade Network as a useful model for enhancing supply-chain traceability that complements recent EU legislative initiatives in the area, and what measures does the Commission believe are necessary to increase significantly the reuse of wooden pallets?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

Under the EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan the EU is engaged in many activities worldwide to promote forest governance and trade in legally harvested timber. The Commission supports the objectives of initiatives such as the Global Forest and Trade Network (GFTN) that aim to promote business to business contacts and match suppliers of forest products from sustainably managed forests with buyers seeking such products. It has provided support to the GFTN programme in Asia ([1]) and Africa ([2]) as well as to a similar initiative managed by The Forest Trust ([3]). Further EU support is provided to WWF's project 'Advancing a legal and sustainable global timber trade through the EU FLEGT action plan.' that builds on existing positive links with the timber trade developed over the last fifteen years through the Global Forest and Trade Network (GFTN).

The EU already has measures in place to achieve the objectives suggested by the Honourable Member. Article 4 of Directive 2008/98/EC ([4]) on waste sets out the waste hierarchy by which waste prevention such as the promotion of product re-use is a priority over other waste management options, e.g. recycling or incineration. In addition, Article 11 of this directive requires Member States to take measures on product re-use, where appropriate, by for example supporting re-use and repair networks and by using economic instruments such as producer responsibility schemes, whereby producers commit to ensuring the collection and the re-use of their products. Re-use of wooden pallets is facilitated by the widespread use in the EU of Euro-pallets with standard dimensions.

([1]) http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-projects/project-impact/projects-on-greening-supply-chains/wood.html
([2]) www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/GFTN_project.doc — EU funded project Forest & Trade Networks for legal and sustainable forest management in Africa and Asia.
([3]) http://www.tft-forests.org/pages/?p=6040.
([4]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002041/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU aid and institution-building support to Yemen

The active role the EU has played in the 'Friends of Yemen' meetings set up in 2010 has been most welcome. Given the crucial role `that youth movements have played in the Arab Spring, can the Vice-President/High Representative reassure me on the following points:

1. Does the European Union intend to be represented at a high level at the next 'Friends of Yemen' group meeting on 7 March 2013 in London? What progress from the European Union's perspective can the Vice-President/High Representative report since the last meeting in New York in September, for example in EU funding for improvements to the Yemeni civil registry?

2. Has there been any move to include and encourage youth movements, represented in organisations such as the Al-Watan party, in the ongoing national transitional dialogue on fresh elections in 2014?

3. Concerns remain over endemic corruption, which could be undermining the crucial European Union aid that is being provided to Yemen. Can the Vice-President/High Representative briefly outline how the EU is ensuring that aid projects such as the funding of police reform, migration and maritime security and maternal healthcare provision are reaching the intended targets on the ground?

4. How are Somali refugees in Yemen being assisted by the EU? Is the EU working in conjunction with UNHCR to ensure that the basic humanitarian needs of these refugees are being adequately met? Can the Commission say whether there is any long-term provision to help these Somalis return home or whether any plans are being put in place to help them settle and support themselves whilst in Yemen?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The EU was represented at the Friends of Yemen (FoY) meeting on 7 March 2013 by the HR/VP. The meeting called for rapid implementation of earlier pledges, provided information on aid already provided and some new pledges were made. FoY gave continued strong support for President Hadi. National dialogue, reconciliation and preparation of elections were recurrent themes. EU spending of pledges since September 2012 stand at over 30%. Civil registry remains a major issue needing coordinated international support. The EU has already started work on assisting with the progress of birth registration and prepares further, more comprehensive actions to gear up the entire civil registration system.

The EU has made great efforts from the outset to assure that the National Dialogue process is all inclusive and has concentrated on outreach in particular to youth and women. The EU will further support the process with assistance, including financially through the United Nations (UN).

The EU applies general rules for project management with close monitoring by staff in the EU Delegation in Sana'a.

Refugees in Yemen (including Somali refugees) benefit from EU humanitarian aid. This support is implemented by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and addresses basic needs in terms of protection including gender-based violence, access to health, water and sanitation services, livelihood with income generating activities and vocational training. The Commission does not specifically fund the return of Somali refugees to their home country.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002042/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Legal certainty over the legal status of digital downloads

Under current EU consumer law, are digital downloads of books and CDs considered to be 'goods' or 'services' or neither?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

According to the new Consumer Rights Directive 2011/83/EU contracts for digital content, which is not supplied on a tangible medium (such as digital downloads of books), is classified, for the purposes of this directive, neither as sales contracts (i.e. contracts concerning goods) nor as service contracts. This category of contracts is subject to specific provisions in the directive, e.g., concerning the right of withdrawal. The Consumer Rights Directive therefore clarifies the regulation applicable to this particular category of products, taking into account their specific features. On the other hand, digital content supplied on CDs and other tangible media is considered as goods within the meaning of the Consumer Rights Directive.

The Honourable Member might be aware that Member States have to transpose the Consumer Rights Directive into national law by 13 December 2013 and to apply it from 13 June 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002043/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: The possible value of an EU pollinator-friendly label for plants to help save Europe's honeybee

As the Commission is aware, there is widespread concern over the rapid decline in the population of honeybees, as well as of other pollinators such as butterflies. In addition, there has been a widespread decline across Europe in the number of birds and number of species of insects.

In the UK during the 1990s, the BBC made its own special contribution to this phenomenon by broadcasting lifestyle and gardening programmes which encouraged tens of thousands of people to believe it was fashionable to concrete over the garden space in front of their houses, though increased parking restrictions no doubt played their part as well.

Recently the BBC broadcast an excellent documentary on bee decline by the distinguished political journalist and beekeeper, Martha Kearney, and subsequently a series of programmes by the gardener Sarah Raven in which she looks for ways to try to arrest the decline in pollinator numbers by encouraging an increase in the numbers of planted pollinating-friendly plants, including those rich in nectar, such as *Hebes* from New Zealand or *Digitalis* (foxgloves). A key initiative was to work together with the British Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) to unveil, at the Chelsea Flower Show in London, an RHS pollinator-friendly label which can be used by garden centres and other commercial retailers to assist gardeners who would like to plant pollinator-friendly flowers and plants by identifying the appropriate species.

Is the Commission aware of any similar initiative in other EU Member States? Does it believe there might be a place for an approved supplementary EU pollinator-friendly label, to be used voluntarily on an EU-wide basis and based on the UK RHS model?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission is not aware of any similar initiatives from other Member States Knowledge elements are currently insufficient to indicate whether an approved, supplementary pollinator-friendly label to be used voluntarily on an EU-wide basis and inspired from the UK RHS model would be the right way forward.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002045/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Possible role of the Bundesbank as an alternative objective and impartial credit rating agency

It is widely alleged that the three principal international private credit ratings agencies played a major role in both the international banking crisis of 2007/8 through their failure to exercise due diligence in assessing the risks associated with mortgage-backed securities as well as other forms of collateralised debt obligations (CDOs) and their failure to flag up the sovereign debt crisis that continues to impact on the world economy. It is ironic now that the credit agencies are offering objective ratings for sovereign debt within the eurozone that they have come under sustained criticism from both the Commission and a number of EU governments, including France.

These agencies are alleged to have had a commercial interest in pleasing their banking clients in not exposing the unsustainable growth in CDOs and by uncritically buying into the now discredited 'Greenspan Doctrine' of safety through diversified risk. Failure to properly assess either the true scale of sovereign debt or the interconnectedness of bank held sovereign debt across Europe and the implications for public finances of bank bailouts were key failures and resulted in a mispricing of risk.

The proposal brought forward in 2011 by the Commission and then shelved, promised a solution that risked jumping from the frying pan into the fire, since EU governments, no less than credit agencies, have a clear interest in disguising or minimising their own levels of debt. If the aim is genuinely to arrive at an objective assessment of true levels of sovereign creditworthiness within the eurozone, does the Commission believe that a formalised role could be found for the Bundesbank, which has an unrivalled global reputation for ensuring fiscal and monetary stability, as an alternative credit agency whose objective and impartial assessments could be taken into account by financial institutions lending within either the eurozone or the wider EU/EFTA area?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The Commission already addressed important failures in the credit rating field in its CRA I ([1]) and CRA II ([2]) proposals, namely conflicts of interests affecting rating analysts, quality of methodologies and transparency. Furthermore, in CRA II, the European Securities and Markets Authorites (ESMA) was entrusted with exclusive supervision powers over CRAs registered in the EU as of June 2011.

The Commission also addressed important remaining concerns in its CRA III proposal ([3]), notably as regards sovereign ratings, methodologies for ratings, the liability of CRAs and excessive reliance on ratings, for which a political agreement was reached between the Council and the European Parliament on 27 November 2012.

The Commission also assessed the feasibility of establishing an independent European CRA in the impact assessment accompanying the CRA III proposal. This analysis showed that setting up a CRA with public money would cost between EUR 300 and 500 million over five years, and it could raise concerns vis-à-vis issuers regarding that CRA's credibility and independence. For these reasons, the Commission decided not to pursue this idea further.

The idea of entrusting monetary authorities, such the Eurosystem, or specific members thereof, has not been put forward as such a concept would raise other important issues, for example regarding the compatibiltiy with the primary objectives of these institutions.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 16 September 2009, on credit rating agencies.
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 513/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 11 May 2011, amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies.
([3]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies. Brussels, 15.11.2011, COM(2011) 747 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002046/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: High-risk and low-risk medical devices

Could the Commission outline what evidence base it used to classify medical devices (such as substance devices) as either high risk or low risk in nature?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The classification of medical devices is a risk based system based on the vulnerability of the human body taking account of the potential risks associated with the devices. This classification is done according to the rules set out in Annex IX of Directive 93/42/EEC ([1]). These rules take into account criteria such as the duration of contact with the body, the part of the body concerned, the degree of invasiveness and the type of effect.

Annex VII of the proposal for a regulation on medical devices ([2]), adopted by the Commission on 26 September 2012, is built on Annex IX of Directive 93/42/EEC. However, it has been amended on the basis of experience gained in the application of the current classification rules, scientific and technological progress, vigilance issues and developments at international level ([3]).

In the proposed classification system, devices composed of substances or combination of substances intended to be ingested, inhaled or administered rectally or vaginally and which are absorbed by or dispersed in the human body are classified in class III. They will have to comply, by analogy, with the relevant requirements of Annex I to Directive 2001/83/EC ([4]). This is due to the level of risk presented by this category of products. The proposed classification together with the conformity with the relevant requirements of Annex I to Directive 2001/83/EC will ensure a high level of safety of these products.

([1]) OJ L 169, 12.7.1993, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2012) 542 final.
([3]) Global Harmonisation Task Force (EU, US, Canada, Australia and Japan).
([4]) OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 67.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002047/13
to the Commission
Sajjad Karim (ECR)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Legacy additives in recyclates under REACH

The number of restrictions or authorisation requirements under the REACH Regulation is growing and is expected to impact a significant number of substances in the coming years. As a result, post-consumer waste from long-life applications such as construction may contain 'legacy additives' which, whilst fully complying with the regulations in force when they were used, have since then, or will be, restricted/subjected to authorisation. In most cases, no demonstrated and economical technique exists for removing these additives from the recyclate.

Plastic waste is being recycled by hundreds of recyclers across the EU, many of which are SMEs. If every single recycler would have to ask for authorisation, this would not only be excessively costly but also administratively unmanageable. As a result, many would stop recycling post-consumer waste due to the uncertain legal situation and to liability issues, thereby limiting the options to exportation of waste, incineration or landfill. Such an outcome is clearly undesirable, as it would be in opposition with the drive towards a more resource-efficient Europe.

This gives rise to the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of this issue?

2. If so, what is the Commission's position in relation to the application of restrictions and authorisation to substances contained in recyclate from post-consumer waste?

3. Is the Commission planning to propose a solution addressing the concerns of the recycling industry?

4. If not, why not? After all, the difficult economic and employment situation justifies offering plastics recyclers a sustainable future.

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2013)

In line with the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe and the Green Paper on a European Strategy on Plastic Waste in the Environment, the Commission is committed to promoting recycling. It is aware of the concerns expressed by recyclers of plastics, constituted in majority by SMEs, concerning the obligations under REACH ([1]), which some of them see as a disincentive to recycle. Having analysed the situation and the regulatory framework, the Commission concluded that different actors involved in recycling and converting plastic waste into products, materials or substances and placing them back to the market need to respect two distinct and complementary regulatory regimes, one related to the waste stage and the other realated to the post-waste/product stage. The output material that has undergone recycling does not automatically cease to be waste but has to meet specific criteria of the Waste Framework Directive ([2]) to do so. The provisions of REACH on authorisation and restriction are fully applicable to products, materials or substances once they have left the waste status and been placed back to the market.

A document explaining this in further detail on the basis of the example of recycled PVC was presented by the Commission to Member States and stakeholders at a meeting of the Competent Authorities to REACH on 13 March 2013 and, based on input from Member States and other stakeholders, should be finalised and made publically available later this year.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency.
([2]) Article 6(1)(a) to (d) of Directive 2008/98/EC Waste Framework Directive.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002048/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per lo sviluppo e la valorizzazione della Cantina Sociale Borgo Santa Maria, in provincia di Latina

La Cantina Sociale Borgo Santa Maria, in provincia di Latina, è una cooperativa nata nel 1960, la prima cooperativa della Provincia di Latina. Ad oggi è composta da 34 soci che gestiscono una coltivazione vitata di oltre 100 ettari per una produzione complessiva di circa 15.000 quintali di uva.

Tale cooperativa agricola è una delle poche rimaste ancora su questo territorio e le zone dove si coltivano i vigneti vanno da Borgo Montello, Borgo Bainsizza, Borgo Santa Maria, fino ad arrivare a ridosso del mare con Borgo Sabotino e Torre Astura. Questa zona è da sempre una zona ad alta vocazione vitivinicola fin dai tempi della bonifica effettuata negli anni '30, dove vengono coltivati con metodi tradizionali (impianto a spalliera ed impianto a tendone) vitigni come il Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah oltre a vitigni autoctoni come il Bellone. La produzione di questo vitigno autoctono, infatti, si trova in piena espansione come dimostrato nelle più importanti fiere internazionali del settore. Negli ultimi anni si è passati da una vendita al dettaglio di questo prodotto al totale imbottigliamento, questo grazie agli investimenti sostenuti negli ultimi dieci anni volti a rinnovare il parco macchine, le botti tramite la vetrificazione delle vasche e la linea di imbottigliamento.

Attualmente la cooperativa è impegnata in un progetto di ristrutturazione e valorizzazione dell'intero complesso architettonico anche al fine di aumentare la produzione e creare nuova occupazione, supportando l'intera filiera produttiva. Il marchio Santa Maria, infatti, è già ben inserito su tutto il territorio della Provincia di Latina e potrebbe in futuro inserirsi anche fuori dalla regione di origine.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali programmi sono previsti per la valorizzazione della cosiddetta zonazione e dei vitigni autoctoni nella nuova PAC;

2. se sono stati previsti finanziamenti per il progetto suesposto nella nuova programmazione 2014-2020;

3. se esiste un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(22 aprile 2013)

Con riferimento al primo pilastro, le proposte della Commissione non modificano gli aspetti principali della riforma dell'OCM Vino del 2008 riguardanti i programmi di sostegno per il settore vitivinicolo. È compito degli Stati membri definire, nell'ambito del programma di sostegno nazionale 2014-2018, le operazioni ammissibili per le misure di investimento, adattandole alle esigenze del territorio.

Secondo la proposta elaborata nell'ambito del secondo pilastro sullo sviluppo rurale (art. 18 della proposta COM(2011)627 ([1])), il sostegno è destinato al miglioramento delle prestazioni globali delle aziende agricole e alla trasformazione, alla commercializzazione e allo sviluppo dei prodotti agricoli di cui all'allegato I del trattato. Inoltre, può essere concessa una maggiorazione delle aliquote di sostegno per gli investimenti collettivi. Spetta agli Stati membri e, nel caso dell'Italia, alle Regioni, stabilire e attuare programmi di sviluppo rurale per il periodo 2014-2020, da gestire congiuntamente con la Commissione, e definire i fondi destinati a ciascuna operazione e cofinanziati dal Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale, sulla base di analisi SWOT effettuate in relazione alle priorità dell'Unione in materia di sviluppo rurale.

Le proposte della Commissione per la riforma della PAC 2020 sono attualmente in fase di negoziazione tra il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio.

([1]) COM(2011)627 definitivo: Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sul sostegno allo sviluppo rurale da parte del Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR).

Per quanto riguarda le domande 2 e 3, la Commissione non è in possesso di informazioni sui singoli progetti approvati dalle autorità degli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002048/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the development and upgrading of the Cantina Sociale Borgo Santa Maria in the Italian province of Latina

The Cantina Sociale Borgo Santa Maria, the largest cooperative in the Italian province of Latina, was established in 1960. Today it has 34 members who manage more than 100 hectares of vines and produce some 15 000 quintals of grapes.

This agricultural cooperative is one of the last few remaining in the region, and its vineyards stretch from Borgo Montello, Borgo Bainsizza and Borgo Santa Maria right down to the sea at Borgo Sabotino and Torre Astura. Vines have been grown in this area ever since it was drained in the 1930s; traditional methods (trellis and pergola training) are used to produce wines from international varieties, including merlot, cabernet sauvignon and syrah, and local varieties, such as bellone. Production from the latter grape variety is increasing significantly and the wines have been shown at prestigious international fairs. The last 10 years have seen a shift away from factory-door sales to bottling of the entire production, as a result of the investments made in updating machinery, the tanks, by means of vitrification, and the bottling plant.

At present the cooperative is restructuring and upgrading its entire complex of buildings so that all aspects of wine production can be dealt with on one site, with a view to increasing production and creating new jobs. The 'Santa Maria' name is already well known throughout the province of Latina and could in future become better known in other parts of Italy as well.

1. What programmes are to be implemented under the new CAP in order to raise the profile of this wine-growing area and the local grapes cultivated there?

2. Has funding been set aside for the project outlined above during the new programming period 2014-2020?

3. Can the Commission give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

With regard to Pillar I, the Commission's proposals do not modify the key features of the 2008 reform of the CMO wine with regard to support programme for the wine sector. It is Member States' responsibility to define, in the National Support Programme 2014-18, the eligible operations for the investment measure, adapting them to the needs of the territory.

Under the proposal on Pillar II for rural development, (Art. 18 of COM(2011) 627 ([1])), support can be provided for the improvement of the overall performance of the agricultural holding and the processing, marketing and development of agricultural products covered by Annex I to the Treaty. Also, higher aid intensity rates can be accorded to collective investments. It is responsibility of the Member States and, in the case of Italy, of the Regions, to establish and implement rural development programmes for the period 2014-20, in shared management with the Commission, and define the budget allocated to each operation and co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, on the basis of the SWOT analysis carried out in relation to the Union priorities for rural development.

Commission's proposals for a reformed CAP 2020 are currently being negotiated between the Parliament and the Council.

Concerning questions 2 and 3, the Commission has no information on the individual projects approved by Member States authorities.

([1]) COM(2011) 627 final: Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-002049/13
komissiolle
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(25. helmikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Eurooppalainen hevosenlihaskandaali

Pakastetuotteita valmistavan Finduksen rutiinitarkastuksissa tekemän löydön seurauksena useat elintarvikevalmistajat ympäri Eurooppaa ovat viime päivinä raportoineet, etteivät heidän kuluttajille myymänsä tuotteet vastaa tuoteselostetta. Monissa tapauksissa kyse on ollut siitä, että tuote on sisältänyt naudanlihan sijaan hevosenlihaa. Keskusteluissa on käynyt ilmi, että eri Euroopan maissa kuolee vuosittain useita tuhansia hevosia enemmän kuin mitä viralliset tilastot osoittavat. Suurin osa näistä hevosista kuolee tai lopetetaan muualla kuin teurastamossa.

Hevosten teurastamoon vientiä rajoittavat muun muassa hevosenlihan alhainen tuottajahinta sekä pitkät ja kalliit kuljetusmatkat. Teurastuksen esteenä voi myös olla hevosen rekisteröimättömyys tai sen saama lääkitys. Usein myöskään teurastamon tilittämä hinta ei korvaa edes hevosen tuontikuluja teurastamoon.

Tilannetta pahentaa lisäksi se, että tilalla kuollut tai lopetettu hevonen on EU:n sivutuoteasetuksen ((EY) N:o 1774/2002) mukaan riskiluokan 2 jätettä, ja jätehuoltovastuu hevosen raadosta kuuluu monissa jäsenmaissa jätteen haltijalle.

Tästä syystä monet omistajat ovat kiinnostuneita joko hautaamaan raadon itse tai myymään sen yrittäjälle, joka kuljettaa ruhon muualle jatkojalostettavaksi. Koska kukaan ei valvo tätä toimintaa, on todennäköistä että hevosia kuljetetaan laittomasti globaalin elintarviketeollisuuden raaka-aineeksi.

1. Koska komission asetuksen (EY) N:o 504/2008 mukaan kaikilla EU:n alueella olevilla hevosilla on oltava tunnistusasiakirja ja hevosista on tallennettava tietokantaan esimerkiksi hevosen syntymäajankohta ja ilmoitettu kuolinpäivä, miten on mahdollista, että Euroopassa katoaa vuosittain tuhansia hevosia jäljettömiin?

2. Millaisin keinoin komissio aikoo taata, että omistajilla on edellytykset joko hevosen turvalliseen teurastukseen tai kansanterveyden kannalta muuhun turvalliseen loppusijoitusvaihtoehtoon?

3. Aikooko komissio selvittää, minne eurooppalaiset kuolleet hevoset päätyvät ja kuinka paljon näistä hevosista päätyy esimerkiksi elintarviketeollisuuden käyttöön ja kuluttajille suunnattujen elintarvikkeiden raaka-aineiksi?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(16. huhtikuuta 2013)

1. Komissio on tietoinen arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen mainitsemasta ongelmasta mutta ei pysty määrittämään sen laajuutta. Jäsenvaltioissa tehdyissä tarkastuksissa ilmeni puutteita hevosten jäljitettävyyttä koskevan nykyisen järjestelmän täytäntöönpanossa. Näiden tarkastusten tulosten perusteella komissio on valmistellut toimintasuunnitelman, jonka puitteissa on tarkoitus ehdottaa hevospassien pakollista kirjaamista kansalliseen keskustietokantaan sekä hevospasseja myöntäviin viranomaisiin sovellettavia tiukempia sääntöjä ja näiden viranomaisten lukumäärän rajoittamista.

2. EU:ssa syntyneet hevoset ja muut hevoseläimet on oletusarvoisesti tarkoitettu elintarvikeketjuun, jollei yksittäisten eläinten passissa ole nimenomaisesti ilmoitettu, ettei niitä ole tarkoitettu teurastettaviksi ihmisravinnoksi. Viimeksi mainitussa tapauksessa on olemassa tiukat säännöt, joilla varmistetaan näiden eläinten turvallinen loppusijoitus ja passien asianmukainen käsittely eläinten kuoltua.

3. Komission arvioiden mukaan hevosenlihan tuotanto EU:ssa on noin 50 000–55 000 tonnia vuodessa, ja omavaraisuusaste on noin 65 %. Lisäksi EU:hun tuodaan noin 30 000 tonnia hevosenlihaa vuodessa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002049/13
to the Commission
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: European horsemeat scandal

As a result of the discovery made during routine monitoring by the frozen food manufacturer Findus, a number of food manufacturers around Europe have reported in recent days that the products they have been selling to consumers do not accord with the product information provided to consumers. In many cases, products have contained horsemeat instead of beef. It has emerged from discussions that in certain European countries several thousand more horses die each year than official statistics suggest. The majority of these horses die or are slaughtered in places other than slaughterhouses.

The number of horses taken to slaughterhouses is limited, *inter alia*, by the low producer price of horsemeat and the length and cost of the transport involved. Other obstacles to slaughter may be the fact that a horse is not registered or that medicines have been administered to it. Moreover, the charges made by slaughterhouses often do not even cover the cost of bringing a horse to the slaughterhouse.

The situation is further aggravated by the fact that, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 on by-products, horses which die or are slaughtered on farms constitute waste of risk Category c, and in many Member States responsibility for disposing of the carcass rests with the animal's keeper.

As a result, many owners are interested either in burying carcasses themselves or in selling them to businesses which take them elsewhere for processing. As no one monitors such activity, it is likely that horses are illegally diverted for use as raw material in the global food industry.

1. Bearing in mind that, pursuant to Commission Regulation (EC) No 504/2008, all horses living within EU territory must have an identification document, and such particulars as the horse's date of birth and notified date of death must be entered in a database, how is it possible for thousands of horses to disappear without trace in Europe every year?

2. What action will the Commission take to ensure that owners are given the opportunity to have their horses either slaughtered safely or else finally disposed of in some other way which safeguards public health?

3. Will the Commission ascertain where dead horses go in Europe and how many of them are, for example, surrendered for use by the food industry and as raw materials in foods intended for human consumption?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the problem highlighted by the Honourable Member, although it is not in a position to quantify it. Based on the outcome of audits in the Member States that identified shortcomings in the implementation of the current system of traceability of horses, the Commission has prepared an Action Plan that envisages to propose the mandatory recording of horse passports in a central national database and more stringent rules for and a reduction in the number of passports issuing bodies.

2. Horses and other equidae born in the EU are by default intended for the food chain, unless individual animals are declared as not being intended for slaughter for human consumption in their passport. In the latter case, strict rules are in place to ensure their safe disposal and the correct handling of their passports after death.

3. The Commission estimates that the production of horsemeat in the EU amounts to approximately 50 to 55 thousand tons per year, with a self-sufficiency of about 65%. In addition, the EU imports about 30 thousand tons of horsemeat per year.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-002050/13
komissiolle
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(25. helmikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Ulkomaisten verkkohyökkäysten uhka

New York Times -sanomalehdessä julkaistiin 18. helmikuuta 2013 artikkeli (Chinese Army Unit Is Seen as Tied to Hacking Against U.S.), jossa epäiltiin, että Kiinan armeijan yksikkö yrittää murtautua yhdysvaltalaisiin tietojärjestelmiin. Artikkelissa todettiin, että Yhdysvaltain ulkoministeriön ja elintärkeää infrastruktuuria ylläpitävien yksityisten yritysten tietojärjestelmiin oli onnistuttu murtautumaan ja että verkkohyökkäykset oli käynnistetty Kiinasta. Presidentti Obama tunnusti riskit 12. helmikuuta 2013 pitämässään kansakunnan tilaa koskevassa puheessa viittaamalla yhtiöitä ja elintärkeää infrastruktuuria vastaan tehtyihin äskettäisiin hyökkäyksiin. Kun otetaan huomioon Yhdysvaltojen hälyttävä tilanne ja tarve suojella unionin kansalaisia ja infrastruktuuria, on välttämätöntä tietää, millainen riski EU:hun kohdistuu. Oikeansuuntaisia toimenpiteitä on jo toteutettu, sillä komissio on antanut yhteisen tiedonannon EU:n tietoverkkoturvallisuusstrategiasta ja verkko- ja tietoturvallisuutta käsittelevän direktiiviehdotuksen. Olisi kuitenkin tärkeää saada vastaus seuraaviin konkreettisiin kysymyksiin:

1. Voiko komissio tehdä luettelon kaikista havaituista komissiota tai muita unionin toimielimiä vastaan tehdyistä verkkohyökkäyksistä? Mistä hyökkäykset on käynnistetty? Ovatko hyökkäykset vaarantaneet tietojen luottamuksellisuuden tai tietotekniikkajärjestelmien toiminnan?

2. Miten suureksi komissio arvioi ulkomaisten verkkohyökkäysten aiheuttaman uhan EU:n elintärkeälle infrastruktuurille? Millainen uhka ulkomaisista verkkohyökkäyksistä aiheutuu EU:n yksityisille yrityksille? Onko komission tiedossa hyökkäyksiä, jotka olisivat vaarantaneet elintärkeän infrastruktuurin tai liikesalaisuuksia? Mistä hyökkäykset on siinä tapauksessa käynnistetty?

3. Mitä välittömiä toimenpiteitä komissio aikoo toteuttaa suojellakseen EU:n kansalaisia jonkun valtion myötävaikutuksella toteutetuilta verkkohyökkäyksiltä?

4. Asia on diplomaattisesti arkaluonteinen. Aikooko komissio käsitellä valtion myötävaikutuksella toteutettuja verkkohyökkäyksiä kahdenvälisesti kulloisenkin asianomaisen maan kanssa?

5. Onko komissio harkinnut EU:n ja Yhdysvaltojen välistä transatlanttista koordinointia ja tietojenvaihtoa estääkseen EU:n ja Yhdysvaltojen ulkopuolelta käynnistetyt verkkohyökkäykset?

6. Aikooko komissio varoittaa kohteita, jos tiedustelupalvelut ovat saaneet tietää, että EU:n infrastruktuuriin, yrityksiin ja hallituksiin kohdistuu verkkohyökkäyksen uhka?

Cecilia Malmströmin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(26. huhtikuuta 2013)

Komissio on tietoinen verkkohyökkäysten vakavasta uhasta, joka kohdistuu sekä EU:n toimielimiin että koko EU:n julkiseen ja yksityiseen sektoriin. Hyökkäysten lähteiden ja vakavuuden selvittäminen on vaikeaa, ja kaikkien asianosaisten pitäisi jatkossakin keskittyä siihen. Hyökkäysten yksityiskohtien julkistaminen voisi olla haitallista, koska hyökkääjät saisivat käsityksen hyökkäyksen kohteen valmiuksista.

Suojellakseen viestintä- ja tietojärjestelmiään hyökkäyksiltä komissio on laatinut sisäisen toimintasuunnitelman, jonka toimenpiteet tähtäävät hyökkäysten havaitsemiseen ja pysäyttämiseen, ihmisten kouluttamiseen ja tietoisuuden lisäämiseen. Komissio vaihtaa muiden toimielinten kanssa tietoja ja parhaita käytäntöjä vuonna 2012 perustetun tietotekniikan kriisiryhmän (CERT-EU) välityksellä.

Pystyäkseen vastaamaan alati muuttuvaan uhkaan komissio kehittää koordinoitua toimintatapaa tiiviissä yhteistyössä jäsenvaltioiden ja muiden EU:n toimielinten kanssa. Komissio ja korkea edustaja antoivat helmikuussa 2013 tiedonannon, jossa hahmotellaan EU:n näkemystä turvallisuuden lisäämiseksi tietoverkoissa ja esitetään tarvittavia toimia tietoverkkojen kestävyyden varmistamiseksi sekä jäsenvaltioissa että EU:ssa. Samaan aikaan komissio on myös tehnyt ehdotuksen verkko- ja tietoturvallisuutta käsitteleväksi direktiiviksi, jolla pyritään varmistamaan, että sekä julkinen että yksityinen sektori ovat asianmukaisesti suojattuja ongelmatilanteissa, olivatpa ne sitten hyökkäyksiä tai onnettomuuksia.

Europoliin perustettu EC3([1]) aloitti toimintansa tammikuussa 2013 ja toimii tietoverkkorikollisuuteen liittyvän tiedon ja asiantuntemuksen keskuksena. Se tarjoaa jäsenvaltioille tukea tietoverkkorikollisuuden tutkintaan ja myös edistää julkisen ja yksityisen sektorin yhteistyötä.

Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinto vastaa kahdenvälisistä suhteista kolmansien maiden kanssa. Yhdysvaltojen kanssa on käyty rakentavaa vuoropuhelua muun muassa EU:n ja Yhdysvaltojen verkkoturvallisuus- ja -rikollisuustyöryhmän välityksellä.

([1]) Euroopan verkkorikostorjuntakeskus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002050/13
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Threat of foreign cyber attacks

In a New York Times article published on 18 February 2013 ('Chinese Army Unit Is Seen as Tied to Hacking Against US'), it was reported that the US Department of State as well as private companies involved in the country's critical infrastructure had been successfully infiltrated by Chinese hacking groups. President Obama acknowledged the risks in his State of the Union address, delivered on 12 February 2013, by alluding to recent attacks on companies and critical infrastructure. In the light of the alarming US situation and in order to protect EU citizens and infrastructure, it is imperative to know the degree of risk that the EU faces. While steps have been made in the right direction — such as the Commission's joint communication on the cybersecurity strategy of the EU and the proposal for a directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union — it is nevertheless important to get answers to the following questions:

1. Could the Commission list all known cyber attacks against the Commission itself and/or other EU institutions? From which countries were the attacks launched? Did any of the attacks compromise confidential information or the functioning of IT systems?

2. What is the Commission's evaluation of the threat of foreign cyber attacks on the EU's critical infrastructure? What is the threat of foreign cyber attacks on private companies in the EU? Is the Commission aware of any cyber attacks that may have compromised critical infrastructure or trade secrets? If so, from which countries were the attacks launched?

3. What immediate action does the Commission plan to take to protect EU citizens from state-sponsored cyber attacks?

4. While acknowledging the diplomatic sensitivities involved, does the Commission plan to address the issue of state-sponsored cyber attacks bilaterally with the countries in question?

5. Has the Commission considered facilitating EU-US transatlantic coordination and information exchange with a view to preventing cyber attacks originating from outside the EU and the US?

6. In the event that security agencies obtain intelligence on future cyber threats to EU infrastructure, companies and governments, does the Commission plan to warn the targets?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the serious threat from cyber attacks, both against the EU institutions and throughout the EU in both the public and private sectors. Attribution of the sources and level of seriousness of attacks is difficult and should remain a focus for all concerned. Public disclosure of details of incidents could be counterproductive, as attackers would get an insight of the defender's capabilities.

The Commission has established an internal action plan to protect its communication and information systems against attacks, including measures aimed at detecting and stopping attacks, training and awareness raising. The Commission exchanges information and best practices in this area with other bodies via the CERT-EU set up in 2012.

To keep pace with the evolving threat, the Commission is developing a coordinated policy in close cooperation with Member States and other EU institutions. In February 2013, the Commission and the High Representative adopted a communication which outlines the EU's vision on how to enhance security in cyberspace and sets out actions required to ensure resilience at national and EU level. The Commission has also simultaneously adopted a proposal for a directive on network and information security, aimed at ensuring that the public and the private sector are adequately protected against incidents, be it attacks or accidental events.

The EC3 ([1]) within Europol was launched in January 2013 as a cybercrime information and expertise focal point, and to provide support to Member States' cybercrime investigations. It also promotes public-private cooperation.

([1]) European Cybercrime Centre.

The EEAS takes the lead on bilateral relations with third countries. Constructive dialogues have taken place with the US, including via the EU-US Working Group on cybersecurity and cybercrime.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002051/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: França «totalmente falida»

O Ministro do Trabalho francês afirmou que «há um Estado mas está totalmente falido», acrescentando que «por isso fomos forçados a impor um plano de redução do défice e nada nos fará desviar desse objetivo». Tais declarações acontecem pouco depois de François Hollande ter afirmado que o pior da crise já havia passado.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Sendo verdade a afirmação do ministro, a UE estaria capacitada a avançar com um plano de resgate para a França?

2. Há já alguma previsão do que tal implicaria em termos financeiros, económicos e institucionais?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão prossegue o controlo da evolução económica e orçamental em França através da sua própria análise independente. Desde o início da crise a França tem implementado medidas destinadas a fazer face aos desafios estruturais e orçamentais e continuamos a confiar que o país continuará a implementar as reformas necessárias. Por conseguinte, a Comissão exclui categoricamente a necessidade de um plano de resgate financeiro por parte da França. Consequentemente, não foram calculadas as implicações a nível financeiro, económico e institucional de um programa deste tipo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002051/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: France 'totally bankrupt'

France's labour minister has said of his country that 'there is a state but it is totally bankrupt', and that 'that is why we had to put a deficit reduction plan in place, and nothing should make us turn away from that objective'. These comments were made shortly after President François Hollande's assertion that the worst of the crisis was already over.

I ask the Commission:

1. If what the minister says is true, is the EU in a position to set up a bail-out plan for France?

2. Has any calculation already been made of the financial, economic and institutional implications of such a move?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

Economic and budgetary developments in France are subject to continued monitoring by the Commission through its own independent analysis. Since the beginning of the crisis France has been implementing measures to address its structural and budgetary challenges and we remain confident that the country will keep on implementing the necessary reforms. Therefore, the Commission excludes categorically that France may need a bailout programme. Accordingly, no calculation of the financial, economic and institutional implications of such a programme has been carried out.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002052/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Tecnologia portuguesa contra ataques de mosquitos

Segundo a comunicação social, investigadores da Universidade do Minho descobriram uma tecnologia que pode ser usada por qualquer pessoa na sua roupa contra os mosquitos que transmitem doenças como a malária ou a dengue.

Esta tecnologia tem uma textura semelhante à do detergente líquido usado na máquina de lavar roupa, podendo ser aplicada em casa. O coordenador do projeto explicou que o produto é «apropriado para usar como aditivo na máquina de lavar» e já foi mesmo usado na indústria dos têxteis funcionais.

A mais recente descoberta no âmbito desta nova tecnologia é a possibilidade do uso de recargas pelo próprio consumidor, o que permite o uso mais fácil da roupa em destinos tropicais e um menor dispêndio de dinheiro do que aquele normalmente envolvido na aquisição de peças de roupas que têm essas funcionalidades.

A mesma notícia dava nota de que este produto mantém a eficácia após pelo menos 50 lavagens.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Conhece esta tecnologia e os produtos com ela conexos?

— A provar-se a sua utilidade, admite promover o seu uso não apenas junto dos seus funcionários colocados em regiões onde se verificam casos de doenças transmissíveis por ação de mosquitos e de outros insetos, mas também junto das populações locais igualmente expostas à sua ação?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(12 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento da tecnologia do repelente de mosquitos referida pelo Senhor Deputado.

Sem informações adicionais, incluindo sobre a segurança do produto, a Comissão não pode tomar uma posição no que diz respeito ao uso desse produto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002052/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Portuguese mosquito-repellent technology

According to the media, researchers at Minho University have discovered a technology which any person can apply to their clothing to repel mosquitoes, which transmit diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

This product has a consistency similar to that of liquid detergent and can be used in the washing machine, meaning that it can be applied at home. The coordinator of the project explained that the product is 'suitable for use as an additive in washing machines' and has already been used in the functional textiles industry.

The latest discovery concerning this new technology is that it can be re-applied by consumers themselves, making it easier to use on clothing in tropical locations and reducing the usual cost of acquiring clothing with these properties.

The same sources reported that this product remains effective after at least 50 washes.

— Is the Commission familiar with this technology?

— If it is shown to be useful, is the Commission prepared to encourage the use of this product not only by its officials deployed in regions with a proven incidence of mosquito and insect-borne diseases, but also by local populations who are equally at risk?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission is not familiar with the mosquito-repellent technology referred to by the Honourable Member.

Without further information, including on the safety of the product, the Commission is not able to take a position regarding the use of the product.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002053/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Crise da carne de cavalo: destino a dar aos produtos em bom estado

Devido à disseminação da carne de cavalo em diversos produtos vendidos por variadas empresas, estas viram-se na necessidade de retirar os referidos produtos da circulação, devido à desconformidade da sua composição efetiva com aquela que era publicitada pela rotulagem dos mesmos. No entanto, presume-se que boa parte desses alimentos possa estar em condições de ser consumida e não pode deixar de lamentar-se a sua destruição pura e simples, quando existem casos de carências alimentares em diversos países europeus a que urge acorrer.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Está em condições de avaliar o volume de produtos contendo carne de cavalo que foram retirados do mercado?

— Confirma que estes produtos, na sua maioria, não apresentam risco para a saúde pública? E que correm o risco de virem a ser destruídos, aumentando o desperdício alimentar no seio da União Europeia?

— Uma vez que existem diversas instituições sociais, famílias e indivíduos que poderiam não levantar obstáculos ao consumo da carne de cavalo, estaria disponível para considerar intervir junto dos Estados-Membros e das empresas visadas para que estes não destruíssem simplesmente os produtos retirados do mercado, mas cedessem às instituições, famílias e indivíduos (sobretudo aos que mais necessitassem) os que se encontram em bom estado?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

Não é possível fornecer dados exatos sobre as quantidades de produtos com carne de cavalo que foram retirados do mercado. Com base no *statu quo* em 26 de fevereiro de 2013 do sistema de alerta rápido para os géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais (RASFF) da Comissão, cerca de 3 600 toneladas de alimentos transformados encontravam-se implicados na adulteração e foram retirados do mercado ([1]). Tendo em conta que, desde então, foram recebidas pelo RASFF, adicionalmente, mais de 20 notificações, é provável que já tenham sido retiradas substancialmente mais do que as 3 600 toneladas comunicadas, no total.

Não há riscos para a saúde pública em relação à fraude de carne de cavalo comunicada ao sistema de alerta rápido para os géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais da Comissão.

A legislação alimentar da UE ([2]) requer que os operadores das empresas do setor alimentar retirem um alimento do mercado sempre que este infrinja as exigências em matéria de segurança dos alimentos. A Comissão considera que, se não há nenhum problema de segurança, nomeadamente no que se refere a resíduos nocivos na carne, os produtos à base de carne mal rotulados podem ser rotulados de novo com os ingredientes corretos mediante supervisão das autoridades competentes. Em seguida, estes produtos à base de carne portadores de novos rótulos podem ser novamente colocados no mercado.

([1]) Advertência: trata-se de informações factuais sobre o que é indicado no RASFF (e, por conseguinte, devem ser vistas como um valor mínimo) com quantidades de alimentos preparados extrapoladas na base de que um prato preparado leva cerca de 20 % de carne picada.

([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 178/2002 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 28 de janeiro de 2002 , que determina os princípios e normas gerais da legislação alimentar, cria a Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos e estabelece procedimentos em matéria de segurança dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 31 de 1.2.2002, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002053/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Horsemeat crisis: destination of edible products

The discovery of horsemeat in several products sold by various companies means that these products must be taken off the shelves, as their actual contents do not match those advertised on the labels. Presumably, however, most of these foodstuffs are perfectly edible and it is a shame to have them destroyed, given the urgent food shortages in several European countries.

— Can the Commission assess the volume of products containing horsemeat that have been withdrawn from the market?

— Can it confirm that most of these products do not pose a public health risk? Are they at risk of being destroyed, thereby increasing food waste within the EU?

— Given that several social institutions, families and individuals might not object to eating horsemeat, is it prepared to intervene with the Member States and the companies involved to prevent them from simply destroying products withdrawn from the market and to have them donate edible products to institutions, families and individuals (especially those most in need)?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

It is not possible to give accurate data on the amounts of products containing horsemeat that have been withdrawn from the market. Based on the state of play on 26th February 2013 of the Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) about 3600 tonnes of processed foods were implicated in the adulteration and were withdrawn from the market ([1]). Taking into account that in addition more than 20 notifications where received by the RASFF since then, it is likely that already substantially more than the reported 3600 tonnes are withdrawn in total.

There are no public health risks in relation to the horse meat fraud reported to the Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed.

EU food legislation ([2]) requires food business operators to withdraw a food in cases of its non-compliance with the food safety requirements. The Commission considers that if there is no safety problem concerning in particular harmful residues in the meat, the mis-labelled meat products can be re-labelled with the correct ingredients under the supervision of the competent authorities. Then these re-labelled meat products can be placed again on the market.

([1]) Caveat: it concerns factual information of what is reported in RASFF (and thus to be seen as a minimum) with quantities of prepared food extrapolated on the basis that around 20% of minced meat is used in a prepared dish.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002054/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Maior apreensão de euros falsos a nível mundial

A Polícia Judiciária portuguesa deteve na noite passada um homem com 1 901 notas falsas de 200 euros no valor total de 380 mil e 200 euros, considerando que esta operação consubstanciou a «maior apreensão de euros efetuada a nível mundial».

Segundo a Polícia Judiciária, «a moeda falsa em causa é de excecional qualidade, reportando-se a uma contrafação existente desde 2002, disseminada por todo o mundo, tendo sido assinalada a sua passagem em maiores quantidades sobretudo em Espanha, em Itália, na Alemanha, na Bulgária e em Portugal».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento desta situação?

— A existência de notas de euro falsas de elevada qualidade levanta-lhe dúvidas acerca da segurança da moeda europeia?

— Dispõe de informações ou estimativas acerca do volume de notas de euro falsas em circulação?

— Recomendaria ao BCE a inclusão de novas formas de reforçar a segurança das notas de euro a emitir futuramente?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

1. A Comissão foi informada sobre a apreensão a que o Senhor Deputado se refere, levada a cabo no Porto em 20 de fevereiro de 2012.

2. A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta E-2154/13.

3. De acordo com o comunicado de imprensa semestral do Banco Central Europeu (BCE) um total de 531 mil notas de euro falsificadas foram retiradas de circulação em 2012 ([1]). Quando comparado com o número de notas de euro genuínas em circulação (em média 14, 9 mil milhões durante a segunda metade de 2012), a proporção de falsificações permanece baixa. Não existem estimativas oficiais acerca do volume de notas de euro falsas em circulação. A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta E-4161/12.

4. Em 8 de novembro de 2012, o BCE anunciou a introdução da segunda série de notas em euros — a série «Europa». As novas notas serão introduzidas gradualmente ao longo de vários anos, começando pela nota de 5 euros em 2 de maio de 2013. A nova série incluirá elementos de segurança novos e melhorados que irão proporcionar uma melhor proteção contra a falsificação. O BCE criou um sítio Web dedicado à nota de euro (www.newfaceoftheeuro.eu), com especial enfoque na série Europa e nos seus avançados elementos de segurança. No plano político e legislativo, a Comissão propôs, em fevereiro de 2013, uma diretiva com o objetivo de reforçar a proteção do euro e outras moedas contra a falsificação através de medidas de direito penal ([2]). Estas medidas irão melhorar as sanções aplicáveis à produção e distribuição de moeda falsa, as investigações transfronteiriças e a análise de falsificações durante os processos judiciais. A Comissão insta o Parlamento e o Conselho a adotarem rapidamente a diretiva.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/press/pr/date/2013/html/pr130110_2.pt.html
([2]) Proposta de diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa à proteção penal do euro e de outras moedas contra a contrafação e que substitui a Decisão-Quadro 2000/383/JAI do Conselho, [COM(2013)42, 2013/0023 (COD)].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002054/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: World's largest ever seizure of counterfeit euros

Last night the Portuguese criminal police arrested a man in possession of 1 901 counterfeit EUR 200 notes, with a value of EUR 380 200, in what was called the 'world's largest ever seizure of fake euro notes'.

According to the criminal police, the counterfeit notes in question are of exceptional quality and of a type which has been in worldwide circulation since 2002, with the largest numbers appearing mainly in Spain, Italy, Germany, Bulgaria and Portugal.

— Is the Commission aware of this situation?

— Does the existence of high quality fake euro notes call into question the security of Europe's currency?

— Does the Commission have any information or estimates concerning the volume of counterfeit notes in circulation?

— Will it recommend that the ECB incorporate new safety features into euro notes issued in future?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

1. The Commission has been informed about the seizure carried out in Porto on 20.2.2012 to which the Honourable Member refers.

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-2154/13.

3. According to the bi-annual press release of the European Central Bank (ECB) a total of 531,000 counterfeit euro banknotes were withdrawn from circulation in 2012 ([1]). When compared with the number of genuine euro banknotes in circulation (on average 14.9 billion during the second half of 2012), the proportion of counterfeits remains low. There are no official estimates concerning the volume of counterfeit notes in circulation. The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-4161/12.

4. On 8 November 2012 the ECB has announced the introduction of the second series of euro banknotes — the Europa series. The new banknotes will be introduced gradually over several years, starting with the euro 5 banknote on 2 May 2013. The new series is to include new and enhanced security features which will offer better protection against counterfeiting. The ECB created a euro banknote website (www.newfaceoftheeuro.eu), with a special focus on the Europa series and its advanced security features. On the policy and legislative side the Commission proposed, in February 2013 a directive to strengthen the protection of the euro and other currencies against counterfeiting through criminal law measures ([2]). These measures shall improve the sanctions against production and distribution of counterfeits, cross-border investigations and the analysis of counterfeits during judicial proceedings. The Commission calls on the Parliament and Council to have it swiftly adopted.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/press/pr/date/2013/html/pr130110_2.en.html
([2]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of the euro and other currencies against counterfeiting by criminal law and replacing Council Framework Decision 2000/383/JHA (COM(2013)42; 2013/0023 (COD)).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002055/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Zimbabué: referendo de 16 de março de 2013

No próximo dia 16 de março de 2013 terá lugar no Zimbabué um referendo visando estabelecer limites aos mandatos presidenciais e à sua imunidade, que, muito provavelmente, antecipará a futura disputa eleitoral entre o presidente Robert Mugabe e o primeiro-ministro Morgan Tsvangirai. Este será o primeiro ato eleitoral após as violentas e contestadas eleições de 2008, temendo-se que a violência entre partidos rivais possa recrudescer à medida que se aproximar a data do referendo e após o anúncio dos seus resultados.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— A União Europeia enviou observadores eleitores para o Zimbabué para acompanhar o processo que culminará no dia 16 de março de 2013? Que apreciação fazem do processo em curso?

— Que avaliação faz da coabitação entre o presidente Robert Mugabe e o primeiro-ministro Morgan Tsvangirai?

— Como avalia a presente situação do Zimbabué?

— Em que medida a segurança e os interesses europeus continuam postos em causa naquele país africano? Nomeadamente, têm-se registado ocupações de terras e atos de violência contra europeus?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(7 de junho de 2013)

A União Europeia regista com satisfação a realização do referendo constitucional em 16 de março de 2013. A UE não enviou observadores para o referendo, considerando que cabe às autoridades do Zimbabué a decisão de convidar missões de observação internacionais. Neste contexto, a UE saúda a sólida missão de observação desenvolvida pela Comunidade de Desenvolvimento da África Austral (SADC) e a extensa participação no referendo de observadores nacionais e da sociedade civil.

O Acordo Político Global liderado pelo Presidente Mugabe e pelo Primeiro-Ministro Morgan Tsvangirai tem criado, desde 2009, uma certa estabilidade em termos de recuperação económica. O espaço político mostra sinais de abertura, a situação geral dos direitos humanos melhorou e o sistema judiciário tem demonstrado independência política. Ao mesmo tempo, muitos desafios continuam por resolver. O programa de reforma agrária continua a afetar explorações que são propriedade de estrangeiros, incluindo explorações pertencentes a europeus. Em especial, a situação das reservas que são propriedade privada na parte meridional do país é motivo de preocupação. O Governo do Zimbabué criou um comité ministerial de alto nível para a resolução do conflito e acordou em que certas explorações agrícolas não devem ser incluídas no futuro programa de reformas, embora a situação continue a ser imprevisível. Apesar da política de propaganda negativa no Zimbabué contra os países ocidentais, não existe atualmente uma ameaça específica à segurança dos europeus no Zimbabué ou contra os residentes no Zimbabué com nacionalidade ou passaporte europeus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002055/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Zimbabwe: referendum on 16 March 2013

On 16 March 2013, Zimbabwe is to hold a referendum which will limit presidential terms and immunity and which will in all likelihood set the stage for the future electoral challenge between President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. This will be the first electoral activity since the violent and disputed 2008 elections and has raised fears that violence could break out again between the rival parties in the run-up to the referendum and once the results are announced.

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

— Did the EU send electoral observers to Zimbabwe to monitor the process leading up to the 16 March 2013 referendum? What is her assessment of the current process?

— What is her assessment of the co-existence between President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai?

— How does she view the current situation in Zimbabwe?

— To what extent is there still a threat to security and European interests in Zimbabwe? In particular, have there been any cases of land occupation and violence directed against Europeans?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The EU notes with satisfaction that the constitutional referendum was held on 16 March 2013. The EU did not send EU observers to the referendum as it is for the Zimbabwean authorities to decide and invite international observation missions. In this context the EU welcomes the robust observation mission deployed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the extensive participation of domestic and civil society observers in the referendum.

The Global Political Agreement spearheaded by President Mugabe and Prime Minister Tsvangirai has, since 2009, achieved a measure of stability in terms of economic recovery. The political space is opening, the general human rights situation has improved and the judiciary has demonstrated political independence. At the same time, many challenges remain. The land reform programme continues to affect foreign owned farms, including farms owned by Europeans. In particular, the situation in the privately owned conservancies in the Southern part of the country is raising concern. The Zimbabwean Government has put a high level ministerial committee in place for the resolution of the conflict and has agreed that certain farms should not be included in the future reform programme, although the situation remains unpredictable. Despite negative propaganda against Western countries' policy on Zimbabwe, there is for the time being no particular security threat to Europeans in Zimbabwe or against Zimbabwean residents with European nationality/passport.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002056/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Manter o apoio ao Ruanda — apelo de Tony Blair

Num artigo publicado no dia 21 de fevereiro de 2013 na revista «Foreign Policy», o ex-primeiro-ministro britânico Tony Blair e Howard G. Buffett, empresário e presidente da fundação sua homónima, apelaram à comunidade internacional para pôr fim à suspensão da ajuda ao Ruanda; essa suspensão está relacionada com o papel das autoridades deste país no conflito da vizinha República Democrática do Congo, que terá privado o país de uma ajuda de cerca de 245 milhões de dólares.

Nas palavras dos autores, «ao reduzir a ajuda ao Ruanda corre-se o risco de anular uma das grandes histórias de sucesso de África. Nos últimos cinco anos o Ruanda retirou 1 milhão de pessoas da pobreza, criou 1 milhão de empregos novos e preparava-se para atingir a maioria dos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio da ONU».

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Que apreciação faz do artigo de Tony Blair e Howard G. Buffett?

— Como avalia as consequências para as populações da retirada de apoio internacional ao Ruanda?

— A União Europeia manteve o seu apoio ao país? Em que áreas principais se concentra?

— Como avalia a presente situação do Ruanda? Como perspetiva a sua evolução?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

Na sequência da recente crise na região dos Grandes Lagos, a UE apelou a que todas as partes interessadas promovessem uma paz sustentável e assegurassem a sua parte de responsabilidade no processo, valorizando simultaneamente uma dinâmica regional positiva. A UE condenou todo o apoio externo a grupos armados e sublinhou a necessidade de respeitar a soberania da RDC.

Em coordenação com os Estados-Membros e com outros membros da comunidade internacional, a UE decidiu, em setembro de 2012, adiar quaisquer novas decisões quanto ao apoio orçamental suplementar ao Ruanda. Os programas de auxílio já iniciados continuam em curso.

Uma suspensão total da ajuda internacional ao Ruanda teria um impacto significativo na situação orçamental do país, mas afetaria também diretamente a população e os esforços realizados para a realização dos ODM.

Desde então, na sequência de um compromisso regional renovado e do envolvimento do Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas, foi possível abrir caminho a uma solução negociada. Essa solução baseia-se em termos mutuamente acordados, tanto a nível regional como com a RDC, no âmbito de um «Acordo-Quadro» assinado em fevereiro de 2013.

Esta evolução positiva, bem como a situação orçamental global do Ruanda, levou a que se retomassem os trabalhos quanto às decisões de apoio orçamental setorial, em particular a favor dos mais pobres.

A UE está disposta a apoiar a implementação e monitorização deste complexo acordo. O objetivo será prosseguir a abordagem construtiva já demonstrada pela RDC e por todos os seus vizinhos na procura de um futuro sustentável para a região dos Grandes Lagos.

Os principais domínios de cooperação da UE com o Ruanda, no quadro do atual ciclo de cooperação, têm sido o desenvolvimento rural e o apoio às infraestruturas. A UE continuará a apoiar o processo de democratização e o respeito pelos direitos humanos naquele país. O reforço da cooperação regional contribuirá, em última análise, para a estabilidade e o desenvolvimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002056/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Maintaining aid for Rwanda: an appeal by Tony Blair

In an article published on 21 February 2013 in Foreign Policy magazine, former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and Howard G. Buffett, entrepreneur and president of the foundation that bears his name, called on the international community to lift the suspension on aid to Rwanda. The suspension was imposed because of the role played by the Rwandan authorities in the conflict in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, and has deprived Rwanda of approximately USD 245 million in aid.

In the authors' words, 'cutting aid to Rwanda also risks undoing one of Africa's great success stories. In the last five years, Rwanda has lifted 1 million people out of poverty, created 1 million new jobs and is poised to meet most of the UN Millennium Development Goals.'

— What is the Vice-President/High Representative's opinion of the article by Tony Blair and Howard G. Buffett?

— What consequences does she think removing international aid for Rwanda will have for the population?

— Has the EU maintained its aid for Rwanda? To which areas is this aid primarily channelled?

— What is her view of the current situation in Rwanda? What are the prospects for the future?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Following the recent crisis in the Great Lakes region, the EU urged all stakeholders to promote a sustainable peace and to ensure their part of responsibility in the process, while calling for a positive regional dynamic. It has condemned any external support to armed groups and stressed the need for respect of DRC's sovereignty.

In coordination with Member States and other members of the international community, the EU decided, in September 2012, to postpone new decisions on additional budget support to Rwanda. Ongoing aid programmes continued.

A full suspension of the international aid to Rwanda would have had a significant impact on its budgetary situation, but also directly affects the population and efforts made towards the achievement of the MDGs.

Since then, following a renewed regional commitment and the UNSG implication, the path for a negotiated solution could be reached. It is based on mutually agreed engagements both from the region and from the DRC in a 'Framework Agreement', signed in February 2013.

This positive development, and the overall budgetary situation in Rwanda, led to the decision to resume decisions on sectoral budget support in particular on pro-poor grounds.

The EU is ready to support the implementation and monitoring of this complex agreement. It aims at continuing the constructive approach demonstrated by the DRC and all its neighbours in the search of a sustainable future for the Great Lakes region.

The main areas for the EU cooperation in Rwanda during the current cooperation cycle have been rural development and support for infrastructure. The EU will support further democratisation and respect for human rights in the country. Finally stronger regional cooperation will contribute to stability and development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002057/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Coreia do Norte — testes nucleares

Os recentes testes nucleares norte-coreanos suscitaram uma justa preocupação por parte da comunidade internacional e motivaram uma declaração firme por parte da Alta Representante, que desde já se saúda.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— De momento, que sanções aplica à Coreia do Norte? Que avaliação faz do resultado das mesmas?

— Considerando que a sucessão do anterior líder Kim Jong-Il permitiu acalentar alguma esperança na renovação da ditadura norte-coreana, como avalia a presente situação daquele país?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(2 de maio de 2013)

As sanções da UE têm por objeto os programas nucleares e de mísseis balísticos da República Popular Democrática da Coreia; as medidas incluem proibições à exportação e importação de armas, a proibição à exportação e importação de determinados produtos e tecnologias suscetíveis de contribuir para os programas de armamento da RPDC (por exemplo, certos tipos de alumínio); medidas nos setores financeiro e comercial destinadas a restringir as relações financeiras por parte do regime em relação a esses programas; medidas no setor dos transportes; vigilância e inspeção de cargas suspeitas provenientes da RPDC ou a ela destinadas. Atualmente, 26 pessoas e 33 entidades são alvo de medidas restritivas da UE (proibição de viajar e proibição de contactos comerciais, no caso das sociedades).

O regime de sanções da UE apoia o regime da ONU. É imprescindível que a comunidade internacional global apoie e defenda o regime mundial de não-proliferação. As medidas autónomas da UE contribuem diretamente para a pressão internacional exercida sobre a RPDC e para a credibilidade da comunidade internacional.

Apesar da ascensão ao poder de uma terceira geração de dirigentes — e da esperança de uma mudança sob a nova liderança —, de algumas tentativas inconclusivas de reforma económica e da alteração do contexto global, não parecem verificar-se quaisquer mudanças positivas no país.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002057/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Nuclear tests in North Korea

The recent nuclear tests conducted by North Korea have raised legitimate concerns amongst the international community and drew a strong statement from the High Representative, which I welcome.

— What sanctions are currently imposed on North Korea? What does the Vice-President/High Representative think they have achieved?

— Given that the succession of former leader Kim Jong-Il gave cause for cautious optimism in terms of a transformation in the North Korean dictatorship, what is her view of the current situation in the country?

Answer given by High-Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

EU sanctions are targeted at the nuclear and ballistic missile programs of the DPRK; measures include prohibitions on the export and import of arms, a ban on the export and import of certain goods and technology which could contribute to the DPRK's weapons programmes (e.g. certain types of aluminium); measures in the financial and trade sectors which aim to restrict financial dealings by the regime in relation to such programs; measures in the transport sector; vigilance and inspection of suspect cargo to and from DPRK. Currently 26 persons and 33 entities are subject to the EU's restrictive measures (travel ban and ban on commercial contacts in case of companies).

The EU's sanctions regime supports the UN regime. It is essential that international community upholds and defends the global non-proliferation regime. EU's autonomous measures contribute directly to international pressure upon the DPRK and to the credibility of the international community.

Despite a third generation of leaders — and hopes for change under new leadership —, some inconclusive attempts at economic reform and a changed global context, there does not appear to be any positive change in the country.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002058/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Acordo de Associação União Europeia-Ucrânia: ponto da situação

Já por diversas vezes foi anunciada a iminência da assinatura do Acordo de Associação entre a União Europeia e a Ucrânia. Não obstante, problemas posteriores vêm impedindo a sua assinatura.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Como avalia o atual estado das relações entre a UE e a Ucrânia?

— Prevê alguma evolução tendente à Assinatura do Acordo de Associação?

— Quais são, em seu entender, os problemas principais que obstam à sua assinatura?

— Reconhece a existência de progressos nesta matéria? Quais?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(23 de abril de 2013)

A UE segue uma política de compromisso com a Ucrânia que visa a associação política e integração económica baseadas no respeito por valores comuns. A UE reconhece as aspirações europeias da Ucrânia e congratula-se com a sua escolha europeia.

Tal como reafirmado nas conclusões de 10 de dezembro de 2012 do Conselho Negócios Estrangeiros, a UE está empenhada em assinar o Acordo de Associação, que inclui uma zona de comércio livre aprofundada e abrangente, assim que a Ucrânia demonstre determinação e progressos tangíveis em determinados parâmetros de referência concretos em três domínios, eventualmente por ocasião da Cimeira da Parceria Oriental de novembro de 2013. Os três domínios são o seguimento dado às irregularidades verificadas nas eleições parlamentares de outubro, a reparação dos casos de justiça seletiva e os avanços das reformas previstas na Agenda de Associação conjuntamente acordada.

Os progressos da Ucrânia na aplicação destes padrões de referência estão a ser seguidos de perto. A UE deixou bem claro que não assinará o acordo sem a tomada de medidas concretas e progressos tangíveis nos domínios referidos. A Ucrânia manifestou o seu empenho em assinar rapidamente o acordo e em aplicar as medidas necessárias previstas nas conclusões do Conselho de dezembro, incluindo a declaração conjunta da Cimeira UE-Ucrânia de 25 de fevereiro de 2013. Até agora, registaram-se alguns progressos na aplicação dos padrões de referência da UE, nomeadamente no que se refere ao alargamento do mandato do tribunal de contas, sendo ainda necessários esforços substanciais no que se refere à maior parte dos padrões de referência.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002058/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Ukraine Association Agreement: situation update

It has been announced on several occasions that the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement is on the point of being signed. Nevertheless, subsequent problems have prevented this signature from taking place.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative therefore answer the following:

— How does she assess the current state of EU-Ukraine relations?

— Does she foresee any shift towards the signature of the Association Agreement?

— What does she see as being the main obstacles to its signature?

— Has she observed any progress on this matter? If so, in what terms?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The EU maintains a policy of engagement with Ukraine towards political association and economic integration based on the respect for common values. The EU acknowledges the European aspirations of Ukraine and welcomes its European choice.

As reaffirmed by the 10 December 2012 conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council, the EU is committed to the signing of the Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, as soon as Ukraine demonstrates determined action and tangible progress on a number of concrete benchmarks in three areas, possibly by the time of the Eastern Partnership Summit in November 2013. These are following up on the shortcomings of the October parliamentary elections, addressing the cases of selective justice and preventing recurrence and progressing on the reforms set out in the jointly agreed Association Agenda.

Ukraine's progress in implementing these benchmarks is being closely monitored. The EU has made clear that it will not sign the agreement unless determined action and tangible progress on the benchmarks are achieved. Ukraine has expressed its commitment to the early signing of the agreement and to implementing the necessary measures set out by the December Council conclusions, including in the joint statement by the EU-Ukraine Summit on 25 February 2013. So far, there has been some progress in the implementation of the EU's benchmarks, e.g. as regards the broadening of the remit of the accounting chamber, but substantial efforts are still needed on most benchmarks.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002059/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Quarto Pacote Ferroviário

A Comissão Europeia apresentou uma série de medidas respeitantes ao setor ferroviário — o chamado quarto pacote ferroviário — que visam aumentar a oferta e a qualidade dos serviços de transporte deste tipo.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Por que formas e através de que meios pretende alcançar os objetivos a que se propôs?

— Quais são os principais obstáculos ao sucesso das medidas que preconiza?

— Vem encontrando resistências dos Estados-Membros às suas propostas? Quais?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

Em 30 de janeiro de 2013, a Comissão adotou um pacote completo de seis propostas legislativas que visam assegurar melhor qualidade e aumentar a oferta dos serviços ferroviários na Europa. A Comissão avaliou em profundidade os seus impactos, custos e benefícios, no âmbito dos estudos de impacto ([1]).

A Comissão considera que o caminho de ferro pode desempenhar um papel mais importante na resposta aos desafios que a UE enfrenta no setor dos transportes, nomeadamente a procura crescente, o congestionamento, a segurança do abastecimento de combustíveis e a redução das emissões carbónicas. O desafio é importante visto que muitos mercados ferroviários europeus estão a enfrentar situações de estagnação ou declínio.

O objetivo da Comissão é promover a inovação no setor ferroviário europeu, a fim de satisfazer as expectativas dos utilizadores. Tal resultado pode ser alcançado através de três meios diferentes e inter-relacionados:

1. Reforçar o papel da Agência Ferroviária Europeia que passaria ao nível da UE as autorizações de colocação de veículos no mercado e os certificados de segurança para os operadores, evitando, assim, atrasos no processo de regulamentação, reduzindo os custos dos veículos ferroviários e dando-lhes maior flexibilidade de circulação na UE a fim de criar novos serviços.

2. Garantir a eficiência e promover a inovação no domínio dos serviços públicos através de concursos públicos, assegurando ao mesmo tempo a continuidade das redes integradas. Permitir a concorrência na prestação de serviços comerciais.

3. Reforçar a independência dos gestores de infraestruturas, de modo a que estes possam controlar todas as funções essenciais da rede ferroviária e proporcionar a todos o acesso ao caminho de ferro em condições de igualdade, o que incentivaria a entrada de novos operadores no mercado.

As medidas propostas exigem o fim da segmentação dos mercados nacionais e uma mudança cultural, de modo a criar um espaço ferroviário europeu único.

Ao longo do processo legislativo, atualmente em curso, a Comissão vai continuar a advogar um ambicioso sistema de ferroviário ao nível da UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002059/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Fourth Railway Package

The Commission has put forward a series of measures for the railway sector — known as the Fourth Railway Package — which aims to improve the availability and quality of transport services of this type.

Can the Commission say:

— How and by what means does it intend to achieve the proposed aims?

— What are the main obstacles to the success of the proposed measures?

— Has it met with resistance to its proposals on the part of the Member States? If so, in what way?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

On 30 January 2013 the Commission adopted a comprehensive package of six legislative proposals to deliver better quality and more choice in rail services in Europe. The Commission thoroughly evaluated their impacts, costs and benefits in the impact assessments ([1]).

The Commission believes that rail can play a greater role in addressing EU transport challenges such as rising demand, congestion, fuel security and decarbonisation. The challenge is important for many European rail markets are facing stagnation or decline.

The Commission objective is to encourage more innovation in EU railways to meet users expectations. This can be achieved through three different and interrelated means:

1. Strengthening the role of the European Railway Agency which would issue EU wide vehicle authorisations for placing on the market and safety certificates for operators: this should avoid delays in the regulatory process, make rail vehicles cheaper, and give greater flexibility to move them around the EU in order to develop new services.

2. Ensuring efficiency and innovation in public services through the use of public tendering, while ensuring the preservation of integrated networks. Allowing competition in the provision of commercial services.

3. Strengthening the independence of infrastructure managers so that they control all the functions at the heart of the rail network and ensure fair access for all to the railway, which should encourage new entrants.

The proposed measures require overcoming the segmentation of the national markets and a change of culture in order to create a Single European Railway Area.

The Commission will continue to advocate an ambitious rail system at EU level throughout the legislative process currently underway.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002060/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Regiões ultraperiféricas — Reforço da cooperação territorial

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-009190/2012, o senhor Comissário Andris Piebalgs declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «para o período posterior a 2013, a Comissão propôs que fosse reforçada a cooperação territorial envolvendo as regiões ultraperiféricas financiada pelo FEDER».

1. Que acolhimento obteve a proposta da Comissão?

2. Quais as matérias, relativas às regiões ultraperiféricas, em que a Comissão considera particularmente importante a efetivação de um reforço da cooperação territorial financiada pelo FEDER?

3. De que modo concreto poderá verificar-se esse reforço e quais os principais obstáculos ao mesmo?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2013)

A proposta legislativa da Comissão com vista a um regulamento do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) no que diz respeito ao objetivo de Cooperação Territorial Europeia reforça o apoio a projetos conjuntos entre as regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP), por um lado, e os países terceiros e países e territórios ultramarinos (PTU), por outro, principalmente através de um aumento da sua dotação financeira e uma maior percentagem de apoio do FEDER à execução do projeto fora do território da UE. Esta proposta foi aceite pelas partes interessadas.

A fim de realizar os programas de cooperação com sucesso, as RUP, os PTU e os países terceiros envolvidos terão, em primeiro lugar, que estabelecer um diálogo, identificar interesses comuns e formular adequadamente os programas conjuntos. A Comissão irá facilitar este processo. Cabe às RUP identificar as áreas relevantes em que deve ser reforçada a cooperação territorial financiada pelo FEDER, tendo em conta os seus interesses comuns, a proximidade e os laços culturais e históricos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002060/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Outermost regions — reinforcing territorial cooperation

In the Commission's answer to my Written Question E-009190/2012, Commissioner Andris Piebalgs said that 'for the post-2013 period the Commission has proposed that territorial cooperation financed under the ERDF involving the Outermost Regions should be reinforced'.

1. How was the Commission's proposal received?

2. In which areas relevant to the outermost regions does the Commission consider it most important to reinforce territorial cooperation financed under the ERDF?

3. What specific form can this reinforcement take and what are the main obstacles to it?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission's legislative proposal for an European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) regulation for the European Territorial Cooperation goal reinforces support for joint projects between the outermost regions (ORs) on the one hand, and non-Member States and overseas countries and territories (OCTs) on the other hand, mainly through an increase in their financial allocation and an increased percentage of ERDF support for project implementation outside the territory of the EU. This proposal has been welcomed by the stakeholders.

In order to carry out cooperation programmes successfully, the ORs, the OCTs and the non-Member States concerned first have to establish a dialogue, identify common interests and formulate accordingly the joint programmes. The Commission will facilitate this process. The relevant areas where territorial cooperation financed under the ERDF should be strengthened are for the ORs to identify, taking into account their common interests, proximity, historical and cultural links.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002061/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Cooperação Transnacional Madeira-Açores-Canárias — balanço

A Comissão Europeia aprovou, a 18 de setembro de 2007, um programa de cooperação territorial europeia para a cooperação transnacional entre os arquipélagos da Madeira e dos Açores (Portugal) e das Ilhas Canárias (Espanha) para o período de 2007-2013, designado «Programa de Cooperação Transnacional Madeira — Açores — Canárias (MAC) 2007-2013».

O programa prevê o apoio comunitário para as três regiões insulares atlânticas NUTS II nos países participantes, no âmbito do objetivo de cooperação territorial europeia. Segundo a Comissão, o orçamento total do programa ronda os 65 milhões de euros e a intervenção comunitária através do FEDER é de cerca de 55 milhões de euros.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que balanço faz deste programa e dos seus objetivos?

— Quais das quatro prioridades do programa destaca como tendo sido mais utilizadas e bem-sucedidas no contexto das regiões ultraperiféricas beneficiárias do programa? E, pelo contrário, aquelas em que os resultados foram mais dececionantes?

— Encontra-se previsto um programa futuro com características idênticas? Que orçamento total e que intervenção comunitária terá? Que alterações destaca neste programa face ao programa vigente?

— Sendo um dos objetivos do programa o desenvolvimento dos terceiros países do espaço geográfico e sendo Cabo Verde um dos países mais próximos — situado na mesma região da Macaronésia — e aquele que tem mais afinidades históricas, linguísticas, sociais, culturais e económicas com as três regiões europeias e mesmo com a União Europeia, beneficiou este país lusófono deste programa? Em que termos?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2013)

A execução do programa da Madeira, dos Açores e das Canárias está a avançar a bom ritmo e o seu acompanhamento não revelou qualquer desvio significativo em relação aos objetivos inicialmente fixados.

O orçamento do programa foi autorizado na íntegra. A avaliação dos resultados do programa será levada a cabo no quadro da avaliação *ex post* de todos os programas de cooperação territorial.

A futura programação está numa fase preliminar, sujeita ao resultado das negociações do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual para 2014-2020 e do futuro regulamento relativo à Cooperação Territorial Europeia.

O atual programa estimula a cooperação com os países terceiros, no contexto de uma política de vizinhança alargada em prol das regiões ultraperiféricas. O orçamento do FEDER destina-lhe 24 milhões de euros (ou seja, 46 % do total da contribuição FEDER do programa, com exclusão da assistência técnica). A participação de parceiros de Cabo Verde tem sido significativa, totalizando 53 participantes em 44 projetos (de um total de 56 projetos aprovados). Mais informações sobre os projetos em (http://www.pct-mac.org/). Podem ainda ser encontradas mais informações em linha nos sítios web dos projetos como, por exemplo, do projeto Islhàgua (http://www.islhagua.org).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002061/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Transnational Cooperation Programme Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands — assessment

On 18 September 2007, the Commission adopted a European territorial cooperation programme for transnational cooperation between the archipelagos of Madeira and the Azores (Portugal) and the Canary Islands (Spain) for the period 2007-2013. This programme is known as the Transnational Cooperation Programme Madeira-Azores–Canary Islands (MAC) 2007-2013.

This programme involves community support for the three NUTS II Atlantic island areas in the participating countries within the framework of the European territorial cooperation objective. According to the Commission, the total budget for the programme is around EUR 65 million and EU investment through the European Regional Development Fund amounts to around EUR 55 million.

What is the Commission's assessment of this programme and its objectives?

Which of the programme's four priorities stands out as being the most used and most successful in terms of the outermost regions benefiting from it? By contrast, which priorities produced the most disappointing results?

Is a future programme with these characteristics being planned? What is its total budget and what EU investment will it receive? How does this programme differ from the current programme?

Given that one of the programme's objectives is to aid the development of third countries within the geographical area and as Cape Verde is one of the nearest countries (also being located in Macaronesia) and the one with the closest historical, linguistic, social, cultural and economic ties to the three European regions and the European Union itself, has this Portuguese-speaking country benefited from this programme? On what terms?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

Implementation of the Madeira, Azores and Canary Islands programme is progressing well and the monitoring of the programme has not revealed any significant departure from the goals initially set.

The budget of the programme has been entirely committed. The assessment of the results of the programme will be carried out in the framework of the *ex post* evaluation of all territorial cooperation programmes.

Future programming is at a preliminary stage and subject to the outcome of the negotiations on the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework and on the future European Territorial Cooperation regulation.

The current programme stimulates cooperation with third countries in the context of a wider neighbourhood policy for the outermost regions. The earmarked ERDF budget is EUR 24 million (i.e. 46% of total ERDF of the programme, excluding technical assistance). Participation of partners from Cape Verde has been significant; 53 Cape Verdean partners participate in 44 projects (out of a total of 56 approved projects). Further details on projects can be found on the programme website (http://www.pct-mac.org/). In addition, many projects provide information online, e.g. the ISLHÀGUA project (http://www.islhagua.org).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002062/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Pacote de Investimento Social

O Senhor Comissário László Andor apresentou no dia 20 de fevereiro, em Bruxelas, o Pacote de Investimento Social que então havia sido aprovado pela Comissão Europeia no pressuposto de que este investimento deve ser interpretado como uma saída para a crise vigente e que devem ser dadas as ferramentas adequadas aos cidadãos para que estes possam adaptar-se às maiores inseguranças do tempo presente. Este pacote reclama que, no contexto da consolidação orçamental, seja dado um enfoque reforçado a este tipo de investimentos.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Considerando a particular vulnerabilidade de alguns Estados-Membros, presentemente sujeitos a programas de consolidação orçamental, que acarretam graves consequências para as suas populações, em particular para os mais frágeis e desprotegidos, em que medida este pacote visará as suas circunstâncias particulares e procurará contribuir para a solução dos seus problemas?

— Concretamente, que orçamento desejaria ver atribuído a estes países no quadro deste pacote?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2013)

Apesar das grandes diferenças entre as situações da economia, do emprego e sociais dos Estados-Membros, os desafios são comuns: alterações demográficas e desafios económicos a curto prazo colocados pela crise. Pese embora o facto de muitos orçamentos dos Estados-Membros estarem sob pressão, o pacote de investimento social (PIS) salienta que é necessário colocar mais ênfase no investimento nos sistemas sociais para desenvolver e sustentar o capital humano, com vista a ajudar os Estados-Membros a emergir da crise mais fortes e competitivos. Além disso, o investimento social agora realizado contribuirá para evitar que no futuro os Estados-Membros tenham de pagar uma fatura financeira e social muito mais elevada.

Os fundos da UE são instrumentos indispensáveis para apoiar a execução do PIS. Para o próximo quadro financeiro plurianual de 2014-2020, a Comissão propôs um aumento mínimo de 25 % da parte do financiamento da política de coesão para o Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) e ainda a utilização mínima de 20 % do total de recursos do FSE para «a promoção da inclusão social e a luta contra a pobreza».

Mais financiamento é disponibilizado pelo Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, nomeadamente para investir em infraestruturas de saúde, sociais, para o acolhimento de crianças, e infraestruturas habitacionais e educativas.

A proposta de novo Programa para a Mudança e Inovação Social, com um orçamento previsto superior a 800 milhões de euros, irá também apoiar o desenvolvimento de políticas de investimento social, a partilha de boas práticas, as ações de reforço das capacidades, e o ensaio de inovações sociais, com o objetivo de reproduzir os mais bem sucedidos, nomeadamente através do FSE.

Por último, a Comissão propôs igualmente a criação de um novo Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas Mais Carenciadas, com um orçamento de 2,5 mil milhões de euros, a fim de complementar os esforços dos Estados-Membros para providenciar alimentação e vestuário às crianças mais pobres e aos sem-abrigo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002062/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Social Investment Package

On 20 February in Brussels, Commissioner László Andor presented the Social Investment Package, adopted by the Commission on the assumption that the investment is seen as a way out of the current crisis and that citizens are provided with adequate tools to adapt to the present climate of heightened insecurity. In the context of fiscal consolidation, this package demands that greater emphasis be placed on this type of investment.

— Given the particular vulnerability of the Member States currently subject to fiscal consolidation programmes, which are having serious consequences for their populations, particularly the weakest and most vulnerable members of society, to what extent does this package address their particular circumstances and seek to resolve their problems?

— Specifically, what budget would it like to see allocated to these countries under this package?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

In spite of large differences in the economic, employment and social situations of Member States, challenges are common: demographic changes and the short-term economic challenges posed by the crisis. Despite the fact that many Member States' budgets are under pressure, the Social Investment Package (SIP) stresses that more emphasis on social investment within social systems is necessary to develop and sustain human capital, helping Member States emerge from the crisis stronger and more competitive. Moreover, social investment now helps to prevent Member States having to pay much higher financial and social bills in future.

EU funds are vital instruments to support the implementation of the SIP. For the next multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed increasing the share of cohesion policy funding for the European Social Fund (ESF) to at least 25%, and that at least 20% of the total ESF resources shall be used for 'promoting social inclusion and combating poverty'.

Further financing is available from the European Regional Development Fund, notably for investing in health, social, childcare, housing and education infrastructure.

The proposed new Programme for Social Change and Innovation, with a foreseen budget of more than EUR 800 million, will also support the development of social investment policies, sharing of best practices, capacity-building, and testing of social innovations, with the aim to scale-up the most successful, notably via the ESF.

Lastly, the Commission has also proposed a new Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived with a budget of EUR 2.5 billion to complement EU Member States' action for providing food and clothes to the poorest children and homeless people.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002063/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: EURES — Transformação e flexibilização

O Comissário László Andor proferiu, no passado dia 15 de fevereiro de 2013, um discurso no Trinity College de Dublin, no qual apresentava a transformação da rede EURES como uma forma de potenciar a mobilidade de jovens na Europa através da abertura do acesso a mais oportunidades de emprego e da sua flexibilização.

1. Que medidas concretas advoga a Comissão para ajudar a flexibilizar a rede EURES?

2. Quais os principais fatores de rigidez que a Comissão encontrou na sua atual configuração e que mais recomendam a alteração da rede EURES?

3. Que transformações concretas pretende a Comissão introduzir na rede EURES?

4. Que resultados qualitativos e quantitativos ambiciona a Comissão obter com semelhante transformação?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

A rede EURES pretende realizar os seus objetivos de colocação de trabalhadores no emprego, através de uma cooperação reforçada entre os Estados-Membros e a Comissão. A Decisão da Comissão relativa à EURES ([1]) opera alterações ao funcionamento da rede, à organização do trabalho entre os diferentes intervenientes e à definição da oferta do serviço, refletindo a evolução dos mercados de trabalho e a prestação de serviços de emprego nos Estados-Membros. Estas alterações deverão contribuir para melhorar a capacidade da EURES de adaptar, com flexibilidade, os seus serviços em função das necessidades de todos os clientes.

As alterações são referidas no Pacote do Emprego ([2]). Os Estados-Membros serão instados a diversificar e a multiplicar o número de intervenientes que operam no quadro da rede EURES, aumentando assim o número de vagas de emprego constantes do portal EURES e facilitando o seu acesso em tempo útil. Será estabelecido um ciclo de programação e apresentação de relatórios para reforçar o intercâmbio, a nível da UE, de informações relativas a necessidades de recrutamento, iniciativas e ferramentas desenvolvidas para dar resposta às necessidades e projetos de cooperação.

Espera-se que as alterações venham a multiplicar o número de contactos de clientes (candidatos a emprego e empregadores) e a melhorar os resultados (colocações e recrutamentos em outros países da UE).

A transição para mais atividades de colocação e recrutamento será acompanhada de a) um portal reformulado EURES capaz de operar, em tempo útil, correspondências entre competências e vagas disponíveis e b) a utilização de regimes de mobilidade laboral específicos que, em função das necessidades do mercado, se concentrem em grupos, setores e profissões onde se verifiquem estrangulamentos ou em determinados países (tais como a iniciativa «O teu primeiro emprego EURES»).

([1]) JO L 238 de 28.11.2012, p.21.
([2]) Reforming EURES to meet the goals of Europe 2020, SWD(2012) 100 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002063/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Transforming EURES into a more flexible recruitment instrument

In a speech delivered at Trinity College Dublin on 15 February 2013, Commissioner László Andor said that transforming the EURES network into a more flexible recruitment instrument will improve labour mobility for young people across Europe by opening up access to more job opportunities.

1. What specific measures does the Commission believe will help make EURES a more flexible recruitment instrument?

2. What makes the current EURES network inflexible and what changes to its configuration are needed?

3. What specific changes will it make to the EURES network?

4. What qualitative and quantitative results does it hope to achieve by making such changes?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

EURES aims to realise its objectives with regards to the placing of workers in employment through an enhanced cooperation between the Member States and with the Commission. The Commission Decision on EURES ([1]) makes changes in the functioning of the network, the organisation of the work between the different actors, and the definition of the service offer, mirroring the evolution in labour markets and employment service provision in the Member States. This should improve the capacity of EURES to flexibly adapt its services according to the needs of all clients.

The changes are outlined in the Employment Package ([2]). Member States will be encouraged to diversify and increase the number of actors operating in the EURES network, thereby increasing the number of job vacancies on the EURES portal while delivering easier and real time access to these vacancies. A programming and reporting cycle will be created to reinforce information exchange at EU level on recruitment needs, events and tools developed to address the needs and cooperation projects.

The changes are expected to increase the number of client contacts (jobseekers and employers) and results (placements and recruitment in other EU countries).

The shift towards more placement and recruitment activities will be accompanied by (a) a revamped EURES portal to achieve a speedy online matching of skills with vacancies and (b) the use of targeted labour mobility schemes that according to market needs focus on specific target groups, sectors and occupations under tensions or countries (such as Your First EURES Job).

([1]) OJ EU, L 328, p. 21, 28.11.2012.
([2]) Reforming EURES to meet the goals of Europe 2020, SWD(2012) 100 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002064/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Patente Unitária Europeia — Tribunal Especializado

Num discurso proferido em Bruxelas no passado dia 18 de fevereiro de 2013, o senhor Comissário Michel Barnier declarou que a patente unitária europeia representará «um grande impulso para a competitividade das empresas europeias». Não obstante esta visão otimista, permanecem ainda questões quanto à gestão prática do sistema relacionado com a patente unitária, nomeadamente a parte dele que respeita à dirimição de litígios e, concretamente, ao estabelecimento do novo tribunal especializado nestas matérias.

1. Quando prevê a Comissão o estabelecimento efetivo e a entrada em funcionamento do novo tribunal especializado?

2. Já foi aprovada definitivamente a sua localização?

3. Não considera a Comissão que o seu estabelecimento em Londres, entretanto anunciado, favorece ainda mais os falantes de língua inglesa e as empresas sedeadas naquele país, já de si favorecidos pelo regime linguístico adotado pelo sistema da patente unitária?

4. Para além da questão de segurança jurídica, que outras questões práticas importantes obstam a que o sistema da patente unitária entre em pleno funcionamento?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

1. O Tribunal Unificado de Patentes deverá estar plenamente operacional quando entrar em vigor o acordo relativo ao mesmo, o que ocorrerá em 1 de janeiro de 2014 ou no primeiro dia do quarto mês após a ratificação por parte de 13 Estados-Membros, incluindo a França, a Alemanha e o Reino Unido. A Comissão espera que o acordo entre em vigor em 2014.

2. A localização da sede da Divisão Central do Tribunal de Primeira Instância do Tribunal Unificado de Patentes foi aprovada pelo Conselho Europeu em 28 e 29 de junho de 2012. Essa sede, assim como o gabinete do Presidente do Tribunal de Primeira Instância, ficarão estabelecidos em Paris. Serão criados *clusters* temáticos em Londres (química, incluindo produtos farmacêuticos, classificação C, necessidades da vida quotidiana, classificação A) e em Munique (engenharia mecânica, classificação F).

3. Tal como indicado antes, a sede da Divisão Central ficará estabelecida em Paris. De qualquer maneira, a língua do processo na divisão central será a língua em que a patente em questão for concedida — independentemente do lugar em que decorrer o processo.

4. O acordo sobre o Tribunal Unificado de Patentes tem de entrar em vigor. Por outro lado, o Tribunal Unificado de Patentes terá de entrar em funcionamento o que requer, entre outros, a elaboração do regulamento interno, a formação dos futuros juízes, a criação da infraestrutura incluindo um sistema informático, o orçamento para o primeiro exercício, etc. Além disso, no comité restrito no âmbito do Instituto Europeu de Patentes (IEP), os Estados-Membros devem tomar uma decisão sobre o nível das taxas de renovação bem como sobre a percentagem de repartição dessas taxas, devendo igualmente atribuir ao IEP determinadas funções administrativas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002064/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: European Unitary Patent — Specialised Court

In a speech delivered in Brussels on 18 February 2013, Commissioner Michel Barnier said that the European unitary patent will be 'a powerful driving force for European companies and their competitiveness'. Despite this optimistic stance, there remain questions regarding the practical management of the unitary patent system, particularly as regards dispute settlement and the establishment of a new specialised court in this area.

1. When does the Commission expect this new specialised court to be effectively established and to become operational?

2. Has a final decision on its location been made?

3. Does the Commission not believe that establishing this court in London, as announced, puts English speakers and companies based in the United Kingdom at an even greater advantage, given that the unitary patent system's linguistic regime already works in their favour?

4. Besides the issue of legal certainty, what other major practical issues are preventing the unitary patent system from becoming fully operational?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

1. The Unified Patent Court will need to be fully operational upon the entry into force of the agreement on the Unified Patent Court which will be on 1 January 2014 or on the first day of the fourth month after ratification by 13 Member States, including France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The Commission hopes that the agreement will enter into force in 2014.

2. The location of the seat of the central division of the Court of First Instance of the Unified Patent has been agreed by the European Council on 28/29 June 2012. That seat, along with the office of the President of the Court of First Instance, will be located in Paris; thematic clusters will be created in London (chemistry, including pharmaceuticals, classification C, human necessities, classification A) and in Munich (mechanical engineering, classification F).

3. As indicated before, the seat of the central division will be located in Paris. In any case, the language of proceedings at the central division will be the language in which the patent concerned was granted — irrespective of the place of the proceedings.

4. The agreement on the Unified Patent Court will need to enter into force. In addition, the Unified Patent Court will need to be set up in practice which requires *inter alia* the preparation of the rules of procedure, the training of future judges, the setting up of infrastructure including an IT system, the budget for the first financial year etc. In addition, in the Select Committee in the framework of the European Patent Office (EPO), Member States will need to decide on the level of renewal fees as well as on the share of distribution of the renewal fees and will also need to give the EPO certain administrative tasks.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002065/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Aliança Financeira Transatlântica

Num discurso proferido em Nova Iorque no passado dia 15 de fevereiro de 2013, o Comissário Michel Barnier declarou que, em seu entender, «uma aliança financeira transatlântica significa que adaptamos a nossa cooperação de regulação e supervisão à realidade do mercado transatlântico. As empresas financeiras na União Europeia e nos Estados Unidos encontram poucas barreiras económicas ao realizar transações através do Atlântico. Mas elas e os reguladores enfrentam muitas diferenças de regulação e de supervisão. Estas diferenças são desnecessárias, custosas e, em última análise, minam o controlo e a supervisão eficientes. Um mercado financeiro transatlântico requer uma aliança transatlântica de regulação que seja baseada na confiança e na cooperação mútuas e na total colaboração entre as nossas autoridades respetivas.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Quais os principais benefícios que uma aliança financeira transatlântica traria aos cidadãos e empresas europeias?

— Quais os principais obstáculos que antecipa no processo tendente à concretização da aliança?

— Que importantes dificuldades concretas devidas às diferenças de regulação e de supervisão entre a União Europeia e os Estados Unidos deteta hoje? Quais as suas consequências?

— Existe já um calendário de negociações estabelecido entre as partes com este objetivo?

— É realista antecipar uma data para a sua conclusão?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

A aliança financeira transatlântica servirá de base à Parceria Transatlântica de Comércio e Investimento entre a UE e os EUA, que se encontra em processo de lançamento. Sem uma aliança desse tipo no setor financeiro, os cidadãos e as empresas da UE não retirarão o máximo partido da parceria. O atual diálogo financeiro transatlântico será reforçado no contexto da PTCI.

Uma questão importante neste contexto são as diferenças na regulamentação e supervisão. A legislação dos países terceiros nem sempre inclui disposições que permitam um funcionamento conjunto dos diferentes sistemas regulamentares. Na Europa, os princípios da equivalência ou do reconhecimento mútuo permitem evitar a duplicação das regras e a sobreposição desnecessária das normas regulamentares.

As duas partes manifestaram a intenção de concluir as negociações sobre a Parceria Transatlântica de Comércio e Investimento num prazo relativamente curto.

Nesta fase, não é possível prever uma data para essa conclusão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002065/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic Financial Alliance

In a speech delivered in New York on 15 February 2013, Commissioner Michel Barnier said that in his opinion 'a transatlantic financial alliance means that we adapt our regulatory and supervisory cooperation to the reality of the transatlantic market place. Financial firms in the EU and in the US face very few economic barriers in transacting across the Atlantic. But they and regulators face many regulatory and supervisory differences. These differences are unnecessary, costly and ultimately undermine efficient control and supervision. A transatlantic financial market place requires a transatlantic regulatory alliance that is based on mutual trust, cooperation and full reliance between our respective authorities.'

How would a transatlantic financial alliance benefit EU citizens and companies?

What will be the main obstacles in the process towards achieving this alliance?

What are the major practical difficulties resulting from regulatory and supervisory differences between the European Union and the United States? What is their impact?

Have both sides established a time frame in which to achieve this objective?

Is it possible to predict a completion date?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The transatlantic financial alliance would underpin the Transatlanctic Trade and Investment Partnership between the EU and the US that is now being launched. Without such an alliance in the financial sector, EU citizens and companies would not get the full benefit of the partnership. The current transatlantic financial dialogue will be strengthened in the context of the TTIP.

An important matter in this context conerns regulatory and supervisory differences. Third countries' legislation does not always include provisions that allow different regulatory systems to work together. In Europe, equivalence or mutual recognition principles, prevents duplication of rules and unecessary regulatory overlaps.

The two sides have declared their intention to conclude negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership in a relatively short time frame.

At this stage it is not possible to predict a completion date.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002066/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Investigação e Mercado

Num discurso proferido a 14 de fevereiro de 2013, em Patras, na Grécia, o Comissário Johannes Hahn declarou que «uma das grandes deficiências da Europa é que gastamos muito em investigação mas precisamos de melhorar verdadeiramente a transferência desta para aplicações comerciais concretas ["concrete business applications" no original]. É por esta razão que estamos a promover uma cooperação muito mais estreita com os fundos de investigação e desenvolvimento do Horizonte 2020 para o próximo período financeiro.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que medidas concretas advoga para ajudar a colmatar esse hiato entre investigação e aplicação prática dirigida ao mercado?

— Como pretende efetivar a cooperação mais estreita com os fundos de investigação e desenvolvimento indicados?

— Sabendo-se da importância da manutenção e incentivo de investigações científicas que muitas vezes não têm aplicações comerciais nem interesse para o mercado no imediato — e que, posteriormente, vêm ou podem vir a revelar-se cruciais para o progresso, bem-estar, saúde e segurança das populações —, por que formas pretende assegurar-se de que a compreensível preocupação com a aplicação prática e reprodutiva dos investimentos em investigação não impedirá nem dificultará a prossecução das daquelas?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2013)

Reforçar a IDT e a inovação é o primeiro objetivo temático dos Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus de propostos pela Comissão para o próximo período. No âmbito deste objetivo, várias prioridades de investimento devem contribuir para colmatar o fosso entre a investigação e as necessidades do mercado, por exemplo, investimentos de apoio tecnológico e investigação aplicada, transferência de tecnologia, criação de redes e agrupamentos, tecnologias seminais essenciais, bem como difusão de tecnologias de interesse geral, desenvolvimento de produtos e serviços, assim como estimulação da procura para novas aplicações.

Para tal, os Estados-Membros devem elaborar e aplicar estratégias de investigação e de inovação para a especialização inteligente. Através do desenvolvimento e da articulação dos pontos fortes no domínio da investigação e da inovação e dos outros ativos únicos de um território com as necessidades e o potencial das empresas, as oportunidades emergentes e a evolução do mercado são abordadas de uma forma coerente por forma a conduzir a uma transformação económica. O processo de especialização inteligente visa evitar a duplicação e a fragmentação dos esforços ao nível da UE. Estas estratégias devem ser desenvolvidas através de um processo de descoberta empresarial que envolva autoridades nacionais ou regionais dos serviços responsáveis pela investigação, inovação e indústria e as partes interessadas, tais como empresas, universidades e outras instituições de ensino superior, bem como a sociedade civil. As autoridades diretamente abrangidas pelo programa Horizonte 2020 devem ser estreitamente associadas a este processo.

Os Estados-Membros devem incentivar as sinergias entre os Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus e o programa Horizonte 2020, que visa reforçar a posição da UE na ciência, reforçar a liderança industrial na inovação e abordar, através da investigação, as grandes preocupações comuns dos cidadãos europeus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002066/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Research and the market

In a speech delivered in Patras, Greece, on 14 February 2013, Commissioner Johannes Hahn said that 'One of the big deficiencies of Europe is that we spend a lot on research but we really do need to improve the transfer of this into concrete business applications. It is for this reason that we are promoting a much closer cooperation with Horizon 2020 EU research and development funds for the next financial period.'

— What specific measures does the Commission believe will help bridge the gap between research and how it is applied to the market?

— How will it ensure closer cooperation with the aforementioned research and development funds?

— Given that it is important to continue with and promote scientific research that often is not transferable to business applications and the market in the short term — but may later prove crucial for the development, welfare, health and safety of the population — how will the Commission ensure that legitimate concern regarding the practical application of, and repeated investment in, research does not prevent or hinder these activities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

Strengthening RTD and innovation is the first thematic objective of the European Structural and Investment Funds proposed by the Commission for the next period. Under this objective, several investment priorities will contribute to bridging the gap between research and the needs of the market, for instance investments supporting technological and applied research, technology transfer, networking and clusters, Key Enabling Technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies, product and service development, as well as demand stimulation for new applications.

For this, Member States will have to design and implement Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation. By developing and matching strengths in research and innovation and other unique assets of a territory with business need and potential, emerging opportunities and market developments are addressed in a coherent manner to drive economic transformation. The smart specialisation process aims to avoid duplication and fragmentation of efforts at EU level. These strategies shall be developed through an entrepreneurial discovery process involving national or regional authorities from departments in charge of research, innovation and industry, and stakeholders such as business, universities and other higher education institutions, and civil society. The authorities directly involved in Horizon 2020 shall be closely associated to this process.

Member States shall encourage synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds and Horizon 2020, which aims to strengthen the EU's position in science, strengthen industrial leadership in innovation and address through research major concerns shared by Europeans.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002067/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Situações de seca na Europa — resposta europeia

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-6073/2009, a Comissária Mariann Fischer Boel declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a análise feita pela Comissão no contexto do Livro Branco sobre a adaptação às alterações climáticas e do documento de trabalho que o acompanha relativo à Agricultura ("Adaptação às alterações climáticas: um desafio para a agricultura e as zonas rurais europeias"), mostra que é provável que, nos próximos anos, o tipo de condições descritas pelo Senhor Deputado se tornem mais frequentes devido às alterações climáticas. Por conseguinte, é importante que as autoridades nacionais e regionais tomem medidas para começar a planear a adaptação à mudança de condições e aproveitem as oportunidades oferecidas pelo Regulamento do Desenvolvimento Rural para apoiar ações de adaptação ao nível agrícola.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Dispõe de novos dados quanto ao aumento e agravamento das situações de seca na União Europeia?

— Para além das medidas nacionais e regionais que recomendou, prevê tomar ou tomou medidas que as complementem? Quais?

— Não considera que um problema desta magnitude e gravidade poderia justificar uma ação e a divulgação das melhores práticas no tocante à necessária adaptação a nível agrícola à escala europeia?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2013)

O número de dias consecutivos sem precipitação (indicador dos riscos de seca) deverá aumentar significativamente na Europa do sul e central e diminuir na Europa do norte, sobretudo devido às alterações climáticas ([1]). A tendência para uma escassez crescente de água é também resultado de uma evolução socioeconómica conducente a um maior consumo de água.

A Matriz dos Recursos Hídricos Europeus, adotada pela Comissão em novembro de 2012, sublinhou quanto é urgente melhorar a eficiência hídrica em determinados setores, incluindo a agricultura.

Identificou também a necessidade de um melhor planeamento da gestão da seca, integrado no planeamento da gestão das bacias hidrográficas no âmbito da Diretiva-Quadro Água.

A PAC apoia a utilização sustentável dos recursos hídricos através da política de desenvolvimento rural e da concessão de pagamentos diretos condicionados à observância de boas condições agrícolas e ambientais, que incluem uma exigência relativa à utilização da água, abrangendo: soluções para a economia de água, investimentos em novas tecnologias de poupança de água, desenvolvimento de infraestruturas nas explorações agrícolas e medidas para aumentar a capacidade de retenção de água do solo a fim de combater os riscos de seca.

As propostas da Comissão para uma política de desenvolvimento rural pós 2013 tratam a gestão da água, incluindo a sua utilização eficiente na exploração, como uma subprioridade explicita. O apoio a projetos que impliquem um aumento do consumo do volume global de água em zonas propensas à seca ficará condicionado a um determinado nível de poupança e eficiência da utilização da água.

Na primavera, a Comissão adotará uma estratégia da UE para a adaptação às alterações climáticas, apoiando os Estados-Membros e as regiões nas ações de adaptação, nomeadamente através da divulgação de informações e do intercâmbio de boas práticas ([2]).

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/climate-impacts-and-vulnerability-2012
([2]) http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002067/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Drought in Europe — European response

In answer to my Question E-6073/2009, Commissioner Fischer Boel stated on behalf of the Commission that 'The Commission's analysis in the context of the White Paper on adapting to climate change and its accompanying Working Document on Agriculture ("Adapting to climate change: the challenge for European agriculture and rural areas"), shows that it is likely that during the coming years the type of conditions described in the Honourable Member's question will become more frequent because of climatic changes. It is, therefore, important that national and regional authorities take measures to start planning for adaptation to the changing conditions, and make use of the opportunities offered by the Rural Development Regulation to support adaptation actions at farm level.'

— Does the Commission have new figures relating to the increasingly widespread and serious drought in the EU?

— Does it plan to take or has it taken steps to complement the national and regional measures that it recommended? What are these steps?

— Does it not believe that a problem of this magnitude and seriousness could warrant action and the dissemination of best practices regarding the need for an EU-wide change in farming?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The number of consecutive dry days (indicating drought risks) is projected to increase significantly in southern and central Europe and to decrease in northern Europe, mainly as a consequence of climatic changes. ([1]). The trend towards rising water scarcity is also a result of socioeconomic developments leading to higher water consumption.

The Blueprint for Europe's waters, adopted by the Commission in November 2012, highlighted that water efficiency improvements are urgent in specific sectors, including agriculture.

It also identified the need for improved drought management planning, integrated with the River Basin Management Planning under the Water Framework Directive.

The CAP supports sustainable water use through rural development policy and granting of direct payments conditional to the respect of good agricultural and environmental conditions, including a requirement on water use. This includes: water saving solutions, investments into new water-saving technologies, development of on-farm infrastructures and measures improving soil water retention to cope with drought risks.

The Commission's proposals for a post-2013 rural development policy set out water management, including efficiency in on-farm use, as an explicit sub-priority. Support for projects leading to an increase of the overall volume of water use in drought-prone areas is to be conditional on achieving a certain level of water savings and use efficiency.

The Commission will adopt an EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change this spring, supporting Member States and regions for adaptation action, including via information dissemination and exchange of good practice ([2]).

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/climate-impacts-and-vulnerability-2012.
([2]) http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002068/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Madeira — relação entre empresas extintas e criadas

Informações recentes dão conta de que a região autónoma da Madeira perdeu mais de 1 000 empresas em 2012, sendo a região de Portugal com pior relação entre empresas criadas e empresas extintas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Confirma estes dados?

— Quais considera serem as principais razões que subjazem a esta redução do número de empresas e à relação desfavorável entre criação e extinção de empresas no arquipélago?

— Que medidas crê deveriam ser tomadas a nível regional de modo a inverter este preocupante estado de coisas?

— Como avalia a presente situação da economia na região autónoma da Madeira?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não acompanha os desenvolvimentos económicos a nível subnacional. Por esta razão a Comissão não pode comprovar as estatísticas que são referidas na pergunta, nem pode tecer comentários acerca das razões subjacentes a esta situação. A fim de fazer face aos principais problemas regionais e inverter a presente situação, as autoridades competentes devem prosseguir com a implementação dos programas operacionais existentes apoiados por fundos da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002068/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Madeira — ratio of companies closed to companies formed

Recent reports show that over 1 000 businesses left Madeira in 2012 and that the region has Portugal's worst ratio of companies closed to companies formed.

Can the Commission verify this data?

Why does it believe that so many businesses have left the archipelago and that the ratio of companies closed to companies formed is so poor?

What measures should be taken at regional level to reverse this worrying state of affairs?

How does it assess Madeira's current economic situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission does not follow economic developments at sub-national level. For this reason the Commission cannot substantiate the statistics referred to in the question and cannot comment on the reasons behind the situation. In order to tackle the main regional problems and to reverse the current state of affairs, relevant authorities should go on with the implementation of the current operational programmes supported by Community funds.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002069/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Bolívia — Expropriação de empresas europeias

As autoridades da Bolívia voltaram a nacionalizar uma empresa de capitais europeus que operava no seu território. Desta feita, uma sociedade espanhola gestora de aeroportos.

1. Que comentário merece esta situação à Comissão Europeia?

2. Contactou a Comissão as autoridades bolivianas a este respeito? Que respostas obteve?

3. Está a Comissão disponível para considerar a hipótese de agir com reciprocidade face aos investimentos e bens bolivianos na União Europeia?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(8 de abril de 2013)

O Governo da Bolívia tem, em princípio, o direito de proceder a nacionalizações. Em conformidade com as disposições dos tratados de investimento bilaterais em vigor, estas, no entanto, só devem ser feitas para cumprir objetivos legítimos de política pública, nos devidos termos da lei, de uma forma não discriminatória e mediante o pagamento de uma indemnização rápida, adequada e efetiva. De um ponto de vista jurídico, se uma empresa considerar que a Bolívia não cumpriu as suas obrigações, a questão deve ser tratada entre a empresa e o Governo da Bolívia ao abrigo dos instrumentos jurídicos existentes.

A existência de um enquadramento jurídico e económico estável e previsível é crucial para promover o investimento direto estrangeiro e para o desenvolvimento do comércio. A recorrente nacionalização de empresas estrangeiras envia sinais prejudiciais para os operadores económicos estrangeiros. A Comissão levantou estas preocupações através de uma série de declarações e diretamente junto do Embaixador da Bolívia em Bruxelas. O Embaixador confirmou o empenho da Bolívia em assegurar uma compensação adequada para as empresas em causa.

Não existe qualquer plataforma jurídica para que a UE possa agir contra investimentos e participações da Bolívia na União Europeia. A resposta possível deve ser dada ao abrigo do Tratado Bilateral de Investimento entre a Bolívia e a Espanha e cabe à empresa ativar as disposições do mesmo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002069/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Bolivia — expropriation of European companies

The Bolivian authorities have nationalised yet another European-owned company operating in the country; in this case, a Spanish airport operator.

1. What does the Commission have to say about this?

2. Has the Commission contacted the Bolivian authorities about this matter? What answers has it received?

3. Is the Commission prepared to consider the possibility of taking action against Bolivian investments and holdings in the EU in response?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The Bolivian Government has in principle the right to proceed to nationalisations. In accordance with the provisions of existing bilateral investment treaties this should, however, only be done for legitimate public policy objectives, under due process of law, in a non-discriminatory manner and against payment of prompt, adequate and effective compensation. From a legal point of view, if a company believes Bolivia has not respected its obligations it is a matter for the company and the Bolivian Government under the existing legal instruments.

Stable and predictable legal and economic policy frameworks are crucial for promoting foreign direct investment and for increasing trade. Recurrent nationalisation of foreign companies sends harmful signals to foreign economic operators. The Commission raised these concerns through a series of statements and directly with the Bolivian Ambassador in Brussels. The Ambassador confirmed Bolivia's commitment to ensure adequate compensation to the companies in question.

There is no evident legal venue for the EU to act against Bolivian investments and holdings in the EU. The possible response is determined by the Bilateral Investment Treaty between Bolivia and Spain, and it is up to the company to activate the provisions in it.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002070/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Alemanha — Possível surto de gripe aviária

Hong Kong, alegadamente, proibiu a importação de aves e todos os produtos relacionados com estas do Estado alemão de Brandenburg, no nordeste do país, na sequência de um alerta sobre um surto de gripe aviária.

1. Confirma a Comissão esta proibição e a existência do referido surto?

2. Que avaliação faz a Comissão da situação efetivamente verificada naquele Estado alemão? Considera a Comissão que existe o risco de alastramento a outras explorações?

3. Obteve a Comissão informações a este respeito por parte das autoridades da região administrativa especial de Hong Kong e do Estado de Brandenburg?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(9 de abril de 2013)

Em conformidade com a legislação da UE sobre o controlo da gripe aviária ([1]) e a notificação de doenças dos animais ([2]), as autoridades alemãs informaram a Comissão e outros Estados-Membros da ocorrência de um surto de gripe aviária de baixa patogenicidade, confirmado em 15 de fevereiro de 2013, numa exploração de aves de capoeira situada no município de Seelow, Landkreis Märkisch-Oderland, Land de Brandeburgo. Além disso, a Alemanha enviou informações adicionais por escrito sobre o surto que a Comissão expediu para outros Estados-Membros, países terceiros parceiros comerciais, incluindo Hong Kong (RAE) e organizações internacionais.

Às restrições comerciais aplicadas por um país terceiro que afetem um único Estado-Membro são geralmente transmitidas diretamente ao Estado-Membro em causa, e não à Comissão. No caso em apreço, a Comissão não recebeu qualquer informação diretamente de Hong Kong sobre qualquer proibição eventualmente posta em vigor.

Na reunião do Comité Permanente da Cadeia Alimentar e da Saúde Animal de 5 de março de 2013, o delegado alemão fez uma apresentação detalhada da situação epidemiológica e das medidas de controlo tomadas, que foi, então, publicada no sítio web da Comissão ([3]). Todas as informações disponíveis indicam que as autoridades alemãs conseguiram controlar e erradicar com sucesso o surto.

([1]) Diretiva 2005/94/CE do Conselho, de 20 de dezembro de 2005, relativa a medidas comunitárias de luta contra a gripe aviária e que revoga a Diretiva 92/40/CEE, JO L 10 de 14.1.2006, p. 16.
([2]) Diretiva 82/894/CEE do Conselho, de 21 de dezembro de 1982, relativa à notificação de doenças dos animais na Comunidade, JO L 378 de 31.12.1982, p. 58.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/animal_health/presentations_en.htm#05032013

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002070/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Germany — Possible bird flu outbreak

Hong Kong has allegedly banned the import of poultry and poultry products from the German state of Brandenburg, in the north-east of the country, following reports of a bird flu outbreak.

1. Can the Commission confirm this ban and that an outbreak has occurred?

2. How does it assess the current situation in this German state? Does it believe that there is a risk of this outbreak spreading to other farms?

3. Has it received information on this outbreak from the Hong Kong SAR and Brandenburg authorities?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

In accordance with EU legislation on the control of avian influenza ([1]) and notification of animal diseases ([2]), the German authorities informed the Commission and other Member States of an outbreak of low pathogenic avian influenza confirmed on 15 February 2013 in a poultry holding located in the commune of Seelow, Landkreis Märkisch-Oderland, Land Brandenburg. Furthermore, Germany sent additional written information on the outbreak which the Commission dispatched to other Member States, non-EU countries trade partners including Hong Kong SAR and international organisations.

Restrictions on trade applied by a non-EU country affecting a single Member State are usually communicated directly to the concerned Member State and not to the Commission. In this case, the Commission has not received an information directly from Hong-Kong on any ban that they have put in place.

At the meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 5 March 2013, the German delegate gave a detailed presentation on the epidemiological situation and the control measures taken, that was then published on the Commission's webite ([3]). All information available indicates that the German authorities have successfully controlled and eradicated the outbreak.

([1]) Council Directive 2005/94/EC of 20 December 2005 on Community measures for the control of avian influenza and repealing Directive 92/40/EEC, OJ L 10, 14.1.2006, p. 16.
([2]) Council Directive 82/894/EEC of 21 December 1982 on the notification of animal diseases within the Community, OJ L 378, 31.12.1982, p. 58.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/animal_health/presentations_en.htm#05032013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002071/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Zona de Comércio Livre UE-EUA — bloqueios e oportunidades

O apoio recentemente manifestado pelo presidente Obama à criação de uma zona de comércio livre entre a União Europeia e os Estados Unidos da América deu novo alento ao debate sobre esta questão e recolocou-a entre as prioridades da agenda política de ambos os lados do Atlântico.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Quais seriam os benefícios para a União Europeia de uma zona de comércio livre deste tipo?

— Quais são, em seu entender, os principais obstáculos à concretização da zona de comércio livre?

— Quais seriam os setores mais beneficiados e mais prejudicados com a sua efetivação?

— Considera que há produtos e setores que deveriam ficar excluídos da mesma?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(10 de abril de 2013)

A celebração de um acordo entre as duas maiores economias mundiais não só constituirá um marco das nossas relações bilaterais de comércio e investimento no futuro, como servirá de exemplo para o desenvolvimento de regras globais. Os seus efeitos sobre o crescimento e o emprego poderão ser fortíssimos dos dois lados do Atlântico. As estimativas mostram que o Produto Interno Bruto da UE poderia aumentar 0,5 %, trazendo dezenas de milhares de milhões de euros por ano e centenas de milhares de novos postos de trabalho. A Comissão procedeu a uma avaliação de impacto ([1]) e encomendou um estudo económico a um perito externo e independente ([2]), que analisou em pormenor os impactos económicos, sociais e ambientais, nomeadamente o impacto potencial sobre os diferentes setores da economia.

Os potenciais desafios e oportunidades subjacentes a estas negociações foram exaustivamente discutidos com os EUA no Grupo de Trabalho de Alto Nível sobre o Crescimento e o Emprego. No relatório final do grupo ([3]), as duas partes chegaram à conclusão de que um acordo que abrangesse um amplo leque de aspetos do comércio e do investimento bilaterais seria a melhor via a seguir. Significa isto que todos os domínios de interesse serão abordados no intuito de alcançar um equilíbrio entre os dois lados da mesa. No entanto, não deixaremos de estar atentos ao caráter muito sensível de certos setores. Por exemplo, o acordo de parceria transatlântica de comércio e investimento não deverá prejudicar a diversidade cultural e linguística da União.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/united-states/#sia
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150777.pdf
([3]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002071/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: EU-US Free Trade Area — obstacles and opportunities

President Obama's recent endorsement of a free trade area between the European Union and the United States has given new impetus to the debate on this issue and has made it a priority on political agendas on both sides of the Atlantic.

How would the European Union benefit from this type of free trade area?

In the Commission's opinion, what are the main obstacles preventing the establishment of a free trade area?

Which sectors would be better or worse off under free trade?

Does the Commission believe that some products and sectors should be excluded from it?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

A future deal between the world's two biggest economies will set the standard — not only for our future bilateral trade and investment relationship but also for the development of global rules. It can have a tremendous impact on growth and jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. Estimates show that the EU could boost its gross domestic product by 0.5%, which translates into tens of billions of euros every year and hundreds of thousands of new jobs. The Commission undertook an impact assessment ([1]) and commissioned an economic study to an external and independent expert ([2]), which analysed in detail the economic, social and environmental impacts, including the potential impact on different economic sectors.

The potential challenges and opportunities presented by this negotiation have been extensively discussed with the US within the High-Level Working Group on Growth and Jobs. In the final report of that Group ([3]), both sides reached the conclusion that a comprehensive agreement that addresses a broad range of bilateral trade and investment issues would be the best way forward. This means that all areas of interest will be addressed, with a view to reaching a balance across the board. Negotiations will however take into account the very sensitive nature of some sectors. The transatlantic trade and investment partnership agreement should, for example, not undermine the EU's cultural and linguistic diversity.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/united-states/#sia
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150777.pdf
([3]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002072/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Identidade, história e cultura europeias

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-010877/2012, a senhora Comissária Viviane Reding, em nome da Comissão, declarou que «A União Europeia funda-se nos valores do respeito pela dignidade humana, da liberdade, da democracia, da igualdade, do Estado de direito e do respeito pelos direitos do Homem, incluindo os direitos das pessoas pertencentes a minorias, consagrados no artigo 2.° do Tratado da União Europeia.»

Não obstante, recordo não ter pedido esclarecimentos apenas quanto aos valores na qual a União se funda mas, também, quanto à sua identidade, história e cultura. Sobre estas, a Comissão nada disse.

Assim, pergunto novamente à Comissão:

— Como define a identidade europeia? Em que história e cultura assenta?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

A identidade europeia é a identidade dos seus cidadãos. Os valores que referi na minha resposta anterior ([1]) são os laços que unem os europeus. São a própria essência de uma história comum, cujas raízes mergulham no desenvolvimento da cidadania na Grécia antiga, nos três pilares da liberdade, igualdade e fraternidade celebrados pela Revolução Francesa, no reconhecimento dos crimes do nazismo e do estalinismo, na reconciliação entre as nações após a Segunda Guerra Mundial e na reunificação do continente europeu em 1989, para citar apenas alguns dos momentos que consubstanciam a nossa história.

Os valores a que a Comissão se refere são comuns aos nossos Estados-Membros e sustentam uma sociedade que se pauta pelo pluralismo, a não discriminação, a tolerância, a justiça, a solidariedade e a igualdade entre homens e mulheres. São estes os valores que fomos moldando ao longo da nossa história e da nossa cultura europeias comuns.

A definição formal de identidade é a paridade absoluta. O significado de igual, por sua vez, encontra-se mais bem descrito no Tratado, que estipula que em todas as suas atividades, a União respeita o princípio da igualdade dos seus cidadãos, que beneficiam de igual atenção por parte das suas instituições, órgãos e organismos.

É cidadão da União qualquer pessoa que tenha a nacionalidade de um Estado-Membro. Uma prova da identidade europeia é o facto de haver 63 % dos cidadãos da UE que, no último inquérito Eurobarómetro, respondem que se consideram cidadãos da UE. Esta percentagem mantém-se estável desde 2010.

A identidade — ou a identificação — baseia-se assim numa memória coletiva de um passado histórico e cultural, mas também numa visão partilhada sobre um futuro comum. Através da cultura podemos exprimir, e reforçar, esta sensação de partilharmos um só destino.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-010877 %2b0 %2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0 %2f%2fEN&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002072/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: European identity, history and culture

In her answer to my previous Question E-010877/2012, Commissioner Viviane Reding said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The European Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union'.

Nevertheless, I recall that I did not only ask for clarification of the Union's founding values but also about its identity, history and culture. The Commission has made no mention of the latter.

I therefore ask the Commission once again:

How does it define European identity? What is its historical and cultural basis?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The European identity is the identity of its citizens. The values addressed in my previous reply ([1]) are a unifying bond for Europeans. They are the intrinsic essence of a common history which has its roots from the development of democracy in the Greek poleis, via the three pillars of freedom, equality and fraternity of the French Revolution, the recognition of the crimes of Nazism and Stalinism, the reconciliation between nations after the Second World War and the overcoming of the division of the Continent after 1989 — to name but a few defining moments in European history.

The values the Commission referred to are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail. These values have been shaped through our common European history and culture.

The formal definition of identity is the one of being equal. The meaning of equal is best described in the Treaty, which states that in all its activities, the Union shall observe the principle of equality of its citizens, who shall receive equal attention from its Institutions, bodies, offices and agencies.

Every national of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. An evidence of European identity is that 63% of EU citizens according to the last Eurobarometer felt they are a citizen of the EU. This result remains stable since 2010.

Identity — or identification — is thus based on a collective memory of a historical and cultural past but also on a shared vision for a common future. Through culture we can express and strengthen this feeling of a shared destiny.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-010877%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002073/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Comunidades piscatórias — apoios europeus presentes e futuros

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-011261/2012, a senhora Comissária Maria Damanaki, em nome da Comissão, declarou que «Para que estas comunidades permaneçam sustentáveis, é importante ajudá-las a fazerem face às mudanças. Este apoio pode assumir diferentes formas, nomeadamente ajuda à valorização, a nível local, das suas capturas ou à diversificação das suas atividades, por exemplo desenvolvendo produtos turísticos baseados na pesca 3. A Comissão considera que é às zonas dependentes da pesca que cabe definir as suas necessidades e prioridades. Desde 2007, o Fundo Europeu das Pescas tem vindo a apoiar grupos de desenvolvimento local nas zonas dependentes da pesca, ajudando-os a definir e a aplicar estratégias integradas de desenvolvimento local. Atualmente estão ativos 303 grupos deste tipo e já foram apoiados cerca de 3 000 projetos. Na sua proposta para o futuro Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas, a Comissão propôs que estes grupos possam beneficiar de apoio europeu suplementar proveniente de outros fundos de gestão partilhada (Feader, FEAMP, FEDER e FSE), no quadro das estratégias de desenvolvimento local lideradas pelas comunidades locais.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Quais as principais mudanças que afetam as comunidades piscatórias?

— Quantas candidaturas recebeu de grupos de desenvolvimento local em Portugal e quantos apoia efetivamente? Em termos práticos, como se processam estas candidaturas?

— Que avaliação faz do modo como estes apoios vêm sendo prestados e dos efeitos que produzem na sustentabilidade das comunidades apoiadas?

— Que acolhimento obteve a sua proposta para o futuro Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas junto dos Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

Conforme salientado na avaliação de impacto da Comissão no contexto da proposta relativa ao novo Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas (FEAMP), a evolução registada nos últimos anos no setor das pescas teve impactos profundos nas comunidades piscatórias, com a perda de importância do setor da pesca em diversas comunidades costeiras e, em muitas delas, a substituição da pesca por novas atividades, como fonte de rendimento e de emprego. Por esta razão, na sua proposta relativa ao FEAMP, a Comissão procurou basear-se na experiência do atual eixo 4 do Fundo Europeu das Pescas (FEP) para ajudar os agentes locais no terreno a desenvolver e aplicar estratégias de desenvolvimento local destinadas a dar resposta às necessidades específicas na sua área. A proposta do FEAMP está atualmente em discussão no Parlamento Europeu e no Conselho.

Em conformidade com o princípio da gestão partilhada em que o FEP se baseia, a Comissão não seleciona diretamente os grupos de ação local da pesca (GAL-Pesca), que são financiados no quadro do programa português no âmbito do FEP. A autoridade de gestão do FEP em Portugal selecionou 7 GAL-Pesca em Portugal, cada um deles beneficiando de um orçamento público total de cerca de 3 milhões de euros. Estes grupos lançaram convites à apresentação de projetos ao nível local e já apoiaram mais de 100 projetos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002073/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Fishing communities — European support now and in the future

In answer to my Question E-011261/2012, Commissioner Damanaki, stated, on behalf of the Commission, that 'it is important to help these communities address these changes to remain sustainable. This support can take different forms, including helping these communities to add more value locally to their catches or diversifying their activities for example by the development of tourist products based on fishing. The Commission is of the opinion that it is at the level of fisheries-dependent areas that needs and priorities should be defined. The European Fisheries Fund supports since 2007 local development groups in fisheries-dependent areas, helping them define and implement integrated local development strategies; 303 of these groups are now in activity and nearly 3 000 projects have already been supported. In its proposal for the future European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the Commission has proposed to allow these groups to access further European support from other shared management funds (EAFRD, EMFF, ERDF and ESF) in the framework of Community-Led Local Development'.

What are the main changes affecting fishing communities?

How many applications has the Commission received from local development groups in Portugal and how many groups does it actually support? In practical terms, how are these applications processed?

What is the Commission's view of the way in which this support is provided and the effects it has on the sustainability of the supported communities?

How has its proposal for the future European Maritime and Fisheries Fund been received by the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

As highlighted in the Commission's Impact Assessment for the proposed new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), developments in recent years in the fishing sector have had profound impacts on fisheries communities with both the importance of fishing is declining in many coastal communities and new activities replacing fisheries as sources of income and jobs in many of them ([1]). This is why the Commission in its proposal for the EMFF has sought to build on the current Axis 4 experience in the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) to help local actors on the ground develop and implement local development strategy designed to address the specific needs of their area. The proposal for the EMFF is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and Council.

In line with the principle of shared management upon which the EFF is based, the Commission does not select directly the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs), which are funded within the framework of the Portuguese EFF Programme. The EFF Managing Authority in Portugal has selected 7 FLAGs in Portugal, each benefiting from a total public budget of around EUR 3 million. These groups have launched calls for projects at the local level and have already supported more than 100 projects.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/reform/sec_1417_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002075/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Camarões — rapto de cidadãos franceses

Segundo a comunicação social, sete cidadãos franceses terão sido raptados a 19 de fevereiro de 2013 na localidade camaronesa de Dadanga, perto da fronteira com a Nigéria.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Dispõe de informações quanto a este rapto?

— Considera que o mesmo terá origem idêntica ao que ocorreu na véspera em Jama'are, na Nigéria?

— Aconselha os cidadãos europeus a deslocarem-se àqueles países?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não dispõe de quaisquer informações privilegiadas diretas sobre o rapto de sete cidadãos franceses em 19 de fevereiro de 2013, no norte dos Camarões, mas está a cooperar muito estreitamente com as autoridades francesas.

Na quinta-feira 21 de fevereiro de 2013, numa mensagem vídeo, o grupo militante islâmico nigeriano Boko Haram reivindicou o rapto dos sete cidadãos franceses.

As delegações da UE na região estão a assegurar uma estreita coordenação com as embaixadas e os consulados dos Estados-Membros nos Camarões, bem como de outros países, como os EUA e o Canadá. A maioria destes países aconselhou oficialmente os seus cidadãos a não viajarem para o extremo norte dos Camarões até nova ordem.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002075/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Kidnapping of French citizens in Cameroon

According to media reports, seven French citizens were kidnapped on 19 February 2013 in the Dadanga area of Cameroon, close to the border with Nigeria.

Does the Commission have any information about this kidnapping?

Does it believe that it was carried out by the same group as the kidnapping that took place the previous day in Jama'are, Nigeria?

Does it advise European citizens to travel to these countries?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission does not have any direct insight information about the abduction of seven French citizens on 19 February 2013 in Northern Cameroon, but is cooperating very closely with France.

On Thursday 21 February 2013 the Nigerian Islamist militant group, Boko Haram, claimed in a video message the abduction of the seven French citizens.

The EU Delegations in the region are coordinating closely with the Embassies and Consulates of Member States in Cameroon as well as those of other countries such as the USA and Canada. Most of these countries have officially advised their citizens not to travel to the Far North region of Cameroon until further notice.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002076/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Investimento produtivo na UE — critérios

No seu discurso de 19 de fevereiro de 2013 proferido no Comité Económico e Social, o Comissário Olli Rehn declarou que temos de nos concentrar «no aumento do investimento produtivo — tanto público como privado. Numa altura em que o setor financeiro ainda não está a funcionar como deveria, os bancos públicos, como o Banco Europeu de Investimento, têm um papel importante a desempenhar.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— De que formas pretende aumentar o investimento produtivo e garantir que este o é verdadeiramente?

— Como pretende fazer a diferenciação da qualidade do investimento, isto é, que critérios e mecanismos usará de modo a apurar — com a fiabilidade adequada — a qualidade do investimento que lhe é apresentado?

— Que medidas tomou, ou prevê tomar, para que estes critérios sejam: a) suficientemente rigorosos para que a sua formulação não permita abusos e b) flexíveis o bastante para não criar desnecessariamente obstáculos ao dinamismo da economia e ao crescimento, garantindo, assim, a atração de investimento e a recuperação da confiança dos investidores?

— Conhecendo as atuais circunstâncias dos Estados-Membros sujeitos a programas de ajustamento e carentes de estímulos produtivos à atividade económica, pretende, de alguma forma, dar-lhes especial atenção quanto aos investimento futuros, às suas metas e aos objetivos, bem como à capacidade de atração e de recuperação da confiança do setor privado?

— Quando prevê apresentar essas medidas?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(8 de maio de 2013)

O atual quadro orçamental da UE oferece margem de manobra para equilibrar as necessidades de investimento público produtivo com a consolidação orçamental. O investimento público é tomado em consideração no momento de avaliar a situação orçamental de um Estado-Membro no relatório que antecede o lançamento de um PDE ([1]), bem como na vertente preventiva do PEC ([2]), dado que os picos de investimentos anuais são excluídos do novo valor de referência para as despesas. Como indicado no plano para uma UEM ([3]) efetiva e aprofundada, a Comissão está a explorar outras vias no âmbito da vertente preventiva para acolher programas de investimento na avaliação dos programas de estabilidade e convergência.

Em termos de financiamento, a política de coesão e o Mecanismo Interligar a Europa constituem instrumentos importantes para apoiar o crescimento económico, a criação de emprego e a interconectividade. Além disso, o Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego introduziu um apoio financeiro suplementar: i) o capital inicial do BEI aumentou 10 mil milhões de EUR, possibilitando ao BEI aumentar a sua capacidade de concessão de empréstimos em 60 mil milhões de EUR nos próximos três anos; ii) a iniciativa «obrigações para financiamento de projetos» lançada em cooperação com o BEI em 2012; iii) a reprogramação dos fundos estruturais, em particular nos países sob programa. A Comissão publicará também um Livro Verde relativo aos investimentos a longo prazo, com destaque para as condições de enquadramento adequadas para o investimento na UE.

([1]) Procedimento relativo aos Défices Excessivos.
([2]) Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento.
([3]) União Económica e Monetária.

Tal como referido no relatório da Comissão sobre «a qualidade das despesas públicas na UE», a produtividade do investimento público depende fortemente da eficaz seleção de projetos, através de instrumentos como a análise de custo-benefício, utilizando taxas de desconto comparáveis às aplicadas pelo setor privado. Na política de coesão da UE, a tónica no crescimento a longo prazo será ainda reforçada a partir de 2014 através de um alinhamento total das prioridades de financiamento com os desafios específicos identificados nas REP ([4]) e nos PNR ([5]).

([4]) Recomendações Específicas por País.
([5]) Programas Nacionais de Reformas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002076/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Productive investment in the EU — criteria

In his speech to the European Economic and Social Committee on 19 February 2013, Commissioner Rehn said that 'we need to focus on boosting productive investment — both public and private'. At a time when the financial sector is not working as it should, 'public banks such as the European Investment Bank have an important role to play here'.

How will the Commission increase productive investment and ensure that such investment is genuinely productive?

How will it determine the quality of investment; that is, what criteria and mechanisms will it use to ascertain — with a suitable degree of reliability — the quality of investments presented to it?

What measures has it taken or does it plan to take to ensure that these criteria are: (a) made strict enough to prevent abuses and (b) flexible enough to avoid unnecessarily hampering the dynamism of the economy and growth, thereby ensuring that investment is attractive and that investor confidence recovers?

In view of the present circumstances of the Member States undergoing adjustment programmes and lacking productive stimuli for economic activity, will the Commission pay them some kind of special attention with regard to future investments, their targets and goals, and their ability to attract and retain the confidence of the private sector?

When does it plan to present these measures?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The existing EU fiscal framework offers scope to balance productive public investment needs with fiscal consolidation. Public investment is taken into account when assessing the fiscal position of a Member State in the report which precedes the launch of an EDP ([1]), as well as in the preventive arm of the SGP ([2]), as annual peaks in investments are excluded from the new expenditure benchmark. As set out in the blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU ([3]), the Commission is exploring further ways within the preventive arm to accommodate investment programmes in the assessment of Stability and Convergence Programmes.

In terms of financing, the cohesion policy and the Connecting Europe Facility are important tools to support economic growth, job creation and interconnectedness. In addition, the Compact for Growth and Jobs introduced additional financing support: (i) EIB's paid-in capital increase of EUR 10 billion, enabling the EIB to increase its lending by EUR 60 billion over the coming three years; (ii) the Project bond initiative launched in cooperation with the EIB in 2012; (iii) structural funds reprogramming, particularly in programme countries. The Commission will also publish a Green Paper on long-term investment with focus on appropriate framework conditions for investment in EU.

As mentioned in the Commission report on 'The Quality of Public Expenditure in the EU', productivity of public investment depends strongly on effective project selection, through tools such as cost-benefit analysis, using discount rates comparable to those applied by the private sector. In EU Cohesion Policy, the focus on long-term growth will be further reinforced from 2014 via full alignment of funding priorities with country-specific challenges identified in the CSRs ([4]) and NRP ([5]).

([1]) Excessive Deficit Procedure.
([2]) Stability Growth Pack.
([3]) European Monetary Union.
([4]) Country Specific Recommendations.
([5]) National Reform Programmes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002077/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Recuperação de tesouros nacionais europeus

Notícias recentes indicam que a Comissão Europeia avalia medidas novas para auxiliar os Estados-Membros a recuperar tesouros nacionais que tenham sido ilicitamente retirados do seu território.

A perda de bens culturais classificados como «património nacional de valor artístico, histórico ou arqueológico» é uma forma particularmente grave de tráfico ilícito de bens culturais, dado que priva os cidadãos da sua história e identidade e coloca em risco a preservação do património cultural dos Estados-Membros.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Confirma que pondera essa possibilidade?

— Quais são, em seu entender, as prioridades europeias a este respeito?

— Considerando que algum património artístico, histórico e cultural português foi pilhado aquando das invasões francesas, estaria disponível para ajudar a apurar o paradeiro deste património e promover a sua justa devolução a Portugal?

Resposta dada por António Tajani em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão partilha a opinião do Senhor Deputado no sentido de que a perda de bens culturais classificados como «património nacional de valor artístico, histórico ou arqueológico» é uma forma particularmente grave de tráfico ilícito pois priva os cidadãos da sua história e identidade e coloca em risco a preservação do património cultural dos Estados-Membros.

Desde 1993, a Diretiva 93/7/CEE do Conselho relativa à restituição de bens culturais que tenham saído ilicitamente do território de um Estado-Membro ([1]) instituiu mecanismos de cooperação e procedimentos para a restituição de bens culturais que estão localizados noutro Estado-Membro.

A avaliação da aplicação da presente Diretiva concluiu que esta precisava de ser revista, por forma a torná-la mais eficaz no que toca à restituição de bens culturais classificados como «tesouros nacionais». Por conseguinte, a Comissão tenciona apresentar uma proposta para a sua revisão. O principal objetivo desta revisão será permitir aos Estados-Membros obterem a restituição ao seu território dos bens culturais classificados como «património nacional», que foram ilicitamente retirados dos seus territórios.

A Diretiva 93/7/CEE é uma medida que suporta o funcionamento do mercado interno. Esta Diretiva aplica-se apenas aos bens culturais que tenham saído ilicitamente do território de um Estado-Membro em ou após 1 de janeiro de 1993. Contudo, cada Estado-Membro pode aplicar o regime previsto na presente diretiva aos pedidos de restituição de bens culturais que tenham saído ilicitamente do território de outros Estados-Membros antes dessa data.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009R0661:PT:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002077/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Recovering European national treasures

Recent reports indicate that the Commission supports new measures to assist Member States in recovering national treasures which have been illegally removed from their territory.

The loss of cultural assets classified as 'national treasures possessing artistic, historic or archaeological value' is a particularly serious form of trafficking in illegal cultural goods, as it deprives citizens of their history and identity and threatens the preservation of Member States' cultural heritage.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following:

— Is it considering this possibility?

— What, in the Commission's view, are Europe's priorities in this respect?

— Given that elements of Portugal's artistic, historical and cultural heritage were looted during the French invasions, would it be prepared to assist in locating these assets and promoting their due return to Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that the loss of cultural objects classified as 'national treasures possessing artistic, historic or archaeological value' is a particularly serious form of illicit trafficking because it deprives citizens of their history and identity and threatens the preservation of cultural heritage within our Member States.

Since 1993, Council Directive 93/7/EEC on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State ([1]) has provided cooperation mechanisms and proceedings for returning cultural objects that are located in another Member State.

The evaluation of the application of this directive concluded that it needed to be revised to make it more effective for the return of cultural object classified as 'national treasures'. Therefore, the Commission intends to put forward a proposal for its revision. The main goal of this review will be to enable Member States to recover any cultural object identified as a 'national treasure' that was unlawfully removed from their territories.

Directive 93/7/EEC is a measure that supports the functioning of the internal market. It applies only to cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State on or after 1 January 1993. However, each Member State may decide to apply the arrangements provided for by the directive to requests for the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of other Member States prior to that date.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31993L0007:EN:NOT.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002078/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Fusão das polícias europeias

Notícias recentes dão conta de que a Comissão Europeia pondera a possibilidade de fundir as polícias europeias num único corpo.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Confirma que pondera essa possibilidade?

— Quais são, em seu entender, as principais vantagens e desvantagens desta fusão?

— Não considera que, tal como sucede com as polícias nacionais, não é fácil nem linear o amalgamamento de corpos policiais com vocações, história e espírito de corpo diferentes, e que este nem sempre resulta?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não vê qualquer vantagem na fusão das forças policiais europeias numa única entidade e nunca considerou tal possibilidade.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002078/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Fusion of European police forces

It has recently been reported that the Commission is considering the possibility of merging Europe's police forces into a single body.

Can the Commission confirm whether this is true?

What does it see as being the main advantages and disadvantages of such a move?

Does it not consider that, based on the experience with national police bodies, it is neither easy nor straightforward to amalgamate police forces with different missions, histories and identities and that it is not always possible to do so?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission does not see any advantages in merging Europe's police forces into a single entity and has never considered such a possibility.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002079/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Equinos — «passaporte» europeu

Devido à recente descoberta de carne de cavalo em comida processada, identificada como contendo apenas carne de bovinos, vêm-se sucedendo recomendações para que a circulação daqueles animais na União Europeia seja regulada de modo mais estrito.

A Federação dos Veterinários da Europa (FVE) defendeu a esse propósito a criação de um registo centralizado a nível europeu de «passaportes» para equinos, de modo a obstar que animais impedidos de serem consumidos por seres humanos possam entrar na cadeia alimentar.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Tomou conhecimento desta recomendação da FVE?

— Que apreciação faz dela?

— Tomou ou pretende tomar medidas quanto a este assunto?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2013)

Já existe legislação da UE para assegurar que determinados equídeos possam ser excluídos permanentemente da cadeia alimentar. O Regulamento (CE) n.° 504/2008 da Comissão ([1]) requer que os equídeos nascidos na UE após 1 de julho de 2009 sejam identificados por repetidor e passaporte no prazo máximo de um ano a contar do seu nascimento. Os passaportes de equídeos nascidos antes de 1 de julho de 2009 tiveram de ser registados até 31 de dezembro de 2009. Desde 1 de janeiro de 2010, qualquer passaporte em falta só pode ser substituído quando o animal é simultaneamente excluído da cadeia alimentar. A emissão do passaporte é registada com um número único vitalício que identifica o organismo emissor do passaporte. Os equídeos sem passaporte apenas podem ser tratados com substâncias medicamentosas autorizadas para animais produtores de alimentos, não podem ser legalmente mantidos nem transportados e não podem ser abatidos para consumo humano.

Com base nos resultados de auditorias nos Estados-Membros que identificaram deficiências na aplicação do atual sistema de rastreabilidade de cavalos, a Comissão elaborou um plano de ação que tenciona propor o registo obrigatório dos passaportes de cavalos numa base de dados central nacional e regras mais rigorosas, assim como a redução do número de organismos autorizados a emitir passaportes. No entanto, uma base de dados centralizada a nível europeu não traria mais segurança ao sistema, embora viesse criar custos consideráveis e uma sobrecarga adicional para os Estados-Membros e a Comissão.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 504/2008 da Comissão, de 6 de junho de 2008, que aplica as Diretivas 90/426/CEE e 90/427/CEE do Conselho no que respeita a métodos para identificação de equídeos, JO L 149 de 7.6.2008, p. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002079/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: European horse passport

As a result of the recent discovery of horsemeat in processed food labelled as containing only beef, a series of recommendations have been made to ensure that the movement of horses within the EU is more strictly regulated.

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) has advocated the creation of a centralised European register of horse 'passports', to prevent animals not authorised for human consumption from entering the food chain.

Is the Commission aware of this recommendation by the FVE?

What is its opinion of it?

Has it taken action on this matter, and if not does it intend to do so?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

EU legislation is already in place to ensure that individual horses can be permanently excluded from the food chain. Commission Regulation (EC) No 504/2008 ([1]) requires equidae born in the EU after 1 July 2009 to be identified by transponder and passport within a year of birth. The passports of equidae born before 1 July 2009 had to be registered by 31 December 2009. Since 1 January 2010, any missing passport can only be replaced when the animal is at the same time excluded from the food chain. The issuing of the passport is recorded under a unique life number which identifies the passport issuing body. Equidae without passport can only be treated with medicinal substances authorised for food producing animals, cannot be legally kept and moved, and cannot be slaughtered for human consumption.

Based on the outcome of audits in the Member States that identified shortcomings in the implementation of the current system of traceability of horses, the Commission has prepared an Action Plan that envisages to propose mandatory recording of horse passports in a central national database and more stringent rules for and a reduction in the number of passport issuing bodies. However, a centralised European database would not add safety to the system, while it would bring considerable costs and additional burden for the Member States and the Commission.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 504/2008 of 6 June 2008 implementing Council Directives 90/426/EEC and 90/427/EEC as regards methods for the identification of equidae, OJ L 149, 7.6.2008.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002080/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Procuradoria de Justiça Europeia: trabalhos preparatórios

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-011263/2012, a Vice-Presidente Viviane Reding, em nome da Comissão, afirmou que, quanto à futura Procuradoria de Justiça Europeia, «a Comissão está atualmente a realizar as necessárias consultas e trabalhos preparatórios tendo em vista a preparação de uma proposta. Os trabalhos preparatórios ainda não estão concluídos.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Quando prevê que os trabalhos preparatórios estejam terminados?

— Dispõe de documentos produzidos no quadro desses trabalhos ou consultas preparatórias suscetíveis de serem consultados?

— Estes procuram atender à preocupação de evitar que seja posto em causa o princípio da subsidiariedade e a independência judicial dos Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(9 de abril de 2013)

De acordo com o seu programa de trabalho, a Comissão prevê a adoção de uma proposta, com base no artigo 85.° do TFUE, relativa à criação de uma Procuradoria Europeia [European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO)] em 2013. Foi encomendado um estudo preparatório, tendo em vista a elaboração da avaliação de impacto da Comissão que fundamentará a proposta de criação da Procuradoria Europeia. Tanto o estudo como a avaliação de impacto serão tornados públicos após a adoção pela Comissão da proposta de regulamento relativa à criação da Procuradoria Europeia. A avaliação de impacto abordará a questão da subsidiariedade e o impacto no sistema judicial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002080/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: European public prosecutor's office: preparatory work

In her answer to my previous Written Question E-011263/2012, Vice-President Viviane Reding said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'the Commission is currently conducting the necessary consultations and preparatory works in view of preparing a proposal [on the European public prosecutor's office]. The preparatory works are not yet finalised.'

Can the Commission say:

— When it expects the preparatory work to be concluded?

— Whether it has any documents produced within the framework of these consultations and preparatory works which can be consulted?

— Whether these seek to address concerns that the principles of subsidiarity and judicial independence of Member States must not be compromised?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

In line with its Work Programme, the Commission foresees the adoption of a proposal, based on Article 86 TFEU, on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) in 2013. A preparatory study has been commissioned to prepare the Commission's Impact Assessment underpinning the proposal on EPPO. Both the study and the impact assessment will be made public after the adoption by the Commission of the proposal for a regulation on EPPO. The Impact Assessment will address the question of subsidiarity and impact on the judiciary.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002081/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Účinnejšia ochrana pred látkami spôsobujúcimi hormonálne poruchy

V posledných rokoch celosvetovo prudko narastá počet pacientov s hormonálnymi poruchami. Príčiny môžu byť rôzne. Tento zvýšený výskyt môžu medziiným spôsobovať steroidné hormóny, dioxíny, niektoré pesticídy, antikoncepčné lieky či lieky na hormonálnu liečbu nádorových ochorení. Treba promptne reagovať a realizovať zodpovedajúce opatrenia najmä na ochranu detí, mladých ľudí a tehotné ženy.

Akým spôsobom chce Komisia venovať zvýšenú pozornosť tejto problematike, príp. pričiniť sa o zmenu súčasných právnych predpisov v snahe aj pomocou legislatívy eliminovať možnosť prístupu k týmto nebezpečným látkam?

Odpoveď pána Potočnika v mene Komisie
(11. apríla 2013)

Od zavedenia stratégie Spoločenstva týkajúcej sa látok narušujúcich endokrinný systém v roku 1999 Komisia investovala prostredníctvom rozpočtu Spoločenstva, aby zlepšila pochopenie mechanizmov, ktorými tieto látky ovplyvňujú fungovanie endokrinných systémov. V tom istom čase sme začlenili špecifické opatrenia týkajúce sa endokrinných disruptorov medzi kľúčové body právnych predpisov o chemických látkach, napríklad nariadenia REACH, nariadenia o biocídnych výrobkoch a nariadenia o prípravkoch na ochranu rastlín.

Komisia v súčasnoti posudzuje stratégiu Spoločenstva týkajúcu sa látok narušujúcich endokrinný systém, aby zhodnotila pokrok dosiahnutý vo vede a v zmenách právnych predpisov. Okrem toho horizontálne kritériá na určenie endokrinných disruptorov, ktoré Komisia vyvinula v dôsledku právnych záväzkov v rámci nariadení o prípravkoch na ochranu rastlín a biocídnych výrobkoch, poskytnú chýbajúci nástroj na určenie týchto látok.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002081/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: More effective protection against substances that cause hormonal disorders

In recent years, there has been a sharp rise worldwide in the number of patients with hormonal disorders. This may be due to a variety of factors. Possible causes of the increased incidence include steroid hormones, dioxins, some pesticides, contraceptives or medications for the hormonal treatment of tumorous diseases. We need to react quickly and implement appropriate measures, particularly for the protection of children, young people and pregnant women.

In what way does the Commission intend to pay more attention to this issue, or, where appropriate, to try and change current legislation in order to eliminate, by legislative means, the possibility of access to these dangerous substances?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

Since the launching of the Community strategy on endocrine disruptors in 1999 the Commission invested through the Community research budget to increase our understanding of the mechanisms by which substances affect the functioning of endocrine systems. Over the same period we have included specific measures to address endocrine disruptors in key pieces of chemicals legislation such as REACH, the Biocidal Product Regulation and the Plant Protection Products Regulation.

The Commission is currently reviewing the Community Strategy for Endocrine Disruptors to reflect the progress achieved in science and changes in legislation. Furthermore, horizontal criteria for identification of endocrine disruptors being developed by the Commission as a consequence of the legal obligations under the Plant Protection Product and Biocidal Product Regulations will provide a missing tool for the identification of these substances.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002082/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Rozvojové ciele po roku 2015

Ostatných pätnásť rokov miléniové ciele určujú smerovanie európskej rozvojovej politiky. Keďže rok 2015 sa blíži, je opodstatnené zaoberať sa otázkou formulovania nových priorít. Najpálčivejšími problémami sú chudoba, vysoká detská úmrtnosť či prístup k liečbe HIV. Výbor pre rozvoj pripravuje príslušnú správu, o ktorej by mal hlasovať koncom apríla toho roku.

Ako chce Komisia podporiť snahy Európskeho parlamentu, pokiaľ hovoríme o otázkach stanovovania rozvojových cieľov po roku 2015?

Odpoveď pána Piebalgsa v mene Komisie
(6. mája 2013)

Miléniové rozvojové ciele (MRC) vytvorili kvalitný rámec pre opatrenia zamerané na boj proti chudobe. Do cieľového roku 2015 sa podarí dosiahnuť značný pokrok pri viacerých zo stanovených cieľov. EÚ k tomuto pokroku výrazne prispieva a v rámci programu zmien ([1]) vyvíja maximálne úsilie, aby ho do roku 2015 ešte urýchlila. V tejto súvislosti spustila v roku 2010 iniciatívu zameranú na podporu dosahovania MRC v oblasti boja proti hladu, zdravia matiek, znižovania úmrtnosti detí, zabezpečenia hygienických podmienok a prístupu k pitnej vode. Na túto iniciatívu vyčlenila finančné prostriedky vo výške 1 miliardy EUR. Naďalej však stojíme pred veľkými výzvami, ktorých riešenie si bude vyžadovať spoločné úsilie svetového spoločenstva aj po roku 2015.

Globálnu víziu v tejto oblasti, ako aj naliehavú potrebu zabezpečiť udržateľnú budúcnosť z hospodárskeho, sociálneho a environmentálneho hľadiska potvrdili aj účastníci konferencie Rio+20, ktorá sa konala v roku 2012. Táto konferencia bola impulzom na naštartovanie opatrení zameraných na udržateľný rozvoj vrátane rozhodnutia vymedziť ciele v oblasti udržateľného rozvoja.

Medzinárodné spoločenstvo sa pod vedením OSN usiluje posúdiť pokrok pri dosahovaní MRC a stanoviť ďalšie kroky pre obdobie po roku 2015, ako aj opatrenia nadväzujúce na záväzky prijaté počas konferencie Rio+20, a to najmä v súvislosti s cieľmi v oblasti udržateľného rozvoja. Tento medzinárodný proces, do ktorého je zapojená celá škála zainteresovaných strán vrátane národných a miestnych vlád, parlamentov a občianskej spoločnosti, by mal vyústiť do stanovenia príslušného rámca pre obdobie po roku 2015.

V oznámení, ktoré Komisia prijala 27. februára 2013 ([2]), sa zdôrazňuje potreba čo najskôr prepojiť posudzovanie pokroku pri dosahovaní MRC s opatreniami vyplývajúcimi zo záverov konferencie Rio+20, a to v záujme vypracovania jednotného všeobecného rámca na obdobie po roku 2015.

Komisia vedie s EP nepretržitý dialóg o MRC a v tomto dialógu bude pokračovať aj v budúcnosti. Komisia so záujmom očakáva správu a uznesenie EP, ktoré budú cenným prínosom v tejto oblasti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/agenda-for-change/agenda_for_change_en.htm
([2]) COM(2013) 92 final: „Dôstojný život pre všetkých: odstránenie chudoby a zabezpečenie trvalo udržateľnej budúcnosti pre celý svet“: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/2013-02-22_communication_a_decent_life_for_all_post_2015_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002082/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Development goals after 2015

The millennium goals have determined the direction of European development policy for the past 15 years. As 2015 is approaching, it is right to address the issue of formulating new priorities. The most pressing problems are poverty, high child mortality rates and access to HIV treatment. The Committee on Development is preparing the relevant report, which should be put to the vote at the end of April this year.

How does the Commission intend to support the efforts of the European Parliament in relation to setting the development goals after 2015?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have provided an excellent framework for action to tackle poverty. Good progress on several of the goals will be recorded by the target year of 2015. The EU has made a significant contribution and — in the framework of the Agenda for Change ([1]) — is making every effort to accelerate progress by 2015. It has notably launched the EUR 1 billion MDG initiative in 2010 to further support the achievement of MDGs related to the fight against hunger, maternal health and children mortality, water and sanitation. Still, significant challenges remain and efforts by the entire global community must continue beyond 2015.

In parallel, the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 confirmed a global vision and urgent challenge for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future and set in motion action towards sustainable development, which in particular included the decision to elaborate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

International efforts are underway, led by the UN, to review progress towards the MDGs and determine what should follow after 2015 and to follow up on Rio+20 commitments in particular on SDGs. This international process, involving the full range of stakeholders, including national and local governments and parliaments and civil society, should lead to a post-2015 framework.

On 27 February 2013 the Commission adopted a communication ([2]) which advocates the bringing together, as soon as possible, of the MDGs review and Rio+20 follow-up processes, with a view to the development of a single, overarching post-2015 framework.

The Commission has been and will remain in constant dialogue with the EP on the MDGs. The Commission looks forward to the EP report, and resolution which will provide valuable input.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/agenda-for-change/agenda_for_change_en.htm
([2]) COM(2013) 92 final: 'A decent life for all: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future': http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/2013-02-22_communication_a_decent_life_for_all_post_2015_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002083/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Investície Európskej únie do výskumu neurodegeneratívnych ochorení

Podľa vyjadrení predsedu Spoločného program EÚ pre výskum neurodegeneratívnych ochorení (JPND), možno evidovať nárast tak závažných neurodegeneratívnych ochorení, akými je Parkinsonova či Alzheimerova choroba. Európska únia v boji proti uvedenému typu onemocnení plánuje do výskumu investovať sumu 25 miliónov eur.

V snahe spoznávať a odhaľovať príčiny vzniku neurodegeneratívnych ochorení, vyvíjať nové liečebné metódy a postupy, ako aj vhodné spôsoby ošetrovateľskej starostlivosti – má aj samotná Komisia plán, ako konkrétne zaintervenovať a podporiť tak úsilie JPND v danej problematike?

Odpoveď pani Geogheganovej-Quinnovej v mene Komisie
(10. apríla 2013)

Komisia si plne uvedomuje závažnosť neurodegeneratívnych ochorení najmä Alzheimerovej choroby, ktorá v roku 2040 postihne viac ako 12 miliónov Európanov. Podpora výskumu neurodegeneratívnych ochorení bola preto prioritou siedmeho rámcového programu v oblasti výskumu a vývoja (RP7, 2007 – 2013) s rozpočtom 400 miliónov EUR venovaných na výskum v tejto oblasti od roku 2007, vrátane 200 miliónov EUR na výskum Alzheimerovej choroby a 165 miliónov EUR na výskum Parkinsonovej choroby. Horizont 2020, nasledujúci rámcový program EÚ pre výskum a inovácie, vytvorí ďalšie príležitosti na podporu výskumu neurodegeneratívnych ochorení vrátane Alzheimerovej choroby.

Komisia podporuje vykonanie iniciatívy spoločného plánovania v oblasti neurodegeneratívnych chorôb (JPND), najmä Alzheimerovej choroby. Ide o iniciatívu vedenú členskými štátmi ([1]), ktorá sa zameriava na zvýšenie vplyvu európskeho výskumu v tejto oblasti prostredníctvom koordinácie úsilia v jednotlivých krajinách. V rámci iniciatívy JPND bol v septembri 2012 prijatý plán na vykonanie výskumnej stratégie.

V tomto ohľade začala Komisia diskusiu s cieľom vytvoriť synergie medzi iniciatívou JPND a programom Horizont 2020 podľa rámca stanoveného v oznámení o partnerstve v oblasti výskumu. V tejto súvislosti Komisia podporuje aj zosúladenie a koordináciu inštitucionálneho a konkurenčného financovania v rámci národných výskumných programov, ktoré predstavujú 88 % investícií do verejného výskumu v Európe.

([1]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002083/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: EU investment in research on neurodegenerative diseases

According to the Chair of the EU Joint Programme — Neurodegenerative Disease Research (JPND), records show an increase in such serious diseases as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. In the fight against diseases of this type, the EU plans to invest EUR 25 million in research.

With a view to understanding and discovering the causes of neurodegenerative diseases, and to developing new treatment methods and procedures, as well as suitable nursing care methods, does the Commission itself have a concrete plan for intervening in and supporting the JPND's efforts in this area?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the burden of neurodegenerative diseases, in particular Alzheimer's diseases that will affect more than 12 million Europeans in 2040. Support for research on neurodegenerative diseases was therefore a priority throughout the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7, 2007-2013), with EUR 400 million dedicated to research in this area since 2007, including EUR 200 million on Alzheimer's and EUR 165 million on Parkinson's. 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 Commission supports the implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases, in particular Alzheimer's (JPND), a Member States-led initiative ([1]) which aims at increasing the impact of European research in this area by coordinating efforts across countries. The JPND adopted its Research Strategy implementation plan in September 2012.

In this regard, the Commission started discussing with the JPND in order to establish synergies between the JPND and Horizon 2020, within the framework provided by the communication on Partnering in Research. In this context, the Commission is also encouraging the alignment and coordination of the institutional and competitive funding committed under national research programmes, which account for 88% of the public research investments in Europe.

([1]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002084/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Jednoduchšie uznávanie kvalifikácií v rámci Európskej únie

Európska únia má snahu zjednodušiť a urýchliť uznávanie odborných kvalifikácií. Tieto kroky môžu významne prispieť napr. k zjednodušeniu situácie v prípade hľadania si pracovného uplatnenia v rámci členských štátov Únie.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia chce v tomto smere prijať Komisia v najbližšej dobe?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(15. apríla 2013)

V decembri 2011 Komisia predložila návrh na modernizáciu smernice o odborných kvalifikáciách (smernica 2005/36/ES) s cieľom zjednodušiť a uľahčiť postupy uznávania a podporiť pohyb kvalifikovaných odborníkov medzi členskými štátmi.

Keď Európsky parlament a Rada oficiálne prijmú tento návrh (dúfame, že to bude ešte v priebehu tohto roka), Komisia sa bude sústrediť na jeho riadnu implementáciu členskými štátmi a na podporu využívania nových nástrojov obsiahnutých v návrhu, akým je napríklad európsky profesijný preukaz pre povolania, ktoré oň majú záujem.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002084/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Simpler recognition of qualifications in the European Union

The European Union is trying to simplify and speed up the recognition of professional qualifications. These steps may contribute significantly, for example, towards simplifying the situation for job seekers in EU Member States.

What concrete measures does the Commission want to adopt in this direction in the immediate future?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

In December 2011 the Commission tabled a proposal to modernise the directive on professional qualifications (Directive 2005/36/EC) with a view to simplify and facilitate the recognition processes and to promote the movement of qualified professionals between Member States.

Once the proposal is formally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, hopefully in the course of this year, the Commission will focus on its proper implementation by Member States and on fostering the use of novel instruments contained in the proposal, such as the European Professional Card for professions which so wish.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002085/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Bezpečnosť jadrových elektrární

Nepredstaviteľné riziko a dopad na ľudské zdravie so sebou nesú jadrové havárie, zapríčinené či už zlyhaním ľudského faktoru alebo vznikajúce následkom prírodných katastrof. Nie je to tak dávno, čo v marci 2011 došlo k havárii v jadrovej elektrárni Fukušima. V reakcii na túto nešťastnú udalosť Únia nariadila vykonať záťažové testy európskych jadrových elektrární v snahe zistiť, do akej miery sú schopné čeliť možným hroziacim katastrofám.

Je dôležité a potrebné, aby elektrárne kontinuálne vyvíjali úsilie na to, aby boli splnené všetky európske bezpečnostné štandardy.

Akým spôsobom zamýšľa Komisia dohliadať na skutočnosť, aby náklady s tým spojené znášali prevádzkovatelia jadrových elektrární, a nie občania ako daňoví poplatníci?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(23. apríla 2013)

Vykonávanie odporúčaní vyplývajúcich zo záťažových testov je vo vnútroštátnej právomoci. Monitorovanie poskytovania potrebných finančných zdrojov na splnenie záväzkov týkajúcich sa jadrovej bezpečnosti a podrobnosti týkajúce sa transponovania tohto cieľa sa takisto uskutočňujú na vnútroštátnej úrovni.

Ďalej sa konštatuje, že v článku 6 ods. 5 smernice Rady 2009/71/Euratom, ktorou sa zriaďuje rámec Spoločenstva pre jadrovú bezpečnosť jadrových zariadení ([1]), sa uvádza: „Členské štáty zabezpečia, aby sa v uplatňovanom vnútroštátnom rámci vyžadovalo, aby držitelia licencie zabezpečili a udržiavali náležité finančné a ľudské zdroje na plnenie svojich povinností v súvislosti s jadrovou bezpečnosťou jadrového zariadenia“.

S cieľom zabezpečiť, aby sa odporúčania vyplývajúce zo záťažových testov nepretržite a transparentne vykonávali v celej Európe, vnútroštátne regulačné orgány a Komisia sa dohodli, že národné akčné plány sa pripravia do konca roka 2012 a partnersky preskúmajú skupinami odborníkov zo zúčastnených krajín a Komisie. V súčasnosti sú príslušné vnútroštátne správy predmetom partnerského preskúmania, ktoré bude ukončené vo forme spoločného seminára v poslednom aprílovom týždni. V úzkej spolupráci s vnútroštátnymi regulačnými orgánmi zamýšľa Komisia podať v júni 2014 správu o vykonávaní odporúčaní vyplývajúcich zo záťažových testov.

Komisia by chcela váženú pani poslankyňu odkázať na svoju odpoveď na ústnu otázku Amalie Sartoriovej O-000183/2012, ako aj na svoje odpovede na písomné otázky Angeliky Werthmannovej E-009123/2012 a E-009124/2012 ([2]).

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 172, 2.7.2009.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002085/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Nuclear power plant safety

Nuclear accidents, whether caused by human error or natural disasters, raise the spectre of an unimaginable risk to, and effect on, human health. It is not so long ago that, in March 2011, the accident occurred at the Fukushima nuclear plant. In response to that unfortunate event, the EU ordered the performance of stress tests on European nuclear plants, in an effort to determine the extent to which they were capable of dealing with potential disasters.

It is important and necessary for power plants to make continued efforts towards meeting all European safety standards.

How does the Commission intend to monitor the situation so that the costs connected with this are borne by the nuclear power plant operators and not by taxpayers?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The implementation of the recommendations of the stress tests is a national responsibility. Monitoring of the provision of necessary financial resources to fulfil the obligations with respect to nuclear safety and the details concerning the way in which this objective is realised are also taking place at national level.

It is additionally noted that Article 6 paragraph 5 of Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations ([1]) provides: "Member States shall ensure that the national framework in place requires license holders to provide for and maintain adequate financial and human resources to fulfil their obligations with respect to nuclear safety of a nuclear installation".

However, in order to ensure that the recommendations of the stress tests are consistently implemented in a transparent way throughout Europe, national regulators and the Commission have agreed that national action plans would be prepared by the end of 2012 and peer reviewed by teams of experts from the participating countries and the Commission. Currently, the corresponding national reports are undergoing a desktop peer review which will be finalised in the form of a joint workshop in the last week of April. In close cooperation with national regulators, the Commission intends to report on the implementation of the stress test recommendations in June 2014.

The Commission would further like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to oral question O-000183/2012 by Amalia Sartori, as well as to its replies to written questions E-009123/2012 and E-009124/2012 by Angelika Werthmann ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 172, 2.7.2009.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002086/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Mladí Európania a trh práce

Miera nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí presiahla v roku 2011 napr. v Grécku a Španielsku hranicu 55 %. V rámci Európskej únie už vzrástla na 21 %, čo zodpovedá päť a pol miliónu ľudí. Za ostatné roky navyše počet mladých bez práce dramaticky narastá. Európska komisia predkladá program navrhujúci tzv. záruky pre mladých, ktoré im majú umožniť ľahší prístup k zamestnaniu.

Ako chce Komisia pomocou navrhovaného balíka prispieť k zvýšeniu úrovne vzdelávania a odbornej prípravy?

Aké opatrenia je možné prijať v záujme nárastu ponuky pracovných miest?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(25. apríla 2013)

Dňa 28. februára 2013 dosiahla Rada politickú dohodu o návrhu Komisie ([1]) na odporúčanie Rady o zavedení systému záruk pre mladých ([2]). Členské štáty sa zaviazali, že zaistia, aby všetci ľudia mladší ako 25 rokov dostali kvalitnú ponuku zamestnania, ďalšieho vzdelávania, učňovskej prípravy alebo stáže v lehote štyroch mesiacov po tom, čo prídu o prácu alebo ukončia formálne vzdelanie.

Súčasťou odporúčania je celé spektrum dobre zadefinovaných usmernení na zavedenie a realizovanie záruk pre mladých. Zahŕňa aj opatrenia na zvýšenie úrovne vzdelania a odbornej prípravy (napríklad programy „druhej šance“ vo vzdelávaní alebo odborné školenia) a opatrenia na zvýšenie počtu dostupných pracovných miest (napr. cielené a správne navrhnuté dotácie na mzdy a nábor nových pracovníkov s cieľom motivovať zamestnávateľov k vytváraniu nových príležitostí pre mladých ľudí).

Odporúčanie Rady a nedávny balík pre zamestnanosť mládeže ([3]) dopĺňajú v rámci úsilia Komisie na podporu vzniku pracovných miest iné opatrenia, najmä balík opatrení pre zamestnanosť z apríla 2012 ([4]). V rámci balíka bolo navrhnuté zvýšenie tvorby pracovných miest v celom hospodárstve prostredníctvom podpory dopytu po pracovnej sile (napr.: cielenými dotáciami na prijímanie nových pracovníkov, znížením zdanenia práce, podporou podnikania a samostatnej zárobkovej činnosti, prechodom od neformálnej alebo neprihlásenej práce k formálnej práci, zvýšením čistej mzdy), plné využívanie potenciálu tvorby pracovných miest v kľúčových odvetviach priemyslu, napríklad v ekologickom hospodárstve, sektore zdravotníctva a sociálnej starostlivosti, digitálnom hospodárstve, a mobilizovanie finančných nástrojov EÚ na podporu tvorby pracovných miest.

([1]) COM(2012) 729 final z 5. decembra 2012.
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st06/st06944.en13.pdf
([3]) COM(2012) 727 – 728 – 729 final z 5. decembra 2012.
([4]) COM(2012) 173 final z 18. apríla 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002086/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Young Europeans and the labour market

Unemployment among young people in 2011 was higher than 55% in Greece and Spain, for example. It has now risen to 21% across the European Union, which amounts to 5.5 million people. The number of young people without work has risen dramatically in recent years. The European Commission is presenting a programme proposing 'guarantees' for young people, which should give them easier access to employment.

How does the Commission intend to contribute to enhanced levels of education and training through the proposed package?

What measures can be adopted to increase the number of jobs on offer?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

On 28 February 2013 the Council reached political agreement on the Commission proposal ([1]) for a Council recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee ([2]). Member States committed to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

The recommendation provides for a wealth of well-defined guidelines to implement and deliver the Youth Guarantee. It includes both measures that enhance levels of education and training (for example second-chance education programmes or skills training), and measures to increase the number of available jobs (e.g. targeted and well-designed wage and recruitment subsidies to encourage employers to create new opportunities for young people).

The Council recommendation and the recent Youth Employment Package ([3]), are complementary to other efforts by the Commission to boost the number of jobs on offer, in particular to the Employment Package of April 2012 ([4]). The Package proposed to step up job creation across the economy by: encouraging labour demand (e.g.: through targeted hiring subsidies, reducing labour taxation, promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment, conversion of informal or undeclared work into regular employment, boosting take home pay) fully exploiting the job creation potential of key industries, such as the green economy, the health and social care sector and the digital economy; and mobilising EU financial instruments in support of job creation.

([1]) COM(2012) 729 final of 5 December 2012.
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st06/st06944.en13.pdf
([3]) COM(2012) 727-728 — 729 final of 5 December 2012.
([4]) COM(2012) 173 final of 18 April 2012.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002087/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Snaha o efektívnu podporu tých najchudobnejších

Rozpočet Únie vyčlenený na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020 pre najchudobnejších európskych obyvateľov by sa mal pohybovať na úrovni asi dve a pol miliardy eur. Podľa dostupných zdrojov, čísla sú pomerne alarmujúce, keď v dnešných časoch žije na hranici chudoby až 116 miliónov európskych občanov.

Možno, podľa názoru Komisie, túto situáciu zmeniť zriadením fondu a distribúciou jedla a oblečenia pre ľudí v najväčšej núdzi?

Ako sa bude dohliadať na to, aby sa pomoc prerozdeľovala skutočne efektívne?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(23. apríla 2013)

Fond európskej pomoci pre najodkázanejšie osoby (FEAD) naozaj nedokáže sám riešiť núdzu najzraniteľnejšej skupiny európskych občanov. Bude však k tomu prispievať a okrem iného bude dopĺňať vnútroštátne opatrenia, ktoré poskytujú nefinančnú pomoc najchudobnejším, potravinovú pomoc, ale aj základný spotrebný tovar pre bezdomovcov alebo deti, ktoré čelia značnej chudobe.

Komisia zdôrazňuje, že materiálna pomoc by bola na základe návrhu Komisie povinne viazaná na činnosti, ktorých cieľom by bola opätovná integrácia najodkázanejších osôb a zároveň podpora, aby sa snažili dostať na trh práce.

FEAD bude fungovať prostredníctvom spoločného riadenia, pričom sa členským štátom poskytne čo najväčší možný priestor na rozhodovanie. Takto budú môcť rozhodovať o formách chudoby, ktoré si budú vyžadovať zásah z fondu, ako aj o kritériách identifikácie príjemcov pomoci. Táto flexibilita im umožní zefektívniť FEAD tým, že bude čo najlepšie reagovať na potreby danej oblasti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002087/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: The effort to provide effective support for the poorest

The EU budget earmarked for the poorest European citizens in the 2014-2020 period should be in the region of EUR 2.5 billion. According to available sources, the numbers are quite alarming, with up to 116 million European citizens living on the poverty line today.

In the Commission's opinion, is it possible to change this situation by establishing a fund and distributing food and clothing to those in greatest need?

How will it ensure that the distribution of aid really is effective?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(23 avril 2013)

Le Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis (FEAD) ne suffira effectivement pas à répondre à lui seul au dénuement des citoyens européens les plus vulnérables. Il y contribuera néanmoins et viendra en outre en complément des dispositifs nationaux qui fournissent une assistance non-financière aux plus pauvres, aide alimentaire, mais aussi les biens de consommation de base pour les personnes sans-abris ou les enfants confrontés à la très grande pauvreté.

La Commission souligne que l'assistance matérielle serait, au terme de la proposition de la Commission, obligatoirement couplée avec des activités visant à la réintégration des plus démunis, les encourageants ainsi à s'engager sur des parcours d'insertion.

Le FEAD sera mis en œuvre en gestion partagée, laissant la plus grande marge de manœuvre possible aux États membres. Ils pourront ainsi décider des formes de pauvreté qui feront l'objet de l'intervention du Fonds, ainsi que des critères d'identification des bénéficiaires. Cette flexibilité leur permettra d'optimiser l'efficacité du FEAD en répondant aux mieux aux besoins du terrain.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002088/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Európska komisia a podpora medzinárodnej vedeckej spolupráce

Nová stratégia EÚ pre medzinárodnú spoluprácu v oblasti výskumu a inovácií spolu s programom Horizont 2020 – to sú piliere medzinárodnej spolupráce v oblasti vedy, ktoré v ostatnom období predstavila Komisia. Práve výraznejšia a inovovaná medzinárodná spolupráca by sa mohla významne pričiniť o posun a skvalitnenie európskeho výskumu.

Akými konkrétnymi krokmi možno z pohľadu Komisie prispieť k posilneniu rozmeru vedy v medzinárodnom meradle?

Ako možno prispieť k väčšej mobilite európskych vedeckých pracovníkov?

Odpoveď pani Geogheganovej-Quinnovej v mene Komisie
(12. apríla 2013)

V septembri 2012 prijala Komisia oznámenie s návrhom novej stratégie pre medzinárodnú spoluprácu v oblasti výskumu a inovácií ([1]). Jedným z jej cieľov je posilnenie excelentnosti a príťažlivosti Únie v týchto oblastiach.

Na dosiahnutie tohto cieľa bol v rámci stratégie zvolený dvojúrovňový prístup:

— Iniciatíva Horizont 2020 bude otvorená pre subjekty z celého sveta. Vďaka tomuto všeobecnému otvoreniu budú môcť európski výskumníci spolupracovať so svojimi kolegami z tretích krajín na témach podľa vlastného výberu.

— V prípade, že bude potrebná spolupráca na určitých témach s dôsledne vybranými partnermi, vytvoria sa cielené aktivity.

Súčasťou stratégie bude aj niekoľko prierezových tém:

— Posilní sa partnerstvo členských štátov, ktoré bude stavať na úsilí Strategického fóra pre medzinárodnú spoluprácu v oblasti vedy a výskumu.

— Vytvoria sa a budú sa podporovať spoločné princípy na vykonávanie medzinárodnej spolupráce.

— Výskum a inovácie budú výraznejšie prispievať k vonkajším politikám Únie.

Uľahčenie mobility vedcov smerujúcich do tretích krajín a prichádzajúcich z tretích krajín je jedným z pilierov Európskeho výskumného priestoru. V tejto súvislosti Komisia vytvorila príslušné nástroje, napríklad portál EURAXESS. Akcie Marie Skłodowskej-Curie v rámci siedmeho rámcového programu sú taktiež kľúčovým nástrojom – najmä medzinárodné pobytové štipendiá a medzinárodná schéma výmeny výskumného personálu. V rámci iniciatívy Horizont 2020 budú tieto úspechy základom akcií Marie Skłodowskej-Curie. Okrem toho budú výzvy Európskej rady pre výskum naďalej otvorené pre výskumníkov z celého sveta.

([1]) COM(2012) 497 Posilnenie a zameranie medzinárodnej spolupráce EÚ v oblasti výskumu a inovácií: strategický prístup.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002088/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: The European Commission and support for international scientific cooperation

The new EU strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation, together with the Horizon 2020 programme, are the pillars of the international scientific cooperation introduced by the Commission over recent years. More pronounced and innovative international cooperation could significantly advance and enhance the quality of European research.

What concrete steps, in the Commission's view, might contribute towards strengthening science internationally?

How can we contribute towards the greater mobility of European scientists?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission in September 2012 adopted a communication proposing a new strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation ([1]), one of its objectives being to strengthen the Union's excellence and attractiveness in research and innovation.

To achieve this, the strategy follows a dual approach:

— Horizon 2020 will be open to participation from entities from across the world. Through this general opening, European researchers will be free to cooperate with their third country counterparts on topics of their own choice;

— Targeted activities will be developed where cooperation will be sought on particular topics and with well identified partners.

A number of cross-cutting issues will also be part of the strategy:

— The partnership with the Member States will be strengthened, building on the work of the Strategy Forum for International S&T Cooperation;

— Common principles for the conduct of international cooperation will be developed and promoted;

— Research and innovation will make a stronger contribution to the Union's external policies.

Facilitating the mobility of scientists, including to and from third countries, is one of the pillars of the European Research Area. To this extent, the Commission developed tools such as the EURAXESS portal. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions of FP7 are also a key instrument, and notably the International Outgoing Fellowships and the International Researcher Staff Exchange Scheme. In Horizon 2020, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions will build on these achievements. In addition, the European Research Council calls will continue to be open to researchers from across the world.

([1]) COM(2012)497 'Enhancing and focusing EU international cooperation in research and innovation: A strategic approach'.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002089/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Neľahké rokovania o viacročnom rozpočte EÚ

Keďže jednotlivé členské štáty Únie sa výrazne zasadzujú za národné záujmy, viacročný finančný rámec na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020 doposiaľ nemá konečnú podobu. Nezhody v rokovaniach sú spojené najmä s otázkou tzv. tranzitných regiónov, keďže v týchto oblastiach sa HDP pohybuje na úrovni 75 – 90% európskeho priemeru. Napriek všetkému však tieto štáty žiadajú vysokú dotáciu.

Akým spôsobom by mohla Komisia zasiahnuť a vynasnažiť sa prispieť k riešeniu už i tak pomerne kritickej situácie?

Odpoveď pána Lewandowského v mene Komisie
(17. apríla 2013)

Dohoda, ktorá sa dosiahla na zasadnutí Európskej rady v dňoch 7. – 8. februára 2013, predstavuje významný krok vpred v rokovaniach o viacročnom finančnom rámci na roky 2014 – 2020. Európsky parlament na túto dohodu reagoval 13. marca 2013 prijatím uznesenia.

Rada teraz musí získať súhlas Európskeho parlamentu s nariadením o viacročnom finančnom rámci. Parlament, Rada a Komisia musia takisto dospieť k zhodnému stanovisku k medziinštitucionálnej dohode. Súčasne ďalej pokročila práca na tvorbe odvetvových právnych predpisov.

Komisia sa zaviazala, že urobí všetko, čo je v jej silách, aby podporila včasné dosiahnutie dohody medzi Parlamentom a Radou o všetkých uvedených otázkach.

Pokiaľ ide o prechodné regióny, Komisia poznamenáva, že Európska rada zachovala princíp prechodných regiónov (bod 27 záverov Európskej rady), avšak výrazne znížila s tým súvisiaci prídel finančných prostriedkov prostredníctvom zníženia intenzity pomoci v porovnaní s tým, čo navrhla Komisia (bod 35 záverov Európskej rady).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002089/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Difficult negotiations over the multiannual EU budget

As the individual EU Member States are strongly advocating national interests, the multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020 has still not been finalised. The disagreements in the negotiations are mainly linked to the issue of the transit regions, as GDP in these areas stands at 75-90% of the European average. Despite everything, however, these States are demanding a large subsidy.

How can the Commission step in and try to contribute towards solving what is now a rather critical situation?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The agreement reached at the European Council of 7-8 February 2013 represents an important step in the negotiations on the multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020. The European Parliament has reacted to it in a resolution adopted on 13 March 2013.

The Council now needs to obtain the consent of the European Parliament on the MFF Regulation. Parliament, Council and Commission also need to reach an agreement on the interinstitutional agreement. In parallel the work on the sectorial legislation continues to progress.

The Commission is committed to do everything in its power to facilitate a timely agreement between Parliament and Council on all of these elements.

As regards the regions in transition, the Commission notes that the European Council has retained the principle of the regions in transition (point 27 of the European Council conclusions), but has significantly lowered the associated financial allocation by reducing the aid intensity in comparison to the one proposed by the Commission (point 35 of the EC conclusions).

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002090/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Humanitárna pomoc pre Afriku

Európska komisia rozhoduje o rozsahu humanitárnej pomoci na základe hodnotenia globálnych potrieb, pričom kategorizuje 140 rozvojových štátov. Komisia vyčlenila na tento rok na humanitárnu pomoc viac ako 660 miliónov eur. Pomoc sa bude prerozdeľovať vo viac ako osemdesiatich krajinách na svete. Najväčšiu finančnú pomoc má v tomto roku dostať Mali, Sudán a Južný Sudán, Pakistan, Somálsko a Konžská demokratická republika. Časť rozpočtu je však vyčlenená i tým krajinám, ktorým sa pozornosť médií až v takej veľkej miere nedostáva, no napriek tomu pomoc potrebujú.

Vynaloží Komisia snahu, aby sa i jej pričinením stali programy rozvojovej pomoci flexibilnejšími a pomoc sa mohla poskytovať promptnejšie?

Odpoveď pani Georgievovej v mene Komisie
(22. apríla 2013)

Komisia vyvíja trvalé úsilie o to, aby boli programy rozvojovej pomoci flexibilnejšie a aby sa pomoc poskytovala promptnejšie.

Komisia vyvinula konkrétne nástroje a metódy na efektívnejšie poskytovanie pomoci. Flexibilita a pragmatické prístupy pri plánovaní a implementácii týchto nástrojov, ktoré vedú k zjednodušeniu a koncentrácii, majú takisto zásadný význam pre zaistenie schopnosti reagovať na meniace sa okolnosti a nové potreby v nestabilnom prostredí. Únia sa ich snaží dosiahnuť.

Humanitárna pomoc sa poskytuje rýchlo a flexibilne. Prvé núdzové rozhodnutia môžu byť prijaté do 72 hodín od katastrofy. Postupy generálneho riaditeľstva ECHO umožňujú rýchle uzatvorenie zmlúv s mimovládnymi organizáciami a partnermi OSN. Ak je potrebné prispôsobiť našu reakciu potrebám, použije sa rezerva na núdzovú pomoc .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002090/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Humanitarian aid for Africa

The European Commission is deciding on the scale of humanitarian aid based on an assessment of global needs, and is categorising 140 developing states. The Commission has allocated more than EUR 660 million for humanitarian aid this year. The aid will be distributed to more than 80 countries worldwide. The largest amount of financial aid this year will go to Mali, Sudan, South Sudan, Pakistan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some of the budget, however, is allocated to countries that do not receive much media attention, but which still need aid.

Is the Commission making efforts to ensure that development aid programmes become more flexible and that aid is provided more promptly?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The Commission continues its efforts to ensure that development aid programmes become more flexible and that aid is provided more promptly.

The Commission has developed specific tools and methodologies for more efficient aid delivery. Flexibility and pragmatic approaches in the programming and implementing of these instruments leading to simplification and concentration is also critical, to be able to answer to changing circumstances and new needs in volatile environments. The Union seeks to assure this.

Humanitarian Aid is provided rapidly and in a flexible way. First emergency decisions can be adopted within 72 h following a disaster. DG ECHO procedures allow to contract NGOs and UN partners quickly. The Emergency Aid Reserve is mobilised when needed to adapt our response to the needs.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002091/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Dlh eurozóny sa približuje k vrcholu

Miera zadlženia eurozóny dosiahla v treťom kvartáli minulého roku 90 % HDP. Podľa odhadov Komisie by dlh tento rok mal narásť až na hodnotu 94,5 % a dosiahnuť tak svoj vrchol. V prípade medziročného porovnania došlo k nárastu dlhu v dvadsiatich dvoch štátoch, pokles nastal v piatich. Podľa slov Európskej komisie dlh bloku sedemnástich štátov používajúcich euro ako spoločnú menu má kulminovať práve toho roku. Zadlženie nad úroveň 90 % je však škodlivé pre rast.

Odkazujúc na Pakt stability a rastu, fiškálny dlh povoľuje dlh najviac pod hranicou 60 %. Dokáže Komisia podniknúť také kroky, aby sa dalo napomôcť eliminovanie negatívneho vplyvu dlhu na eurozónu?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(11. apríla 2013)

Komisia súhlasí s tým, že miera zadlženosti v eurozóne a v Európskej únii vo všeobecnosti dosiahla veľmi vysokú úroveň, čo môže ohroziť budúci rast v EÚ.

Reformou Paktu stability a rastu, ktorú Komisia začala v roku 2010 a ktorá bola prijatá v roku 2011, sa zaviedlo uplatňovanie povinnosti vyplývajúcej z Paktu stability a rastu, t. j. že pomer dlhu musí byť „dostatočne klesajúci“, ak je vyšší ako 60 %. Uplatňovanie tejto povinnosti si vyžaduje, aby členské štáty znížili svoju mieru zadlženia o jednu dvadsatinu rozdielu medzi pomerom dlhu a 60 % priemerom za tri roky, pričom sa zohľadňujú aj podmienky hospodárstva.

Komisia je presvedčená, že balík šiestich legislatívnych aktov o správe ekonomických záležitostí výrazne prispeje k zníženiu dlhového zaťaženia európskych hospodárstiev, a podnikne opatrenia na zabezpečenie implementácie jeho ustanovení.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002091/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Euro area debt is approaching its peak

The euro area debt level reached 90% of GDP in the third quarter of last year. According to Commission estimates, the debt is expected to rise to 94.5% this year, thereby reaching its peak. In terms of a year-on-year comparison, debt has increased in 22 States and decreased in five. According to the Commission, the debt of the bloc of 17 countries that use the euro as a common currency will reach its maximum this year. However, debt exceeding 90% is detrimental to growth.

With reference to the Stability and Growth Pact, fiscal debt allows a maximum debt ceiling of 60%. Can the Commission take steps to help eliminate the negative impact of debt on the euro area?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission agrees that the debt level in the Euro Area and in the European Union in general has reached very high levels, which can put in danger future growth in the EU.

The reform of the Stability and Growth Pact, which the Commission initiated in 2010 and was adopted in 2011, introduced an operationalization of the Stability and Growth Pact obligation that the debt ratio has to be 'sufficiently diminishing' if it is above 60%. This operationalization requires that Member States reduce their debt ratio by 1/20th of the difference between the debt ratio and 60% on average over three years, taking into account also the conditions of the economy.

The Commission is convinced that the Six-Pack will greatly contribute to diminish the debt burden on the European economies and will act to secure the implementation of its provisions.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002092/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Recesia v eurozóne

Aj v treťom kvartáli sa HDP eurozóny znížil, konkrétne o 0,1 %. Štatistický úrad Eurostat tak v sedemnástich štátoch platiacich eurom potvrdil recesiu. Európska komisia v rámci odhadov na tento rok predpokladá prepad v prípade eurozóny o 0,4 % a čo sa týka Európskej únie, hovoríme o hodnote 0,3 %. Podľa slov prezidenta Európskej centrálnej banky Maria Draghiho až koncom roka 2013 by mala recesia začať ustupovať a ekonomika by sa mala postupne oživovať.

Aké kroky môže podniknúť Komisia, aby sa recesia v nadchádzajúcom roku ďalej neprehlbovala?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(12. apríla 2013)

Aktualizované údaje, v súvislosti s ktorými kladie otázku vážená pani poslankyňa, sú obsiahnuté v Európskej hospodárskej prognóze na rok 2013 z februára tohto roka ([1]).

Ročný prieskum rastu pre rok 2013, ktorý Komisia uverejnila v novembri predchádzajúceho roka, je základom na vytváranie spoločného názoru na prioritné opatrenia na úrovni vnútroštátnej aj EÚ, pričom EÚ sa usiluje vrátiť sa na cestu smerom k trvalo udržateľnému rastu a vytváraniu pracovných miest.

Hoci už boli podniknuté dôležité kroky a začínajú sa objavovať pozitívne trendy, hospodárska obnova ešte stále nebola úplne dosiahnutá. V záujme obnovenia dôvery a návratu na cestu rastu je dôležité, aby členské štáty udržali reformné úsilie, a z tohto dôvodu Komisia odporúča, aby sa pozornosť sústredila na rovnakých päť priorít, ako boli stanovené v minuloročnom prieskume rastu:

— presadzovanie diferencovanej fiškálnej konsolidácie, ktorá bude podporovať rast;

— obnovenie normálneho poskytovania úverov pre hospodárstvo;

— podpora rastu a konkurencieschopnosti v súčasnosti a v budúcnosti;

— riešenie nezamestnanosti a sociálnych dôsledkov krízy;

— modernizácia verejnej správy.

Ročný prieskum rastu by mal nájsť svoj priemet do hospodárskych a rozpočtových rozhodnutí na vnútroštátnej úrovni, ktoré budú členské štáty prijímať v rámci programov stability a konvergenčných programov (na základe Paktu stability a rastu), ako aj v národných programoch reforiem (na základe Stratégia Európa 2020) v apríli. Tieto programy budú základom pre návrhy odporúčaní pre jednotlivé krajiny, ktoré Európska komisia predloží v máji, ako aj pre ďalšie opatrenia na úrovni členských štátov, ktoré majú byť predstavené na jeseň.

Ročný prieskum rastu a sprievodné dokumenty sú k dispozícii na adrese:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee1_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002092/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Recession in the eurozone

Euro area GDP continued to fall in the third quarter — by 0.1% in concrete terms. The Eurostat statistical office thus confirmed that the 17 countries using the euro were in recession. The European Commission's estimates predict a decline of 0.4% in the euro area this year, and 0.3% across the European Union. According to the President of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, the recession will only start to subside, and the economy gradually to recover, at the end of 2013.

What steps can the Commission take to prevent the recession from worsening in the coming year?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The winter 2013 European Economic Forecast released in February updated the figures referred to by the Honourable Member ([1]).

The Annual Growth Survey for 2013, which the Commission published in November 2012, is the basis for building a common understanding about the priorities for action at the national and EU level as the EU seeks to return to a path of sustainable growth and job creation.

Although important action has already been taken and positive trends are beginning to emerge, recovery remains at some distance. To restore confidence and return to growth, it is essential that Member States maintain the reform momentum, and for this reason the Commission recommends focusing on the same five priorities that were identified in last year's Survey:

— Pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation

— Restoring normal lending to the economy

— Promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow

— Tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis

— Modernising public administration

The Annual Growth Survey should feed into national economic and budgetary decisions, which Member States will set out in Stability and Convergence Programmes (under the Stability and Growth Pact) and National Reform Programmes (under the Europe 2020 strategy) in April. These programmes will form the basis for the European Commission's proposals for country-specific recommendations in May and for further action at the Member State level in the autumn.

The Annual Growth Survey and the accompanying documents are available under the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee1_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002093/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Spomalenie úverového toku

Európska centrálna banka nedávno zverejnila údaje, z ktorých je zrejmé, že hospodárske ťažkosti eurozóny sa odzrkadľujú v poklese úverov podnikom aj domácnostiam. Objem úverov súkromnému sektoru klesol v novembri o 0,8 %, čo je rovnaká miera poklesu ako v októbri. Banka rovnako zverejnila údaje o ponuke peňazí, čiže o množstve peňazí v obehu v hospodárstve. Ukazovateľ v novembri stúpol o 3,8 % po 3,9-percentnom raste v októbri. Banka odhaduje, že hospodárstvo eurozóny zaznamená v roku 2013 pokles, a to o 0,3 %. Európska centrálna banka teda čelí tlaku, aby opäť znížila úrokové sadzby. Pre slabé ukazovatele ekonomického vývoja sa o znížení úrokových sadzieb uvažovalo už v decembri, no nakoniec ostali na úrovni 0,75 %. V eurozóne v tejto súvislosti pokračuje rozsiahla diskusia.

Aký má Komisia názor na potenciálne zníženie už aj tak rekordne nízkych úrokových sadzieb?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(6. mája 2013)

Komisia sa nevyjadruje k menovej politike eurozóny. Táto oblasť spadá do výlučnej právomoci Európskej centrálnej banky, ktorá koná úplne nezávisle.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002093/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Slowdown in the flow of credit

The European Central Bank has recently published data from which it is clear that the economic difficulties of the euro area are reflected in a decline in lending to businesses and households. The volume of loans to the private sector decreased in November by 0.8%, which was the same decrease as in October. The Bank also published data on the money supply, that is, the amount of money circulating in the economy. The indicator rose in November by 3.8%, after a 3.9% rise in October. The Bank estimates that the euro area economy will contract by 0.3% in 2013. The European Central Bank therefore faces pressure to cut interest rates again. A reduction in interest rates was considered back in December due to weak economic development indicators, but in the end they stayed at 0.75%. This remains the subject of extensive debate in the euro area.

What are the Commission's views on the potential reduction of interest rates, which are already at a record low?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission does not comment on euro area monetary policy, which is in the exclusive competence of the European Central Bank (ECB) acting in full independence.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002094/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Pracovný trh v Španielsku

Španielske odbory predpokladajú, že v roku 2013 príde o prácu vo finančnom sektore približne 12 tisíc ľudí. Veľké prepúšťanie pripravuje aj letecká spoločnosť Iberia. Chce skresať stavy zamestnancov o štvrtinu, čo znamená zánik asi 4500 pracovných miest. Španielsky pracovný trh je pritom v katastrofálnom stave. V súčasnosti je bez práce 4,8 milióna obyvateľov krajiny, teda každý štvrtý Španiel. Nezamestnanosť v treťom štvrťroku 2012 dosiahla 25 %. Za celý rok 2012 došlo k zániku 426 tisíc pracovných miest. V porovnaní s rokom 2011 šlo o 9,6-percentný nárast. O prácu každý deň prišlo dve tisíc Španielov. Španielska ekonomika sa vplyvom škrtov v objeme 60 miliárd eur zmieta v recesii a tento rok by mala klesnúť o 1,5 %.

Ako chce Komisia prispieť v roku 2013 k zlepšeniu situácie na španielskom pracovnom trhu?

Plánuje Komisia vypracovať určitý druh odporúčania s cieľom zlepšiť situáciu na španielskom pracovnom trhu?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(26. apríla 2013)

Komisia sa domnieva, že jednou z hlavných výziev, ktorým Španielsko v súčasnosti čelí, je rekordne vysoká miera nezamestnanosti (26,1 % na konci roka 2012) a najmä skutočnosť, že každý druhý mladý človek v ekonomicky aktívnom veku je v súčasnosti nezamestnaný.

Z hľadiska Komisie je potrebné venovať osobitnú pozornosť mladým ľuďom, ktorí nemajú zamestnanie, nepokračujú vo vzdelávaní ani v odbornej príprave (tzv. NEET), majú nízku kvalifikáciu a sú dlhodobo nezamestnaní. V roku 2012 na základe iniciatívy Komisie pod názvom Príležitosti pre mladých mnoho španielskych programov spolufinancovaných z Európskeho sociálneho fondu (ESF) presúva finančné prostriedky (viac ako 200 miliónov EUR v roku 2012) a činnosti do konkrétnych opatrení orientovaných na rozvíjanie aktívnych politík trhu práce so zameraním na mládež.

Európska rada okrem toho navrhla iniciatívu na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí (YEI) s celkovým rozpočtom vo výške 6 miliárd EUR na obdobie rokov 2014 až 2020. Za oprávnené čerpať podporu z týchto prostriedkov sa budú považovať všetky regióny EÚ (na úrovni NUTS 2), v ktorých miera nezamestnanosti mládeže v roku 2012 dosiahne alebo prekročí 25 %. Komisia v tejto súvislosti 12. marca prijala oznámenie([1]) a vykonala ďalšie zmeny vo svojom návrhu nariadení o ESF a spoločných ustanoveniach na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020. Investície podporované iniciatívou YEI by sa mali výrazne orientovať na rýchle dosiahnutie konkrétnych výsledkov.

V rámci európskeho semestra 2012 Komisia vydala príslušné osobitné odporúčania pre Španielsko, ktoré Rada prijala v roku 2012. Komisia monitoruje vývoj na španielskom trhu práce, ako aj prijaté opatrenia a predloží svoje celkové hodnotenie v júni 2013.

([1]) COM(2013) 144.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002094/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: The labour market in Spain

Spanish unions predict that around 12 000 people will lose their jobs in the financial sector in 2013. The airline Iberia is also preparing large layoffs. It wants to reduce the number of employees by a quarter, which means the loss of about 4 500 jobs. Meanwhile, the Spanish labour market is in a catastrophic state. At present, 4.8 million of the country's population are without work, which equates to one person in four. Unemployment in the third quarter of 2012 reached 25%. The full year of 2012 saw the loss of 426 000 jobs. This was 9.6% more than in 2011. Two thousand Spaniards lost their jobs every day. Due to cuts amounting to EUR 60 billion, Spain's economy is mired in recession and is expected to contract by 1.5% this year.

How does the Commission intend to contribute to improving the Spanish labour market situation in 2013?

Does the Commission plan to draw up recommendations of a particular type in order to improve the situation on the Spanish labour market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission considers that one of the main challenges Spain currently faces is the record high unemployment rate (26.1% at the end of 2012) and especially the fact that one in two young people in the labour force are unemployed today.

From the Commission point of view, special attention should be given to young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs), the low-skilled and long-term unemployed. In 2012, following the Commission's Youth Opportunities Initiative, many of the Spanish programmes co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) are reallocating funds (more than EUR 200 million in 2012) and activities towards specific actions that develop active labour market policies targeting youth.

In addition, the European Council proposed a Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) with a total budget of EUR 6 billion for 2014-2020. All EU regions (at NUTS level 2) with youth unemployment rate in 2012 equal or higher than 25% will be eligible. The Commission adopted on the 12th of March a communication ([1]) on this mater and made further amendments to its proposal for the ESF and CPR Regulations for 2014-2020. The investments supported by the YEI should be strongly oriented towards achieving tangible and swift results.

In the context of the 2012 European Semester, the Commission issued relevant Country Specific Recommendations to Spain, adopted by the Council in 2012. The Commission is monitoring the developments in the Spanish labour market and the adopted measures and will present its overall assessment in June 2013.

([1]) COM(2013) 144.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002095/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Solárne inštalácie v Nemecku

Počas posledných troch rokoch sa v Nemecku štvornásobne zvýšil výkon solárnych zariadení. Spolkové ministerstvo životného prostredia nedávno predstavilo údaje o počte fotovoltických elektrární, ktoré sa v krajine nainštalovali v roku 2012. Nová kapacita na úrovni viac ako 7,6 gigawattov prekonala rekordy z predchádzajúcich rokov – 7,5 GW v roku 2011 a 7,4 GW v roku 2010. Združenie solárneho priemyslu BSW-Solar uviedlo, že z 1,3 milióna fotovoltických inštalácií sa v Nemecku minulý rok zo slnka vyprodukovalo 28 miliárd kilowatthodín elektriny pre 8 miliónov domácností, čo je medziročný nárast o 45 %. Rekordný nárast nových solárnych inštalácií v minulom roku nie je v súlade s energetickou stratégiou krajiny. Počet a rýchlosť, ktorým nové zariadenia pribúdajú, prevyšujú plány nemeckej vlády, podľa ktorej by sa mal výkon nových inštalácií pohybovať na úrovni 2,5 až 3,5 GW. Nárast vyvolali najmä štedré výkupné ceny zelenej energie, ktoré vláda producentom zaručuje počas 20 rokov v snahe povzbudiť prechod od fosílnych palív na obnoviteľné zdroje. Veľké podniky tak majú udelenú výnimku a nemusia platiť vysokú tarifu za zelenú energiu ani náklady za využívanie siete. Bremeno nákladov sa tak prenáša na domácnosti a malé firmy.

Aký je názor Komisie na abnormálny nárast nových solárnych inštalácií v Nemecku?

Je podľa názoru Komisie udelenie výnimky a odpustenie vysokej tarify za zelenú energiu spolu s nákladmi za využívanie siete pre veľké podniky v súlade s právom EÚ?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(19. apríla 2013)

Komisia si uvedomuje, že rast kapacity fotovoltickej slnečnej energie v Nemecku bol výraznejší, ako sa predpokladalo v nemeckom národnom akčnom pláne pre energiu z obnoviteľných zdrojov energie, ktorý bol predložený v zmysle smernice o obnoviteľných zdrojoch energie ([1]). Výrazný rast objemu fotovoltickej slnečnej energie v Nemecku nie je ojedinelým javom; došlo k nemu vo viacerých členských štátoch EÚ, a to vďaka výraznému zníženiu nákladov na túto technológiu a v niektorých prípadoch aj vďaka štedrej finančnej podpore.

Komisia v súčasnosti pripravuje usmernenie o podpore energie z obnoviteľných zdrojov, ktorého uverejnenie sa predpokladá v polovici roka 2013. Odporúča sa, aby boli schémy podpory trhovo orientované, transparentné a predvídateľné, obmedzené na minimálny nevyhnutný rozsah a aby neprimerane nenarúšali hospodársku súťaž.

Komisia momentálne skúma nemecký prípad oslobodenia veľkých užívateľov elektrizačnej sústavy od poplatkov za využívanie siete. Formálne zisťovanie týkajúce sa štátnej pomoci sa začalo v marci 2013 (pozri IP/13/191).

([1]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2009/28/ES z 23. apríla 2009 o podpore využívania energie z obnoviteľných zdrojov energie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002095/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Solar installations in Germany

The output of solar facilities has increased fourfold in Germany over the last three years. The Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety recently presented data on the number of photovoltaic power plants installed in the country in 2012. The new capacity in excess of 7.6 gigawatts has surpassed the records of previous years — 7.5 GW in 2011 and 7.4 GW in 2010. The solar industry federation BSW-Solar stated that the 1.3 million photovoltaic installations in Germany generated 28 billion kilowatt hours of electricity from the sun for 8 million homes last year, which is a year-on-year increase of 45%. The record growth in new solar installations last year is not in line with the country's energy strategy. The number of new facilities and the rate of increase exceed the plans of the German Government, under which the output of new installations should be around 2.5 to 3.5 GW. The growth has been fuelled mainly by the generous purchase prices for green energy which the government guarantees to producers for 20 years, in an effort to encourage the transition from fossil fuels to renewables. Large businesses have been granted an exemption and do not have to pay a high tariff for green energy or costs for using the network. The cost burden is thus transferred to households and small firms.

What is the Commission's view on the abnormal growth in new solar installations in Germany?

In the Commission's opinion, is the granting of exemptions and the remission of the high green energy tariff for large businesses, along with network usage charges, in accordance with EC law?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2013)

The Commission is aware that solar photovoltaic (PV) capacity in Germany has grown more strongly than foreseen in Germany's National Renewable Energy Action Plan submitted under the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]). Strong growth in PV is not unique to Germany and has occurred in a number of EU Member States as a result of significant cost-reductions for this technology and, in some instances, generous financial support.

The Commission is currently working on guidance for renewable energy support to be published mid-2013. It is recommended that support schemes are market based, transparent and predictable as well as limited to the minimum necessary and avoiding undue distortions of competition.

The Commission is currently examining the German exemption from network charges for large grid users. A formal state aid investigation was opened in March 2013 (see IP/13/191).

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002096/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Ochrana zvierat počas prepravy

Európska únia má od roku 1977 pravidlá, ktoré upravujú dobré životné podmienky zvierat počas prepravy a ktorých cieľom je odstrániť technické prekážky obchodu a zároveň zabezpečiť dostatočnú úroveň ochrany zvierat. Právne predpisy Európskej únie týkajúce sa dobrých životných podmienok zvierat počas prepravy boli aktualizované v nariadení Rady (ES) č. 1/2005 o ochrane zvierat počas prepravy a s ňou súvisiacich činností, ktoré nadobudlo účinnosť 5. januára 2007. Podľa správy, ktorú Európska komisia predložila v novembri 2011, v období rokov 2005 – 2009 došlo k značnému nárastu počtu prepravovaných zvierat: v prípade hovädzieho dobytka o 8 %, v prípade prasiat o 70 %, v prípade oviec o 3 % a iba v prípade koní došlo k poklesu o 17 %, takže sa nepodarilo dosiahnuť cieľ stanovený v odôvodnení 5 nariadenia Rady (ES) č. 1/2005, že „z dôvodu ochrany zvierat by sa mala v maximálnej miere obmedziť preprava zvierat na dlhých cestách vrátane zvierat určených na porážku“. Nepodarilo sa teda dosiahnuť cieľ nariadenia, ktorým je obmedzenie prepravy zvierat. Harmonizované uplatňovanie a presadzovanie právnych predpisov týkajúcich sa dobrých životných podmienok zvierat je kľúčové na udržanie vysokých noriem pre dobré životné podmienky zvierat a predchádzanie narušeniam trhu v EÚ. V správe sa konštatuje, že v uplatňovaní právnych predpisov niektorými členskými štátmi sa vyskytujú zásadné nedostatky.

Uvažuje Komisia o tom, že by podnikla určité kroky voči členským štátom s cieľom zabezpečiť jednotné mechanizmy kontroly dodržiavania podmienok prepravy zvierat?

Plánuje Komisia legislatívnu iniciatívu smerujúcu k obmedzeniu maximálnej dĺžky času prepravy jatočných zvierat potvrdenú výsledkami vedeckého výskumu, a to pod podmienkou dodržiavania dobrých životných podmienok zvierat?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(9. apríla 2013)

1. Komisia plánuje čoskoro prijať vykonávacie rozhodnutie týkajúce sa výročných správ členských štátov o kontrolách dobrých životných podmienok zvierat počas prepravy. Hlavným cieľom rozhodnutia je získanie lepších a porovnateľnejších údajov z členských štátov o kontrolách vykonaných podľa článku 27 nariadenia (ES) č. 1/2005 o ochrane zvierat počas prepravy ([1]).

2. Ako sa uvádza v správe Komisie spomenutej v otázke, Komisia nie je toho názoru, že by zmena nariadenia (ES) č. 1/2005 bola najvhodnejším spôsobom riešenia problémov, ktoré sú v správe uvedené. Namiesto toho sa zameria na zabezpečenie riadneho presadzovania platných právnych predpisov v rámci jednotlivých členských štátov.

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 3, 5.1.2005, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002096/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Protection of animals during transport

Since 1977, the EU has had rules governing the welfare of animals during transport that aim to eliminate technical barriers to trade while ensuring an adequate level of animal protection. EU legislation on the welfare of animals during transport has been updated by Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, which entered into force on 5 January 2007. According to a report presented by the European Commission in November 2011, the 2005-2009 period saw a significant increase in the number of animals transported: of 8% in cattle, 70% in pigs, 3% in sheep, and only in the case of horses was there a decrease, of 17%. The objective set out in recital 5 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, that 'for reasons of animal welfare the transport of animals over long journeys, including animals for slaughter, should be limited as far as possible', was therefore not achieved. It was thus not possible to achieve the goal of the regulation, which was to limit the transport of animals. The harmonised application and enforcement of legislation relating to animal welfare is key to maintaining high standards of animal welfare and preventing market distortions in the EU. The report notes that there are fundamental deficiencies in the application of the legislation by several Member States.

Is the Commission considering taking specific steps regarding Member States, with a view to ensuring uniform mechanisms for monitoring compliance with animal transport conditions?

Is the Commission planning a legislative initiative aimed at limiting the maximum length of time for which slaughter animals may be transported, as confirmed by the results of scientific research, and on condition that animal welfare is respected?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

1. A Commission implementing Decision concerning the Member States' annual reports on their inspections on animal welfare during transport is planned to be adopted by the Commission shortly. The decision's main objective is to retrieve better and more comparable data from the Member States on the controls carried out under Article 27 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]).

2. As explained in the Commission report referred to in the question, the Commission does not see that an amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 would be the most appropriate way to address the problems identified in that report. Instead it will focus on ensuring proper enforcement of the existing legislation by the Member States.

([1]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002097/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Digitálna sloboda

Internet predstavuje kľúčový prvok prístupu k informáciám, slobody prejavu, slobody tlače, slobody zhromažďovania a ekonomického, sociálneho, politického a kultúrneho rozvoja. Technológie menia spoločnosť, fungovanie našich demokracií, ekonomík a podnikov, vplývajú na rozvoj. Rapídne sa meniaci svet technológii však prináša aj obavy v oblasti bezpečnosti a obrany a otázky v oblasti ľudských práv. Niekoľko členských štátov EÚ už uznalo prístup k internetu za základné právo a Európska komisia schválila zaradenie digitálnych slobôd medzi Kodanské kritériá. Digitálne slobody predstavujú základné práva a sú nevyhnutné na zaručenie tradičných ľudských práv, ako je sloboda prejavu a sloboda združovania, ako aj na zabezpečenie transparentnosti a zodpovednosti vo verejnom živote.

Keďže Európska únia predstavuje spoločenstvo hodnôt, ktoré by mali tvoriť základ jej vonkajšej činnosti, akú úlohu bude v súvislosti s celosvetovým presadzovaním a ochranou digitálnej slobody zohrávať v roku 2013?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(2. apríla 2013)

Európska komisia uverejnila tieto otvorené výzvy (v hodnote 5 miliónov EUR): „Dôveryhodné IKT“ ([1]), Štúdia o „nástrojoch a metodikách monitorovania internetu“ ([2]), FIRE ([3]), ([4]), CONFINE ([5]), OpenLab ([6]) a CAPS ([7]). Výzvy sú predmetom hodnotenia a pripravuje sa postup verejnej súťaže na platformu ECSA (European Capability for Situational Awareness – Európsky systém získavania informácií o aktuálnej situácii). Ďalšie opatrenia v rámci stratégie NDS (No Disconnect Strategy – stratégia proti odpojeniu) smerujú cez širšie poňaté nástroje v oblasti ľudských práv, akými sú napríklad „strategický rámec a akčný plán pre ľudské práva a demokraciu“ ([8]) prostredníctvom Akcie 24 vrátane spolupráce pri vypracúvaní „verejných usmernení o slobode prejavu online a offline“ alebo činnosti odbornej prípravy prostredníctvom EIDHR realizované takisto v roku 2013. NDS prispieva k vypracovaniu reštriktívnych opatrení (Sýria ([9]), Irán ([10])) a poskytuje podporné informácie pre aktualizáciu nariadenia EÚ o vývoze informačných a komunikačných technológií s dvojakým použitím. Pred dokončením sa nachádzajú usmernenia o ľudských právach a IKT pre európske spoločnosti pôsobiace v odvetví internetu a IKT. Členské štáty EÚ už implementujú akčné plány v oblasti SZP na vnútroštátnej úrovni. NDS poskytuje podporu pri zabezpečovaní toho, aby otázka ľudských práv bola prítomná pri vypracúvaní politík a programov týkajúcich sa kybernetickej bezpečnosti.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/security/fp7-calls-trustworthy_en.html
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/fire/calls/studies/2012/0046-internet-traffic/ted-smart-2012-0046_en.html
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/fire/home_en.html
([4]) http://www.ict-fire.eu/
([5]) http://confine-project.eu/open-call-1/
([6]) http://www.ict-openlab.eu/open-calls.html
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/collective-awareness-platforms
([8]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf
([9]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:016:0001:0032:SK:PDF
([10]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:068:0009:0013:SK:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002097/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Digital freedom

The Internet is a key element in access to information, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and economic, social, political and cultural development. Technologies change society and the functioning of our democracies, economies and businesses, and influence development. However, the rapidly changing world of technology also raises concerns in the areas of security and defence, and issues in the area of human rights. A number of EU Member States have already recognised Internet access as a fundamental right, and the European Commission has approved the inclusion of digital freedoms among the Copenhagen criteria. Digital freedoms are fundamental rights, and are needed for guaranteeing traditional human rights such as freedom of expression and freedom of association, as well as for ensuring transparency and accountability in public life.

As the European Union is a community of values, and these values should form the basis of its external action, what role will the EU play with regard to the worldwide promotion and protection of digital freedom in 2013?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

The EC has launched open calls (EUR 5m): 'Trustworthy ICT' ([1]); Study on 'Internet Monitoring tools and methodologies' ([2]); FIRE ([3]) ([4]); CONFINE ([5]); OpenLab ([6]) and CAPS ([7]). Calls are under evaluation and the ECSA platform tendering process under preparation. Other NDS actions are channeled through broader EU Human Rights instruments such as the 'Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy' ([8]) via Action 24 including cooperation in the development of 'Public Guidelines on Freedom of Expression online and offline' or training activities through the EIDHR, also in 2013. The NDS contributes to the drafting of Restrictive measures (Syria ([9]), Iran ([10])) and supports the updating of EU Regulation on of dual-use ICT exports. Human Rights and ICT guidelines for European Internet/ICT companies are about to be finalised. EU MS are already implementing CSR actions plans at national level. The NDS provides support to ensure human rights are present in the development of policies and programmes relating to cyber-security.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/security/fp7-calls-trustworthy_en.html
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/fire/calls/studies/2012/0046-Internet-traffic/ted-smart-2012-0046_en.html
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/fire/home_en.html
([4]) http://www.ict-fire.eu/
([5]) http://confine-project.eu/open-call-1/
([6]) http://www.ict-openlab.eu/open-calls.html
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/collective-awareness-platforms
([8]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf
([9]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:016:0001:0032:EN:PDF
([10]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:068:0009:0013:EN:PDF

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002098/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Malé a stredné podnikanie

Na jednotnom trhu EÚ pôsobí približne 23 miliónov MSP. MSP v EÚ vytvárajú 75 % pracovných miest v súkromnom sektore a za posledných päť rokov prispeli k vytvoreniu približne 80 % všetkých nových pracovných miest. Majú obrovský potenciál na vytváranie pracovných miest, najmä čo sa týka zamestnávania mladých ľudí. Malé a stredné podnikanie je hnacím motorom európskeho hospodárstva. Tieto podniky majú nezastupiteľnú úlohu v boji proti chudobe, sociálnemu vylúčeniu, pri dosahovaní sociálnej stability, súdržnosti a integrácie. Stále však čelia priveľkej administratívnej záťaži, stále existuje veľké množstvo prekážok pri ich zakladaní a rozvoji. Ide najmä o obmedzený prístup k financovaniu a k úverom, nedostatočnú transparentnosť pri riadení fondov v niektorých členských štátoch, zaťažujúcu reguláciu, skutočnosť, že podnikateľom, najmä ženám, sa často neposkytuje pomoc, ktorú potrebujú atď. Ďalej, iba 25 % MSP pôsobí za štátnymi hranicami členského štátu, v ktorom boli zriadené, a len 13 % aktívne pôsobí na trhoch mimo EÚ prostredníctvom vývozu. Počet MSP zainteresovaných v oblasti priamych zahraničných investícií je tiež obmedzený.

Ako plánuje Komisia podporovať vznik malých a stredných podnikov v roku 2013?

Plánuje Komisia prijať určité opatrenia s cieľom znížiť administratívnu záťaž, ktorej malé a stredné podniky čelia?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(22. apríla 2013)

V rámci Akčného plánu pre podnikanie 2020 ([1]) sa Komisia zaviazala realizovať v rokoch 2013 a 2014 viaceré opatrenia na podporu začínajúcich podnikov. Najdôležitejšími sú poskytovanie pôžičiek MSP s veľkým potenciálom, rozvoj európskeho trhu mikrofinancovania ([2]), posilnenie rizikového kapitálu, investície podnikateľských anjelov a inkubátory ([3]). Okrem toho portál „Vaša Európa“ ([4]) a sieť Enterprise Europe Network poskytujú podnikateľom informácie o prístupe k financovaniu a poradenstvu EÚ.

Okrem toho noví podnikatelia majú prostredníctvom programu Erasmus pre mladých podnikateľov príležitosť učiť sa od skúsených podnikateľov. Najmä pre podnikateľov v oblasti webu a IKT je určené európske partnerstvo začínajúcich podnikov ([5]), ktorého cieľom je sprístupniť skúseností, poradenstvo, technológie a prispôsobené služby.

Pokiaľ ide o internacionalizáciu MSP, Komisia si dovoľuje váženú pani poslankyňu odkázať na svoju odpoveď na otázku E-000791/2013.

Pokiaľ ide o inteligentnú reguláciu, Komisia vyzvala členské štáty, aby skrátili postupy na získanie prevádzkových licencií na jeden mesiac ([6]). V rámci ambicióznych opatrení na minimalizáciu regulačného zaťaženia MSP ([7]) Komisia zorganizovala verejnú konzultáciu so zainteresovanými stranami s cieľom identifikovať 10 právnych predpisov EÚ, ktoré pre MSP predstavujú najväčšiu záťaž ([8]). Na základe výsledkov tejto konzultácie sa prijmú opatrenia v rámci nového programu regulačnej vhodnosti (REFIT).

Komisia tiež posilnila používanie testu MSP vo vzťahu ku všetkým novým opatreniam s cieľom zaistiť, aby sa účinok návrhov právnych predpisov na MSP – najmä na mikropodniky – plne posúdil a aby sa obmedzil na primeranú úroveň, napr. úpravou riešení a zjednodušením režimov pre MSP.

([1]) „Akčný plán pre podnikanie 2020 – Opätovné stimulovanie podnikateľského ducha v Európe“ [COM(2012) 795 final].
([2]) Vrátane nástroja mikrofinancovania zameraného na zraniteľné skupiny.
([3]) Tie pomôžu MSP pri testovaní, predvádzaní a skúšobnej prevádzke nových technológií a obchodných modelov. To má zásadný význam pre zvýšenie ich kvality a finančnej návratnosti.
([4]) Súčasťou portálu „Vaša Európa“ je jednotné prístupové miesto k informáciám o finančných nástrojoch EÚ.
([5]) http://daa.ec.europa.eu/content/special/startup-europe-partnership
([6]) „Akčný plán pre podnikanie 2020 – Opätovné stimulovanie podnikateľského ducha v Európe“ [COM(2012) 795 final].
([7]) „Minimalizovanie regulačného zaťaženia pre MS – Prispôsobenie právnych predpisov EÚ potrebám mikropodnikov“ [KOM(2011) 803 v konečnom znení].
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/top10report-final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002098/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Small and medium-sized enterprises

There are almost 23 million SMEs operating in the single market. SMEs create 75% of private sector jobs in the EU, and over the past five years they have contributed to the creation of almost 80% of all new jobs. They have enormous potential for job creation, particularly in relation to employment for young people. Small and medium-sized enterprise is the driving force of the European economy. These businesses have an irreplaceable role in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, and in the achievement of social stability, cohesion and integration. They continue to face an excessive administrative burden, however, and there are still many obstacles to their establishment and development. It is mainly a matter of limited access to funding and credit, insufficient transparency in the management of funds in some Member States, onerous regulation, the fact that entrepreneurs — especially women — are often not given the help they need, etc. Furthermore, only 25% of SMEs operate beyond the borders of the Member State in which they were established, and only 13% operate actively outside the EU through exports. The number of SMEs interested in direct foreign investment is also limited.

How does the Commission plan to support the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises in 2013?

Is the Commission planning to adopt specific measures aimed at reducing the administrative burden faced by SMEs?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

Under the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([1]), the Commission committed to implement between 2013 and 2014 several actions to support start-ups. The most important are the provision of loans for high potential SMEs, the development a European microfinance market ([2]), the reinforcement of venture capital, angel investments and incubators ([3]). Additionally, the 'Your Europe' portal ([4]) and the Enterprise Europe Network provide entrepreneurs with necessary information on access to EU funding and advice.

The Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Programme enables new entrepreneurs to learn from experienced entrepreneurs is envisaged to. Especially for web and ICT entrepreneurs, the Commission's new Start-up Europe Partnership ([5]) aims to offer expertise, mentoring, technology, customised services.

Regarding the internationalisation of SMEs, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-000791/2013.

Concerning smart regulation, the Commission has invited the Member States to shorten the procedures to obtain operational licenses to one month ([6]). As part of the ambitious measures to minimise the regulatory burden for SMEs ([7]), the Commission has carried out a public stakeholder consultation to identify the Top 10 most burdensome pieces of EU legislation for SMEs ([8]). The results of the consultation will be followed up within the new EU Regulatory Fitness programme (REFIT).

Finally, the Commission has strengthened the application of the SME Test to all its new actions to ensure that the effect of legislative proposals on SMEs — especially micro-enterprises — is fully assessed and limited to the necessary and reasonable level, e.g. via adapted solutions and lighter regimes for SMEs.

([1]) 'Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan. Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe' (COM(2012) 795 final).
([2]) Including a micro-finance facility targeting vulnerable groups.
([3]) These will help SMEs to test, demonstrate and pilot new technologies and business models. Essential for increasing their quality and financial returns.
([4]) 'Your Europe' portal includes a single access point on EU financial instruments.
([5]) http://daa.ec.europa.eu/content/special/startup-europe-partnership
([6]) Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan. 'Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe' (COM(2012) 795 final).
([7]) 'Minimising regulatory burden for SMEs — Adapting EU regulation to the needs of micro-enterprises' (COM(2011) 803 final).
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/top10report-final_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002099/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Jednotný digitálny trh EÚ

Internetové hospodárstvo je hybnou silou rastu a vytvárania pracovných miest. Rozširuje spotrebiteľské možnosti. V niektorých krajinách skupiny G8 predstavoval internet za posledných päť rokov 20 % hospodárskeho rastu a 25 % rastu pracovných miest. Za každé pracovné miesto, ktoré ubudne vo svete mimo internetu, vytvorí online odvetvie 2,6 nových pracovných miest. Spoločnosti, ktoré využívajú plný potenciál internetu, vytvárajú viac než dvojnásobok pracovných miest ako spoločnosti, ktoré to nerobia. Spotreba a výdavky spojené s internetom merané ako samostatné odvetvie sú dnes väčšie ako poľnohospodárstvo či energetika. Podľa najnovších výskumov budú do roku 2016 na svete 3 miliardy používateľov internetu a internetové hospodárstvo v rámci G 20 dosiahne 4,2 bilióna USD. V krajinách G 20 predstavuje 4,1 % HDP, čiže 2,3 bilióna USD, pričom v roku 2010 prekonalo hospodárstva Talianska a Brazílie. Príspevok internetu v niektorých hospodárstvach je až 8 % HDP. Výhody digitálneho hospodárstva sa nevyužívajú naplno. Digitálny trh sa nevyvíja tak, ako by sa mohol. Súčasná právna roztrieštenosť odrádza spotrebiteľov aj podniky od úvah o zapojení sa do cezhraničného obchodu.

Plánuje Komisia odstrániť súčasný stav právnej roztrieštenosti v oblasti digitálneho hospodárstva?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(26. apríla 2013)

Komisia sa stotožňuje s vyjadreným názorom, podľa ktorého sa potenciál digitálneho hospodárstva nevyužíva v plnej miere, a dokončenie digitálneho vnútorného trhu považuje za veľkú prioritu tohto funkčného obdobia. „Digitálna agenda“, ktorú Komisia stanovila v roku 2010, sa odvtedy posilnila a spresnila, najmä prostredníctvom oznámenia o akčnom pláne elektronického obchodu z januára 2012. V tomto oznámení sa určilo päť priorít a šestnásť opatrení s cieľom zdvojnásobiť podiel elektronického obchodu na maloobchodnom predaji v EÚ a podiel internetovej ekonomiky na európskom HDP.

Práve sa dokončuje správa o pokroku dosiahnutom v rámci tohto akčného plánu. Jej zverejnenie možno očakávať v nadchádzajúcich týždňoch. Konštatuje sa v nej, že rok po prijatí akčného plánu sa uskutočnila už polovica stanovených opatrení a všetky ostatné sa už začali vykonávať.

K príkladom neuspokojivej situácie patrí pretrvávajúca rozdrobenosť telekomunikačného trhu, ktorá vyplýva z rozdielneho vykonávania právnych predpisov EÚ a znemožňuje, aby podniky a občania v plnej miere využívali výhody jednotného trhu.

Komisia v blízkej dobe predloží konkrétne opatrenia v tejto oblasti zamerané na čo najskoršie dosiahnutie jednotného trhu v oblasti informačných a komunikačných technológií.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002099/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: The EU's Digital Single Market

The Internet economy is a driving force for growth and job creation. It widens the possibilities available to consumers. In some G8 countries, the Internet has accounted for 20% of economic growth and 25% of jobs growth in the last five years. For every job that disappears in the world outside the Internet, the online sector creates 2.6 new jobs. Companies that make use of the full potential of the Internet create more than twice as many jobs as companies that do not. Consumption and expenditure associated with the Internet, measured as a separate sector, are today higher than those associated with agriculture or energy. According to the latest research, there will be 3 billion Internet users in the world by 2016, and the Internet economy in the G20 will reach USD 4.2 trillion. It accounts for 4.1% of the GDP of the G20 countries, or USD 2.3 trillion, and it overtook the economies of Italy and Brazil in 2010. The Internet contributes as much as 8% of GDP in some economies. The benefits of the digital economy are not being fully exploited. The digital market is not developing as it could. The current legal fragmentation discourages consumers and businesses from considering engaging in cross-border trade.

Does the Commission plan to remedy the current state of legal fragmentation in the area of the digital economy?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(26 avril 2013)

La Commission partage l'avis exprimé selon lequel les bénéfices de l'économie numérique ne sont pas entièrement exploités et a fait de l'achèvement du marché intérieur numérique une priorité majeure de ce mandat. Elle a défini dès 2010 une « stratégie numérique », renforcée et précisée depuis, en particulier par la Communication portant plan d'action sur le Commerce électronique de janvier 2012. Celle-ci fixe 5 priorités et 16 actions visant les doublements de la part du commerce électronique dans les ventes de détail et de l'économie de l'Internet dans le PIB de l'UE.

Le rapport relatif à l'état d'avancement de ce plan d'actions est en cours de finalisation et sera publié dans les semaines qui viennent. Il montrera qu'un an après son adoption, la moitié des actions sont déjà réalisées et que toutes les actions sont désormais engagées.

Au nombre des situations qui demeurent insatisfaisantes figure la fragmentation persistante du marché des télécommunications, qui résulte de la mise en œuvre divergente des règlements de l'UE et empêche les entreprises et les citoyens de bénéficier à plein du marché unique.

La Commission présentera prochainement des mesures concrètes dans ce domaine, visant à réaliser dans les meilleurs délais le marché unique des technologies de l'information et des communications.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002100/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25. februára 2013)

Vec: Prevencia ženských chorôb, ktoré súvisia s vekom

Ženy sa síce v priemere dožívajú vyššieho veku, v porovnaní s mužmi je však u nich omnoho vyšší výskyt rôznych ochorení, ako napr. osteoporóza, reumatoidná artritída, cievne mozgové príhody, močová inkontinencia a rakovina. Rakovina je súčasne najčastejšia príčina smrti starších žien v EÚ. Výskyt chorôb sa s pribúdajúcim vekom rapídne zvyšuje. V dôsledku fajčenia zomiera približne šesť miliónov ľudí ročne. Nadmerné požívanie alkoholu je po tabaku a hypertenzii tretím rizikovým faktorom z hľadiska úmrtnosti a invalidity. Je príčinou úmrtia 195 000 osôb ročne. Vo viac ako polovici krajín OECD najmenej každý druhý človek trpí nadváhou alebo obezitou a podľa predpovedí budú do desiatich rokov v niektorých krajinách dvaja z troch ľudí obézni. Starnutie predstavuje pre ženy veľmi náročné životné obdobie. Zažívajú výrazné zmeny, mení sa ich spoločenská aj pracovná rola a fyzické zmeny dokážu často prijať len veľmi ťažko. Starnúce ženy patria do špecifickej a obzvlášť zraniteľnej skupiny obyvateľstva EÚ.

Plánuje sa Komisia v roku 2013 zameriavať na prevenciu a lepšiu informovanosť európskych žien v súvislosti s chorobami a starnutím?

Ak áno, akým konkrétnym spôsobom?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(12. apríla 2013)

Komisia sa zaväzuje k riešeniu demografických zmien v spoločnosti a starnutie vníma ako príležitosť. Preto zaviedla program európskeho partnerstva v oblasti inovácií zameraného na aktívne a zdravé starnutie.

Jedna zo stanovených priorít v rámci európskeho partnerstva sa viaže na prevenciu slabosti a zhoršenia funkcií u starších ľudí, pričom sa explicitne berú do úvahy vzory starnutia u oboch pohlaví.

Jedným z partnerov je nadácia „The Older Women Network in Europe“, ktorá poskytla odborné znalosti o rodových perspektívach vo všetkých aspektoch vytvorenia priaznivejšieho prostredia pre starších ľudí.

Počas monitorovania iniciatívy európskeho partnerstva v oblasti inovácií sa budú v rámci niektorých ukazovateľov procesov a výsledkov zohľadňovať rozdiely medzi pohlaviami v príslušnej cieľovej populácii, vďaka čomu budeme môcť lepšie porozumieť ochoreniam žien spojených so starnutím.

Komisia navyše podporuje opatrenia na zvýšenie úrovne zdraviu prospešných aktivít, zdravé diéty, fyzické aktivity a podporuje znižovanie poškodzovania zdravia spôsobeného alkoholom, ako je stanovené v stratégii riešenia zdravotných problémov súvisiacich s výživou, nadváhou a obezitou v Európe ([1]) a stratégii EÚ na podporu členských štátov pri znižovaní rozsahu škôd súvisiacich s požívaním alkoholu ([2]).

([1]) KOM(2007) 279.
([2]) KOM(2006) 625 v konečnom znení.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002100/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(25 February 2013)

Subject: Prevention of age-related women's diseases

Women may live longer than men on average, but they have a much higher incidence of various illnesses such as osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, strokes, incontinence and cancer. Cancer is now the most common cause of death among older women in the EU. The incidence of diseases increases rapidly with advancing age. Almost 6 million people a year die from smoking. In terms of mortality and disability, excessive alcohol use is the third risk factor after smoking and high blood pressure. It causes 195 000 deaths every year. In more than half of OECD countries, at least one person in two is overweight or obese, and it is forecast that within 10 years two out of three people will be obese in some countries. Old age is a very difficult time of life for women. They experience many changes, their social and employment roles change, and they often find it very difficult to accept the physical changes. Aging women are a specific and particularly vulnerable sector of the EU population.

Is the Commission planning to focus on prevention and greater awareness of illnesses and aging among European women?

If so, by what specific means?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission is committed to tackle the demographic changes in our society and looks at ageing as an opportunity. To this aim, the Commission has launched a European Innovation Partnership on Active and Health Ageing (EIP on AHA).

One of the identified priorities in the European Innovation Partnership is related to the prevention of frailty and functional decline in older people and gender related ageing patterns are explicitly considered.

One of the partners is 'The Older Women Network in Europe' who has committed offering expertise on gender perspectives in all aspects of creating age friendly environments.

As part of the EIP monitoring, some process and outcomes indicators will consider sex differences in the target population being addressed, giving additional understanding on age related women's diseases.

Furthermore, the Commission is promoting action to enhance physical activity levels and promote healthier diets, physical activity and to reduce alcohol related harm as set out in the 'Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health issues' ([1]) and in the EU Strategy to help Member States in reducing alcohol related harm ([2]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) COM(2006) 625 Final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002101/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(26 februari 2013)

Betreft: Kroes over Berlusconi

Op 24 februari 2012 verscheen commissaris Kroes op de Nederlandse televisie ([1]). In het programma „Eva Jinek op zondag" verklaarde zij met afgrijzen naar een tv-optreden van Berlusconi te kijken. Ook zei zij dat Berlusconi van zijn gezond verstand niet af weet wat er moet gebeuren en omschreef ze een eventuele herkiezing van Berlusconi als een horrorscenario (en parafraseerde daarmee Mario Monti).

Ik heb al eerder verschillende vragen gesteld over de bemoeienis van commissaris Kroes met het nationale beleid van de lidstaten (E-007890/2012, E-009405-12). In de antwoorden die ik van de Commissie ontving, werd vermeld dat commissarissen nooit hun onpartijdigheid mogen laten varen. Het lijkt erop dat mevrouw Kroes niet met deze regel bekend is.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van dit interview?

2. Is de Commissie van oordeel dat de tussenkomst van mevrouw Kroes in de Italiaanse verkiezingscampagne verenigbaar is met de fundamentele functie van commissarissen, namelijk het optreden in het algemeen belang van de samenleving ([2])?

3. Eerbiedigt de Commissie het standpunt van de advocaat-generaal van het Europees Hof van Justitie ([3]) dat de Commissie haar taken alleen met goed gevolg kan verrichten wanneer zijzelf en haar leden zichtbaar te werk gaan met volledige onpartijdigheid en volstrekte onafhankelijkheid? Hoe kunnen de aanhangers van Berlusconi vertrouwen hebben in commissarissen wanneer zij door een van hen worden veroordeeld vanwege hun politieke voorkeur?

4. Denkt de Commissie dat aanhoudende bemoeienissen met verkiezingscampagnes in verschillende lidstaten kunnen worden beschouwd als wenselijk gedrag voor een commissaris?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(9 april 2013)

1. De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van de details van het door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaald interview waarin vicevoorzitter Neelie Kroes haar persoonlijke mening over een reeks actuele onderwerpen heeft gegeven.

2. Op grond van de elementen waarover de Commissie beschikt, is er geen sprake van inmenging in de Italiaanse verkiezingscampagne. Vicevoorzitter Neelie Kroes heeft haar mening slechts in eigen naam geuit. Commissarissen hebben het recht om hun persoonlijke mening te uiten.

3. Voor de Commissie is het van primordiaal belang dat de leden van de Commissie zich bij de uitoefening van hun taken volkomen onpartijdig en onafhankelijk opstellen. De onpartijdigheid en onafhankelijkheid van vicevoorzitter Kroes zijn niet aangetast door haar opmerkingen tijdens een interview in eigen naam.

4. Zoals hierboven is opgemerkt, is er geen sprake van inmenging in welke verkiezingscampagne dan ook.

([1]) http://powervrouwen.blog.nl/politiek/2013/02/24/neelie-kroes-zegt-nee-tege-berlusconi.
([2]) Artikel 213, lid 2, van het EG-Verdrag en artikel 126, lid 2, van het Euratom-Verdrag.
([3]) Advies van advocaat-generaal Geelhoed over zaak C-432/04.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002101/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commissioner Neelie Kroes' opinion of Silvio Berlusconi

On 24 February 2012, Commissioner Kroes appeared on Dutch television ([1]). In the programme 'Eva Jinek op zondag' she stated that she abhorred seeing Mr Berlusconi on television. She also said that she thinks Mr Berlusconi has no clue whatsoever what to do and that it would be a horror scenario (paraphrasing Mr Monti) if Mr Berlusconi ever came to power.

I have submitted questions about Commissioner Kroes' interference in Member States' national politics on a number of occasions (E-007890/2012, E-009405/2012). In the answers the Commission sent me, it stated that Commissioners should never breach the impartiality rule. It seems that Ms Kroes is not aware of that rule.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the content of this interview?

2. Does the Commission think that Ms Kroes' intervention in the Italian electoral campaign is compatible with Commissioner Kroes' fundamental role, which is to act in the general interest of the Community ([2])?

3. Does the Commission respect the opinion of the Advocate General of the European Court of Justice ([3]) in which he states that the Commission can only succeed in fulfilling its tasks if it and its members are seen to operate with complete impartiality and complete independence? How will voters supporting Mr Berlusconi have confidence in the Commissioners when one of them is judging him on the basis of her political opinion?

4. Does the Commission think that continuous interference in electoral campaigns in different Member States is appropriate behaviour for a Commissioner?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

1. The Commission is not informed of the details of the interview referred to by the Honourable Member, in which Vice-President Neelie Kroes gave her personal opinions on a range of topical subjects.

2. According to the elements available, there was no interference in the Italian electoral campaign. Vice-President Kroes limited herself to express her views in her personal capacity. Commissioners may indeed express personal opinions.

3. The Commission considers that complete impartiality and independence are of paramount importance as concerns the behaviour of the Members of the Commission when exercising their duties. Vice-President Kroes's impartiality and independence are not affected by her comment during an interview given in her personal capacity.

4. As stated above, no interference in any electoral campaign is at stake.

([1]) http://powervrouwen.blog.nl/politiek/2013/02/24/neelie-kroes-zegt-nee-tege-berlusconi
([2]) Article 213(2) Treaty on EC and 126(2) Euratom.
([3]) Opinion of Advocate General Geelhoed on Case C-432/04.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002102/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(26 februari 2013)

Betreft: Standpunt van commissaris Kroes over schoolhervorming

Commissaris Kroes heeft onlangs een column geschreven in Het Financieel Dagblad waarin zij stelt dat Nederland zijn scholen moet hervormen door meer ICT-onderwijs in het lespakket in te voeren en meer ruimte te bieden voor verscheidenheid van mensen ([1]).

Voor zover ik weet, maakt onderwijs geen deel uit van de portefeuille van commissaris Kroes.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van dit artikel?

2. Deelt de Commissie het standpunt dat commissaris Kroes, door in bovengenoemde column aanbevelingen te doen over een hervorming van het schoolsysteem, inbreuk maakt op punt 4 van de kaderovereenkomst over de betrekkingen tussen het Europees Parlement en de Commissie, waarin wordt bepaald dat „elk lid van de Commissie de politieke verantwoordelijkheid draagt voor de maatregelen op het gebied waarmee het is belast"?

3. Wat zijn de gevolgen voor commissaris Kroes, gezien het feit dat zij de regels voor commissarissen herhaaldelijk heeft geschonden en daardoor niet voldoet aan de gestelde voorwaarden voor de uitvoering van haar taken als commissaris? overweegt voorzitter Barroso commissaris Kroes te verzoeken ontslag te nemen, overeenkomstig artikel 17, lid 6, van het VWEU?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(2 mei 2013)

1. Ja, de Commissie is op de hoogte van dit artikel.

2. De Commissie ziet niet op welke wijze vicevoorzitter Kroes punt 4 van het Kaderakkoord over de betrekkingen tussen het Europees Parlement en de Europese Commissie zou hebben geschonden. Het feit dat vicevoorzitter Kroes in een artikel voor een Nederlandse krant heeft gesteld dat het Nederlandse schoolsysteem gebaat zou zijn bij meer ICT-onderwijs, is perfect verenigbaar met haar portefeuille binnen de Commissie. Het directoraat-generaal voor Communicatienetwerken, Inhoud en Technologie voert al jaren onderzoek en beleid op dit gebied. Bovendien wordt er op dit moment gewerkt aan een initiatief om in het onderwijs meer ICT-instrumenten te gebruiken.

3. De Commissie is niet van mening dat vicevoorzitter Neelie Kroes de regels waaraan zij is gebonden, heeft overtreden.

([1]) http://frontpage.fok.nl/nieuws/587062/1/1/100/kroes-wil-meer-ict-in-het-onderwijs.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002102/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Kroes' ideas on school reforms

Commissioner Kroes recently wrote a piece in the Dutch newspaper 'Het Financieele Dagblad' stating that the Netherlands should reform its schools by introducing more IT teaching into the curriculum and individualising schooling ([1]).

To my knowledge, education is not part of Commissioner Kroes' portfolio.

1. Is the Commission familiar with this article?

2. Does the Commission agree that, by outlining recommendations on how to reform the school system in the aforementioned article, Commissioner Kroes is in breach of point 4 of the framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission, which states that 'each Member of the Commission shall take political responsibility for action in the field of which he/she is in charge'?

3. What will the consequences be for Commissioner Kroes, in view of the fact that she has repeatedly violated the rules for Commissioners and therefore does not meet the conditions laid down for the performance of her duties as a Commissioner? Is President Barroso considering asking Commissioner Kroes to resign, pursuant to Article 17(6) of the TEU?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

1. Yes, the Commission is aware of this article.

2. The Commission sees no reason to consider that Vice-President Kroes could have infringed point 4 of the framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission. Stating that a reinforcement of IT education would be an improvement in the Dutch schooling system in an article for a Dutch newspaper is perfectly compatible with Vice-President Kroes' portfolio within the College. Indeed, for several years the DG for Communications Networks, Content and Technology has conducted research and policy work in this field, and an initiative to introduce more ICT tools in education is currently under preparation.

3. The Commission does not consider that Vice-President Neelie Kroes has violated any of the rules to which she is submitted.

([1]) http://frontpage.fok.nl/nieuws/587062/1/1/100/kroes-wil-meer-ict-in-het-onderwijs.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002104/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Ligações aéreas diretas entre os Açores, Cabo Verde e a Madeira

Responsáveis pelos municípios dos Açores e de Cabo Verde defenderam recentemente a criação de ligações aéreas diretas entre os dois arquipélagos, visando impulsionar as relações económicas, no quadro da Confederação dos Municípios Ultraperiféricos.

Em declarações à agência noticiosa portuguesa, os presidentes da Associação dos Municípios da Região Autónoma dos Açores e da Associação Nacional de Municípios de Cabo Verde indicaram que os dois arquipélagos, juntamente com o da Madeira, poderiam beneficiar com as ligações diretas, quer nas trocas comerciais quer no turismo.

1. Considera a Alta Representante que o estabelecimento de ligações aéreas diretas entre os Açores, Cabo Verde e a Madeira poderia impulsionar as suas relações económicas?

2. Estaria a Alta Representante disponível para apoiar o seu estabelecimento? Em que termos?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(30 de abril de 2013)

Na sua Comunicação de junho de 2012 ([1]), a Comissão reiterou a importância da integração regional das regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP) nas respetivas vizinhanças regionais. Para tal, a Comissão apontou para rotas aéreas e marítimas novas ou mais eficientes entre as RUP e seus países vizinhos e salientou diferentes instrumentos jurídicos disponíveis a nível da UE.

Tendo em conta os laços culturais dos Açores e da Madeira com Cabo Verde, as ligações aéreas diretas entre todas estas ilhas poderiam dar um novo impulso às suas relações económicas. Contudo, cabe às autoridades nacionais e regionais decidir se pretendem dar prioridade a tais relações e, se assim for, se querem adotar as medidas necessárias para incentivar a abertura destas rotas aéreas diretas no âmbito dos instrumentos jurídicos da UE. Em especial, no que diz respeito aos auxílios estatais, as orientações da Comissão para os auxílios ao arranque das companhias aéreas que operam a partir de aeroportos regionais ([2]) preveem disposições específicas para as RUP em matéria de ligações aéreas aos Estados vizinhos que não são membros da UE ([3]). Além disso, a Comissão estará disposta a apreciar um pedido de Portugal para concluir acordos bilaterais com Cabo Verde e para exigir, em termos de serviços de transporte de passageiros, requisitos semelhantes aos previstos nos contratos de obrigação de serviço público pela legislação da UE, mas só quando, em si mesmas, as condições de mercado não sejam suficientes para atrair os operadores económicos, sem qualquer discriminação entre estes, e no respeito dos acordos bilaterais e multilaterais vigentes e das regras em matéria de auxílios estatais pertinentes.

Os Açores e a Madeira, poderiam incluir essa prioridade no desenvolvimento dos planos de ação individuais referidos na Comunicação de junho de 2012.

([1]) Comunicação de junho de 2012 «As regiões ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: Parceria para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo», COM(2012) 287 final de 20.6.2012.

([2]) Orientações comunitárias sobre o financiamento dos aeroportos e os auxílios estatais ao arranque das companhias aéreas que operam a partir de aeroportos regionais (JO C 312 de 9.12.2005, p. 1).

([3]) Ponto 76 das orientações.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002104/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Direct air links between the Azores, Cape Verde and Madeira

Municipal leaders from the Azores and Cape Verde have recently advocated the creation of direct air links between the two archipelagos, with the aim of boosting economic relations within the Confederation of Outermost Municipalities.

In statements to a Portuguese news agency, the chairmen of the Association of Municipalities of the Autonomous Region of the Azores and of the National Association of Municipalities of Cape Verde said that direct links could be beneficial for the two archipelagos, and Madeira, in terms of trade and tourism.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that establishing direct air links between the Azores, Cape Verde and Madeira could give a boost to their economic relations?

2. Would she be prepared to support the establishment of such links? How?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

In its communication of June 2012 ([1]), the Commission reiterated the importance of the regional integration of the outermost regions (ORs) within their own regional neighbourhoods. To this end, the Commission referred to new or more efficient air and maritime routes between the ORs and their neighbours and pointed to different legal instruments available at EU level.

Given the cultural links between the Azores and Madeira with Cape Verde, direct air routes between these areas could give a boost to their economic relations. However, it is for the national and regional authorities to decide whether they want to prioritise such relations and, if so, to adopt the necessary measures to encourage the establishment of these direct air routes within the framework of the available EU legal instruments. In particular, with regard to state aid, the Commission Guidelines on start-up aid for airlines departing from regional airports ([2]) provide for specific arrangements for the ORs concerning air routes to neighbouring non-EU Member States ([3]). Moreover, the Commission would be ready to assess a request from Portugal to conclude bilateral agreements with Cape Verde, establishing service requirements on passenger transport similar to public service obligations contracts under EC law, only when market conditions alone are not enough to attract economic operators, without any discrimination among the latter and in respect of the existing bilateral and multilateral agreements and relevant state aid rules.

The Azores and Madeira could include such a priority in the development of the individual action plans referred to in the communication of June 2012.

([1]) Communication of June 2012 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', COM(2012) 287 final, of 20.6.2012.
([2]) Community Guidelines on Financing of Airports and Start-Up aid for Airlines departing from Regional Airports, OJ C 312, 9.12.2005.
([3]) Paragraph 76 of the Guidelines.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002105/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Acordo agrícola — Angola, Brasil, Índia e África do Sul

Segundo a comunicação social, o governo brasileiro celebrou um acordo de cooperação agrícola com Angola, Índia e África do Sul, no passado dia 19 de fevereiro de 2013, no âmbito da pesquisa e formação técnicas, comércio, redução da pobreza e desenvolvimento de zonas rurais.

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento da celebração deste acordo?

2. Qual a sua natureza?

3. Como o avalia a Comissão?

4. Estará a Comissão disponível para participar desta parceria ou prestar-lhe ajuda técnica se para isso for convidada?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(30 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do acordo a que o Senhor Deputado faz referência. O Memorando de Entendimento entre o Brasil, a Índia e a África do Sul, de 13 de setembro de 2006, incide na transferência de tecnologia, na investigação, no comércio de produtos agrícolas, incluindo questões sanitárias e fitossanitárias, e no desenvolvimento rural. A segurança alimentar foi debatida na Cimeira dos BRICS, realizada em Durban, em finais de março.

Com base no Memorando de Entendimento, os países IBAS assinaram um acordo de cooperação técnica com Angola, que foi aprovado pelo Governo brasileiro em fevereiro de 2013. É a este acordo que o Senhor Deputado faz referência. O Memorando de Entendimento e o acordo com Angola constituem exemplos da cooperação Sul-Sul, de que o Brasil é um grande promotor.

Além disso, o Plano de Ação Conjunto UE-Brasil prevê especificamente a possibilidade de desenvolver iniciativas de cooperação triangular com os países em desenvolvimento interessados. A Comissão é favorável à cooperação triangular, no âmbito da qual a combinação de competências pode criar sinergias para fazer face aos problemas de segurança alimentar. Na sua Comunicação de setembro de 2012 ([1]), a Comissão propôs uma abordagem estratégica para reforçar a cooperação internacional no domínio da investigação e da inovação. O próximo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação (Horizonte 2020) deverá permitir tais parcerias. A cooperação em matéria de investigação agrícola com os principais atores mundiais é uma das iniciativas previstas.

O Acordo de Cooperação ([2]) assinado em janeiro de 2013 entre o Centro Comum de Investigação e o Ministério da Ciência brasileiro menciona a investigação no domínio agrícola como um tema de interesse mútuo. Este acordo, juntamente com o acordo bilateral ([3]), renovado em 2012, constitui o quadro para a cooperação com o Brasil. A Comissão está a identificar temas de investigação de interesse comum, incluindo com múltiplos terceiros, em especial países africanos.

([1]) Reforçar e centrar a cooperação internacional no domínio da investigação e da inovação: Uma abordagem estratégica, COM(2012) 497 de 15.9.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm?id=1410&dt_code=NWS&obj_id=16020
([3]) Acordo de Cooperação Científica e Tecnológica: JO L 295 de 11.11.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002105/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Agricultural agreement between Angola, Brazil, India and South Africa

It has been reported in the media that on 19 February 2013 the Brazilian Government signed an agricultural cooperation agreement with Angola, India and South Africa, covering the spheres of technical research and training, trade, poverty reduction and rural development.

1. Is the Commission aware of this agreement?

2. What is the nature of the agreement?

3. What is the Commission's view of it?

4. Is the Commission prepared to participate in this partnership or provide technical assistance to it, should it be asked to do so?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of this agreement. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Brazil, India and South Africa of 13.9.2006 focuses on technology transfer, research, agricultural trade including SPS issues, and rural development. Food Security was discussed at the BRICS Summit in Durban end of March.

Based on the MoU, the IBSA countries signed a technical cooperation agreement with Angola that was approved by the Brazilian Government in February 2013. It is this agreement that the Honourable Member of Parliament refers to. The MoU and the agreement with Angola are examples of south-south cooperation of which Brazil is a keen promoter.

In addition, the EU-Brazil Joint Action Plan specifically foresees the possibility to develop triangular cooperation initiatives with interested developing countries. The Commission is favourable to triangular cooperation, where combined expertise can create synergies for addressing food security. In its communication of September 2012, the Commission proposes a strategic approach to enhance international cooperation in research and innovation. Horizon 2020, the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, should allow such partnerships. Agricultural research cooperation with key world players is one of the initiatives foreseen.

The Cooperation Arrangement signed in January 2013 between the Joint Research Centre and the Brazilian Ministry of Science, lists research in agriculture as a topic of mutual interest. This, along with the Bilateral Agreement, renewed in 2012, is the framework for cooperation with Brazil. The Commission is identifying research topics of common interest, including with multiple third parties, notably African countries.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002106/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau: encontro de Ramos Horta com as forças armadas guineenses

O representante especial do secretário-geral da ONU em Bissau avistou-se recentemente com as chefias militares do país no contexto do debate acerca da necessária reorganização das forças armadas.

José Ramos Horta apelou nesta circunstância para a necessidade de dar uma vida digna aos militares da Guiné-Bissau.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta visita?

2. Que apreciação faz das declarações do representante especial do secretário-geral das Nações Unidas?

3. Estaria disponível para contribuir para a melhoria da qualidade de vida dos militares da Guiné-Bissau se estes dessem sinais efetivos de acatamento incondicional da ordem constitucional, procedessem à sua restruturação e combatessem resolutamente o tráfico de droga no seu território?

4. Dispõe de informações acerca do estado do processo de reorganização das forças armadas guineenses?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente está ao corrente da visita a que se refere. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente está consciente da importância de proporcionar condições de vida aceitáveis às forças armadas da Guiné-Bissau, também como medida para promover um clima de confiança no contexto mais vasto da tão necessária reforma do setor da segurança.

No entanto, a UE considera que a reforma deve ir além da componente das infraestruturas, de modo a cobrir elementos estruturais, tais como a redução de 65 % do número total de profissionais das forças armadas, a formação, a reforma jurídica, administrativa e financeira, o sistema de reformas e de recrutamento, bem como a renovação do topo da hierarquia. Estas medidas também estão previstas nas obrigações mútuas estabelecidas pela Decisão 2011/492 do Conselho, de julho de 2011, no âmbito de um procedimento em curso a título do artigo 96.° do Acordo de Cotonu.

Em recentes contactos com o SEAE e a Comissão, o Representante Especial do Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas, José Ramos-Horta, declarou que tenciona procurar obter financiamentos de doadores, para além da UE, para a reabilitação das infraestruturas militares. Se, após as eleições, as autoridades legítimas se comprometerem a proceder a uma profunda reforma do setor da segurança, a UE poderá examinar a possibilidade de prestar apoio à vertente estrutural da reforma, com base em resultados concretos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002106/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: meeting between José Ramos-Horta and the armed forces

The UN Secretary General's special representative in Guinea-Bissau recently met with the country's military leaders, in the context of the debate on the much-needed reorganisation of the armed forces.

Mr Ramos-Horta drew attention to the need to provide members of the armed forces of Guinea-Bissau with a decent standard of living.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative informed of this visit?

2. What is her opinion of the statements made by the UN Secretary-General's special representative?

3. Would she be prepared to contribute towards improving the quality of life of members of the armed forces in Guinea-Bissau if they effectively demonstrate their willingness to unconditionally respect the constitution, undergo restructuring and take firm action to combat drug trafficking in the country?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The HRVP is informed about the meeting referred to. She is aware of the importance of providing acceptable living conditions to the armed forces of Guinea-Bissau, also as a confidence building measure in the wider context of the much needed security sector reform.

Nevertheless, the EU believes that the reform must go well beyond the infrastructure component to cover structural elements such as, *inter alia*, reducing the total number of profesional members of the armed forces by 65%, training, legal, administrative and financial reform, pensioning and recruitment, renewal of the top hierarchy. This is also foreseen by the mutual obligations established by Council Decision 2011/492 of July 2011, in the framework of an ongoing procedure under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement.

In recent contacts with the EEAS and the Commission, SRSG Ramos-Horta indicated that he foresees seeking funds from donors other than the EU for the rehabilitation of military infrastructure. If, after the elections, the legitimate authorities will commit to undertake a thorough security sector reform, the EU could consider providing support to the structural part of the reform, based on concrete results.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002107/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau: combate mais empenhado contra a droga

O Conselho de Segurança da ONU incitou as autoridades militares e políticas da Guiné-Bissau a combaterem «mais empenhadamente» o tráfico de droga no país, ameaçando com «novas ações» contra os responsáveis. Numa resolução que renovou por três meses o mandato da Uniogbis, os membros manifestaram «profunda preocupação com o aumento comunicado do tráfico de droga na Guiné-Bissau desde o golpe militar de 12 de abril» e incitaram «os responsáveis civis e militares na Guiné-Bissau a demonstrarem um maior empenho em combater eficazmente o tráfico de droga», nomeadamente assegurando «o funcionamento adequado das agências do Estado responsáveis pelo controlo de fronteiras e pelo combate ao tráfico de droga».

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta resolução do Conselho de Segurança?

2. Que apreciação faz da mesma?

3. Obteve das autoridades civis e militares *de facto* da Guiné-Bissau alguma garantia ou expressão de compromisso e empenhamento efetivo no combate ao tráfico de droga que campeia no país e de reforço da capacidade técnica e operacional das referidas agências?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(2 de maio de 2013)

A Alta Representante/Vice Presidente está plenamente ciente da Resolução do Conselho de Segurança da ONU relativa ao tráfico de droga na Guiné-Bissau.

A UE partilha a opinião de que o tráfico de drogas ilícitas através da Guiné-Bissau constitui uma importante ameaça para a estabilidade do país e de toda a região.

As atuais autoridades civis e militares *de facto* tendem a minimizar a importância e o impacto do tráfico de drogas ilícitas através da Guiné-Bissau; A UE intervém nos seus contactos com as Nações Unidas, a UA e a Cedeao, a fim de chamar a atenção para o problema e de promover uma resposta coordenada a nível da região relativamente a este desafio.

A UE é o principal doador do plano de ação regional da Cedeao para fazer face ao crescente problema do tráfico de drogas ilícitas, à criminalidade organizada e à toxicodependência na África Ocidental. Além disso, a UE está a financiar o programa «Rota da cocaína» que tem por objetivo reforçar as capacidades de luta contra a droga em certos aeroportos e portos marítimos específicos da África Ocidental. A UE financia ainda, no âmbito dos 9.° e 10.° FED, diversos projetos de luta contra a droga em vários países da África Ocidental. Espera-se que estes esforços tenham igualmente um impacto positivo na Guiné-Bissau e ajudem a combater os fluxos de entrada e saída.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002107/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: greater efforts to combat drug trafficking

The United Nations Security Council has called on the military and police authorities in Guinea-Bissau to show 'greater commitment' to combating drug trafficking in the country, and has threatened to take fresh action against those responsible. In a resolution renewing the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) for a further three months, the members of the Security Council expressed their 'serious concern over reports of increase in drug trafficking since the 12 April coup' and urged the 'civilian and military leadership in Guinea-Bissau to demonstrate greater commitment to international efforts to combat drug trafficking', by ensuring the 'full functioning of State agencies responsible for border control and for combating drug trafficking'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this UN Security Council resolution?

2. What is her view of it?

3. Has she received any guarantee or assurances from the *de facto* civil and military authorities in Guinea-Bissau of their commitment to effectively engage in combating the rampant drug trafficking in that country and reinforce the technical and operational capacity of the abovementioned agencies?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

The HR/VP is fully aware of the UN Security Council resolution in respect of drug trafficking in Guinea Bissau.

The EU shares the opinion that illegal drugs trafficking through Guinea-Bissau is a major threat to the country's stability as well as to the whole region.

The current de facto civil and military authorities tend to minimise the importance and impact of illegal drugs trafficking through Guinea-Bissau; the EU is active in its contacts with the UN, AU and Ecowas in order to draw attention to the problem and to promote a coordinated, region-wide response to this challenge.

The EU is the largest donor to the Ecowas regional action plan addressing the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking, organised crime and drug abuse in West Africa. In addition, the EU is funding the 'Cocaine Route Programme' which aims to strengthen the anti-drugs capacities at selected airports and seaports in West Africa. Furthermore, the EU is funding, under the 9th and 10th EDF several anti-drugs projects in various West African countries. Such efforts should also have a positive impact on Guinea Bissau and help to combat incoming and outgoing flows.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002108/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Montados — Proteção, preservação, promoção e estudo

O ICAAM (Instituto de Ciências Agrárias e Ambientais Mediterrânicas) da Universidade de Évora levou a efeito a conferência internacional subordinada ao tema «Montados e *Dehesas* como sistemas de Elevado Valor Natural».

Para os organizadores do evento, atualmente, e face ao aumento da pressão para a intensificação da utilização da terra, torna-se urgente definir prioridades que, a nível da definição de políticas, considerem os Montados e *Dehesas* como sistemas complexos com características únicas que importa valorizar.

Neste contexto, o conceito de Elevado Valor Natural (*High Nature Value* — HNV) poderá ser a chave para a classificação e promoção específica destes sistemas, em termos de definição de políticas aos diferentes níveis de decisão. Torna-se assim essencial identificar e definir critérios e metodologias que permitam o reconhecimento e a monitorização adequada dos Montados e *Dehesas* que efetivamente fornecem os valores não-produtivos atualmente valorizados pela sociedade.

1. Como avalia a Comissão a importância socioeconómica, ambiental e natural dos Montados-*Dehesas*?

2. Teve a Comissão conhecimento desta conferência e dos seus objetivos?

3. Em que medida poderá o conceito de Elevado Valor Natural (*High Nature Value* — HNV) ser a chave para a classificação e promoção específica destes sistemas? E de que modo poderão ser avaliados os valores não-produtivos com eles conexos?

4. Pretende a Comissão tirar partido da experiência adquirida e do conhecimento acumulado por diversos grupos de trabalho em Portugal, Espanha e outros países do Mediterrâneo para sua proteção, preservação, promoção e estudo? De que modo?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

1. A Comissão está ciente da importância da conservação da grande biodiversidade e da paisagem tradicional das zonas agrícolas de montado e *dehesa*. A atividade nessas zonas pode ser apoiada por diferentes medidas dos programas de desenvolvimento rural: agroambiente, Natura 2000, zonas desfavorecidas, investimentos, primeira implantação de sistemas agroflorestais em terras agrícolas, conservação e valorização do património rural, agroturismo e iniciativas dos grupos de ação local. Todas estas medidas são implementadas pelo programa de desenvolvimento rural Proder, estando previstas diversas ações para manter e recuperar os montados (www.proder.pt).

2. A Comissão não tem conhecimento da conferência da Universidade de Évora.

3. Quanto à classificação dos montados e *dehesas* como zonas agrícolas de elevado valor natural, a responsabilidade incumbe aos Estados-Membros e regiões. A produção de bens públicos provenientes dos montados e *dehesas* é expressa por múltiplos indicadores do «quadro comum de acompanhamento e avaliação» dos programas de desenvolvimento rural. Para compreender a forma como a manutenção dos montados e *dehesas* contribui para proporcionar benefícios ambientais e não produtivos, todos esses dados devem ser interpretados conjuntamente.

4. A Comissão acompanha a contribuição dos interessados no contexto do procedimento de programação do desenvolvimento rural. O grupo consultivo «Florestas e Cortiça» abordou também a questão dos produtos e serviços proporcionados pelos montados e *dehesas*, em especial a cortiça. Além disso, a Comissão reconheceu já a importância dos sistemas agrossilvopastoris, tais como os montados e *dehesas*, tendo, com efeito, proposto o reforço das medidas agroflorestais no futuro regulamento sobre o desenvolvimento rural para o período 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002108/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Protection, preservation, promotion and study of montado ecosystems

The University of Évora's Institute for Mediterranean Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (ICAAM) has held an international conference on '*Montados* and *Dehesas* as High Nature Value systems'.

According to the event's organisers and in view of the increased pressure on land use intensification, priorities need to be set as a matter of urgency which, in terms of policy-making, consider *montados* and *dehesas* as complex systems with unique characteristics that should be promoted.

In that context, the high nature value (HNV) concept could be key to the classification and targeted promotion of such systems, at different levels of policy-making. It is therefore crucial to identify and establish criteria and methodologies enabling the recognition and adequate monitoring of *montados* and *dehesas*, which provide the non-productive benefits valued by society today.

1. What is the Commission's view of the socioeconomic, environmental and natural importance of *montados*/*dehesas*?

2. Was the Commission aware of this conference and its aims?

3. To what extent could the high nature value concept be key to the classification and targeted promotion of these systems? What assessment could be made of the non-productive benefits associated with *montados*?

4. Will the Commission take advantage of the experience gained and the knowledge accumulated by several working groups in Portugal, Spain and other Mediterranean countries in respect of the protection, preservation, promotion and study of *montados*? How?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the importance to conserve rich biodiversity and traditional landscape in Montado and Dehesa agricultural areas. Different measures of the Rural Development Programmes can support the activity in those areas: agri-environment, Natura 2000, less favoured areas, investments, first establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land, conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage, agro-tourism as well as initiatives of Local Action Groups. All these measures are implemented by the RD Programme 'Proder' and several actions are foreseen aiming to preserve and restore the *montados* (www.proder.pt).

2. The Commission is not aware of the Evora's University conference.

3. As regards the classification of *montados* and *dehesas* as High Nature Value Farming areas (HNVF) the responsibility lies with the Member States and regions. The production of public goods from *montados* and *dehesas* is expressed by multiple indicators of 'Common monitoring and evaluation framework' of Rural Development Programmes. All these data should be interpreted in combination to understand the contribution of *montados* and *dehesas* maintenance to environmental and non-productive benefits

4. The Commission watches at the contribution of the stakeholders channelled under the context of the Rural Development programming procedure. The Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork also has addressed the products and services from *dehesas* and *montados*, in particular cork. Moreover, the Commission has already recognised the importance of sylvo-pastoral agricultural systems, such as *montados* and *dehesas*. It has indeed proposed to reinforce the agro-forestry measure in the future rural development regulation for the period 2014-2020.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002109/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Timor-Leste: «Greater Sunrise» — gás e petróleo

Notícias recentes dão conta que os governos timorense e australiano ainda não chegaram a acordo quanto ao plano de desenvolvimento do «Greater Sunrise», que expirou no dia 23 de fevereiro de 2013.

O Ministro do Petróleo e Recursos Naturais timorense, Alfredo Pires, declarou que o seu governo está preocupado com o Acordo sobre a Fronteira Marítima, no âmbito do plano de desenvolvimento do gasoduto, que prevê que a linha fronteiriça seja novamente discutida 50 anos depois da exploração de petróleo e gás no campo «Greater Sunrise». O executivo de Timor-Leste poderá abandonar o acordo devido à definição da fronteira marítima.

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-004173/2010, o Comissário Andris Piebalgs declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a Comissão não tem conhecimento de qualquer estudo de viabilidade que realize uma avaliação pormenorizada do impacto potencial de uma instalação de gás natural liquefeito em Timor-Leste» e que «a Comissão não está a prestar assistência no setor da energia».

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Como a avalia?

3. Dispõe, neste momento, de qualquer estudo de viabilidade que faça uma avaliação pormenorizada do impacto potencial de uma instalação de gás natural liquefeito em Timor-Leste?

4. Estaria disposta a prestar assistência a Timor-Leste no setor da energia?

5. Dispõe de garantias de que a Austrália não se aproveitará da sua posição de potência regional para impor os seus interesses a um parceiro significativamente mais fraco e dependente?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente está a seguir de perto o evoluir da situação relativa à exploração de petróleo e gás no mar de Timor, visto que estes são essenciais para o desenvolvimento de Timor-Leste.

A UE tem conhecimento do relatório *2012-11 Analysis transportation options Greater Sunrise* e agradeceria que o Senhor Deputado lhe enviasse outras informações relevantes sobre esta questão.

Como o Comissário Andris Piebalgs já referiu, a UE não está diretamente envolvida no setor da energia em Timor-Leste. Não obstante, a ajuda ao desenvolvimento da UE tem incidido sobretudo no apoio dado às instituições timorenses para gerirem de forma eficaz os recursos próprios do país, bem como para definirem as políticas a seguir, incluindo no domínio das relações externas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002109/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Timor-Leste: gas and oil in the 'Greater Sunrise' field

According to recent reports, the East Timorese and Australian Governments have not yet reached an agreement on the 'Greater Sunrise' development plan, which expired on 23 February 2013.

The East Timorese Minister for Oil and Natural Resources, Alfredo Pires, said that his government was concerned about the Maritime Boundary Agreement, as part of the pipeline development plan, which provides for the boundary line to be renegotiated after 50 years of oil and gas exploitation in the 'Greater Sunrise' field. The East Timorese authorities might cancel the agreement because of how the maritime boundary is defined.

In answer to my Question E-004173/2010, Commissioner Piebalgs, on behalf of the Commission, stated that 'the Commission is not aware of any feasibility study having made a detailed assessment of the potential impact of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant in Timor-Leste' and that 'the Commission is not assisting in the energy sector'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this situation?

2. What is her view on the matter?

3. Does she currently have any feasibility study that makes a detailed assessment of the potential impact of an LNG plant in Timor-Leste?

4. Would she be prepared to assist Timor-Leste in the energy sector?

5. Does she have any guarantees that Australia will not exploit its position as a regional power to impose its interests on a much weaker and more dependent partner?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The HR/VP is following closely the developments related to exploitation of the oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea, as they are key for the development of Timor-Leste.

The EU is aware of the report '2012-11 Analysis transportation options Greater Sunrise', and would be grateful if the Honourable Member would wish to share any other relevant information on this issue.

As stated by Commissioner Piebalgs, the EU is not directly involved in the energy sector in Timor-Leste. Nevertheless, the main focus of the EU development assistance has been support to the capacity of the Timorese institutions to effectively manage the country's own resources, as well as design its own policies, including in the area of foreign relations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002110/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Timor-Leste: Secretário-executivo da CPLP

A comunicação social informou que o secretário-executivo da Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa, Murade Murargy, fez um balanço positivo da sua recente visita a Timor-Leste e destacou o empenho das autoridades timorenses no combate à pobreza.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta visita?

2. Contactou o secretário-executivo a esse propósito?

3. Partilha da sua opinião quanto à avaliação que faz do empenhamento das autoridades timorenses no combate à pobreza?

4. Dispõe de dados acerca da pobreza naquele país?

5. Como avalia a sua própria participação no esforço conjunto de redução da pobreza em Timor-Leste?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2013)

Na sua primeira visita a um país da CPLP desde que tomou posse em setembro de 2012, o Secretário-Geral da CPLP, o moçambicano Murade Murargy, esteve em Timor-Leste entre 16 e 23 de fevereiro de 2013.

De acordo com as informações recebidas, o objetivo da sua visita era promover a presença da CPLP em Timor-Leste e assinar o contrato de concessão de um terreno para a implantação da representação da CPLP na capital Díli, a financiar pelo Governo de Timor-Leste. Por outro lado, a visita de Murade Murargy proporcionou a oportunidade de analisar conjuntamente com o Governo de Timor-Leste futuros domínios de cooperação, com especial ênfase na cooperação económica com os países da CPLP, bem como nos investimentos desses países.

O Embaixador da UE em Timor-Leste contactou o Secretário-Geral Murade Murargy, mas este não estava disponível para uma reunião.

A UE tem vindo a colaborar com Timor-Leste desde a restauração da independência em 2002, com um objetivo global de redução da pobreza. Designadamente através da sua delegação, a UE participa, numa base diária, nos esforços de redução da pobreza, utilizando as estatísticas nacionais e internacionais disponíveis. Embora as receitas de petróleo e gás sejam abundantes, as limitações de capacidades que Timor-Leste enfrenta representam um desafio para a gestão eficiente desses recursos. É por este motivo que a estratégia da UE em matéria de cooperação com Timor-Leste se centra, em grande medida, no reforço das capacidades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002110/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Timor-Leste: Executive Secretary of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP)

According to media reports, the Executive Secretary of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, Murade Murargy, made a positive assessment of his recent visit to Timor-Leste and underlined the East Timorese authorities' commitment to tackling poverty.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this visit?

2. Has she contacted the Executive Secretary about it?

3. Does she agree with his assessment of the East Timorese authorities' commitment to tackling poverty?

4. Does she have any figures on poverty in Timor-Leste?

5. How does she view her own contribution to the joint effort to reduce poverty in Timor-Leste?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

In his first visit to a CPLP country since he took office in September 2012, the Mozambican CPLP Secretary General, Murade Murargy, was in Timor-Leste between16-23 February 2013.

According to reports, the objective of his visit was to promote the CPLP's presence in Timor-Leste and to sign the land concession agreement for the CPLP representation in the capital Dili, to be financed by the Timor-Leste Government. Furthermore, Mr Murargy's visit provided an opportunity to analyse jointly with the Timor-Leste Government future areas for cooperation, with a special emphasis on economic cooperation with, and investment from, CPLP countries.

The EU Ambassador to Timor-Leste approached the Secretary General Murargy but he was not available for a meeting.

The EU has been working together with the Timor-Leste partners since the restoration of independence in 2002, with an overarching objective of poverty reduction. The EU, including through its Delegation, engages on a daily basis in poverty reduction efforts, using available national and international statistics. While oil and gas revenues are abundant, capacity constraints Timor-Leste is facing, represent a challenge of efficient management of these resources. That is why the EU strategy of cooperation with Timor-Leste is to a very big extent focused on capacity strengthening.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002111/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Açores — Situação da economia da região

Notícias recentes dão conta que a região autónoma dos Açores apresenta a maior taxa de sempre de falências de empresas, de insolvências familiares e de desemprego, além de ter também a maior percentagem de beneficiários do Rendimento Social de Inserção em Portugal e a maior dívida pública de sempre, e vem conhecendo quebras profundas na construção civil, no turismo e nas receitas fiscais.

1. Confirma a Comissão estes dados?

2. Quais considera a Comissão serem as principais razões que subjazem a esta situação?

3. Que medidas crê a Comissão que deveriam ser tomadas a nível regional de modo a inverter este preocupante estado de coisas?

4. Como avalia a Comissão a presente situação da economia na região autónoma dos Açores?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão acompanha os desenvolvimentos económicos a nível regional apenas a médio e longo prazo, não podendo consequentemente pronunciar-se sobre as notícias referidas na pergunta, nem sobre as razões subjacentes aos desenvolvimentos mencionados.

A fim de fazer face aos principais problemas regionais e inverter a presente situação, as autoridades competentes devem prosseguir com a implementação dos programas operacionais existentes apoiados por fundos da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002111/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: The economic situation of the Azores

According to recent news reports, company and household bankruptcies and unemployment in the Autonomous Region of the Azores have hit unprecedented levels. It has the highest number of people claiming social inclusion benefit in Portugal, public debt is at an all-time high, and construction, tourism and tax receipts have collapsed.

1. Can the Commission substantiate these statistics?

2. What does the Commission think are the main reasons behind this situation?

3. What measures does the Commission think should be taken at regional level to reverse this worrying state of affairs?

4. How does the Commission view the current economic situation of the Autonomous Region of the Azores?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission follows economic developments at regional level only on a medium and longer term basis and therefore can comment neither on the news reports referred to in the question, nor on the reasons behind the developments reported.

In order to tackle the main regional problems and to reverse the current state of affairs, relevant authorities should go on with the implementation of the current operational programmes supported by EU funds.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002112/13
til Kommissionen
Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(26. februar 2013)

Om: Udbudsregler for færgefarten

Færgeforbindelser er essentielle for små lokalsamfund overalt i EU, men det er ofte dyrt og besværligt at etablere færgeforbindelser, og de kan sjældent drives på kommercielle vilkår alene. Det er en stor investering for et rederi at investere i færgeforbindelser, som de risikerer at miste efter 6 år, når driften skal i udbud igen.

Kommissionens krav om reducering af svovlindholdet i skibsbrændstof vil øge rederiernes investering, da færgerne enten vil være nødsaget til at skifte fra bunkerolien til et dyrere alternativ eller betale mere for bunkerolie med lavere svovlindhold.

Den 30. marts 2011 spurgte undertegnede, hvordan Kommissionen forholdt sig til at forlænge udbudsperioden til færgedrift af en vis størrelse, således at det bliver mere attraktivt at investere i færgedrift. (Spørgsmål nr. E-003436/2011, stillet den 30. marts 2011).

Kommissionen forklarede, at der ikke var fastsat nogen maksimumsvarighed for kontrakter om offentlig tjeneste i forordning (EØF) nr. 3577/92, men at Kommissionen som retningslinje angav en varighed på 6 år i fortolkningsmeddelelsen ([1]). Kommissionen forklarede ligeledes, at der på daværende tidspunkt var overvejelser om en forlængelse af denne varighed i forbindelse med den nye fortolkningsmeddelelse, der skulle have været offentliggjort i 2011. Fortolkningsmeddelelsen er endnu ikke offentliggjort.

Forventer Kommissionen at forlænge udbudsreglerne for færgefarten, således at det bliver mere rentabelt at investere i færgedrift, og hvornår forventes fortolkningsmeddelelsen klar?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(18. april 2013)

I løbet af 2011 og 2012 indsamlede Kommissionen yderligere oplysninger om gennemførelsen af Rådets forordning (EØF) nr. 3577/92 om cabotagesejlads. På grundlag af disse yderligere oplysninger vil Kommissionen til sommer i år opdatere og revidere sin fortolkningsmeddelelse om cabotagesejlads fra 2003, bl.a. med hensyn til varigheden af kontrakter om offentlig tjeneste, som det ærede medlem henviser til.

Som nævnt i svaret på forespørgsel nr. E-003436/2011 er det Kommissionens opfattelse, at varigheden af kontrakter om offentlig tjeneste bør begrænses til, hvad der er nødvendigt for at sikre, at investeringen tjenes ind, og der er et rimeligt afkast af den investerede kapital. Hensigten med dette er at fremme investering i færgedrift uden at begrænse andres adgang til markedet unødigt.

([1]) Meddelelse fra Kommissionen til Europa-Parlamentet, Rådet, Det Europæiske Økonomiske og Sociale Udvalg og Regionsudvalget om fortolkningen af Rådets forordning (EØF) nr. 3577/92 om anvendelse af princippet om fri udveksling af tjenesteydelser inden for søtransport i medlemsstaterne (cabotagesejlads) af 22. december 2003, KOM(2003)0595, som ændret ved meddelelsen af 11. maj 2006, KOM(2006)0196.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002112/13
to the Commission
Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Tendering rules for ferry services

Ferry connections are essential for small local communities all over the EU, but it is often expensive and difficult to establish such connections, and they can rarely be operated on a purely commercial basis. Shipping operators have to invest a lot of money in ferry links which they risk losing after six years when the operation has to be put out to tender again.

The Commission's requirements for the reduction of the sulphur content of marine fuels will increase the amount operators have to invest, as the ferries will either be forced to switch from bunker oil to a more expensive alternative or to pay more for low-sulphur bunker oil.

On 20 March 2011 I asked the Commission (Question E-003436/2011) how it viewed the idea of extending the tendering period for ferry operations of a given size so that it becomes more attractive to invest in ferry operation.

The Commission answered that while Regulation (EC) No 3577/92 does not provide for a maximum duration of a public service contract, the Commission had given as an indication a duration of 6 years in its interpretative communication ([1]). The Commission also explained that it was currently reflecting on possible extension of this duration in the new interpretative communication, due to be published in 2011. This interpretative communication has not yet been published.

Does the Commission expect to amend the rules to extend the tendering period for ferry services so that it becomes more profitable to invest in ferry operations, and when is the interpretative communication expected to be ready?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

In the course of 2011 and 2012 the Commission gathered additional information on the implementation of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 on maritime cabotage ([2]). On the basis of this additional information the Commission intends to update and revise its interpretative communication on maritime cabotage of 2003, including on the issue of duration of public service contracts, referred to by the Honourable Member, by summer this year.

As stated in the reply to Question E-003436/2011 ([3]), the Commission believes that in order to encourage the investments in ferry operations while not foreclosing the market, the duration of public service contracts should be limited to the time estimated to be necessary for the shipowner to recuperate the investments made in operating the service together with a reasonable return on invested capital.

([1]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the interpretation of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 applying the principle of freedom to provide services to maritime transport within Member States (maritime cabotage) from 22.12.2003, COM(2003)595 as amended by the communication from 11.5.2006, COM(2006)196.

([2]) Council Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 of 7 December 1992 applying the principle of freedom to provide services to maritime transport within Member States (maritime cabotage), OJ L 364, 12.12.1992.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002113/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(26 februari 2013)

Betreft: Emissies airco's in auto's

Autofabrikanten mogen vanaf 1 januari 2013 in nieuwe wagens geen aircosystemen meer installeren met een aardopwarmingspotentieel (GWP) van meer dan 150 (Richtlijn 2006/40/EG van 17 mei 2006 betreffende emissies van klimaatregelingsapparatuur in motorvoertuigen). Voor voertuigen die niet aan deze eis voldoen mogen geen typegoedkeuringen worden afgeleverd.

Om aan deze verplichting te voldoen, gebruiken constructeurs HFO-1234yf, een koelvloeistof met een GWP van 4, wat maar liefst 99,7 % lager is dan de in het verleden gebruikte koelvloeistof R134a.

Een Duitse autofabrikant heeft twijfels geuit over de veiligheid van HFO-1234yf en heeft om die reden, gesteund door het Duitse Ministerie van Verkeer (Bundesverkehrsministerium), aan de Commissie een uitstel van 6 maanden gevraagd.

Internationale instanties, waaronder SAE International, bevestigen de veiligheid van de nieuwe koelvloeistof.

1. Heeft de Commissie zicht op de naleving van Richtlijn 2006/40/EG door de Europese autofabrikanten vanaf 1 januari 2013?

2. Kan de Commissie meedelen welke fabrikanten zich wel of niet houden aan deze verplichting?

3. Welke maatregelen zal de Commissie nemen ten aanzien van autoconstructeurs die zich niet houden aan de vanaf 1 januari 2013 geldende verplichting?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(10 april 2013)

Wat de handhaving van Europese Richtlijn 2006/40/EG inzake klimaatregelingsapparatuur in voertuigen betreft, heeft de Commissie de lidstaten op 12 februari 2013 een brief gestuurd met twee vragen: 1) of er op hun markt na 1 januari 2013 motorvoertuigen zijn verkocht of geregistreerd die niet aan de richtlijn voldoen, omdat zij namelijk zijn geproduceerd om het gas R134a te gebruiken hoewel typegoedkeuring is verleend voor gebruik van het gas HFO 1234yf; en 2) als er zich voertuigen in die situatie bevinden, welke acties zijn gepland om de productie ervan weer conform te maken.

Op 15 maart 2013 hadden nog maar enkele lidstaten deze vragen van de Commissie beantwoord. Uit de ontvangen antwoorden blijkt dat sommige fabrikanten in de onder 1) bedoelde situatie zouden verkeren en dus niet aan de richtlijn zouden voldoen. De relevante autoriteiten gaven in hun correspondentie ook te kennen dat zij actieplannen hebben opgezet om deze kwestie aan te pakken.

Volgens de informatie waarover de Commissie beschikt, komen alle andere fabrikanten hun verplichtingen uit hoofde van bovengenoemde richtlijn na.

De Commissie verkeert niet in een positie om actie tegen specifieke economische subjecten te ondernemen. In gevallen van niet-naleving van de EU-wetgeving moet de lidstaat die met de typegoedkeuring van het voertuig is belast, erop toezien dat passende corrigerende maatregelen direct op de fabrikant worden toegepast. De Commissie kan een inbreukprocedure inleiden tegen lidstaten die de EU-wetgeving niet correct toepassen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002113/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Emissions from air conditioning systems in cars

Since 1 January 2013, car manufacturers have no longer been permitted to instal air conditioning systems in new cars which have a global warming potential (GWP) higher than 150 (Directive 2006/40/EC of 17 May 2006 relating to emissions from air conditioning systems in motor vehicles). Type approvals can no longer be issued for vehicles which fail to meet this requirement.

In order to comply with this requirement, manufacturers are using HFO-1234yf, a coolant with a GWP of 4, a figure fully 99.7% lower than that for the coolant R134a which used to be used.

A German car manufacturer has expressed doubts about the safety of HFO-1234yf and has therefore, supported by the German Ministry of Transport (Bundesverkehrsministerium), asked the Commission for a 6-month postponement.

International bodies, including SAE International, confirm that the new coolant is safe.

1. Does the Commission have an overview of compliance with Directive 2006/40/EG by European car manufacturers since 1 January 2013?

2. Can the Commission indicate which manufacturers are complying with this requirement and which are not?

3. What measures will the Commission take with regard to car manufacturers who fail to comply with the requirement which has been in force since 1 January 2013?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

Regarding the enforcement of European Directive 2006/40/EC on mobile air-conditioning (MAC), the Commission wrote, on 12 February 2013, to the Member States resquesting two elements: (i) if there are, on their markets, motor vehicles, sold or registered after 1 January 2013, which do not respect the directive, namely because they are produced to use the gas R134a though they have been type-approved for the use of gas HFO 1234yf and; (ii) if there are vehicles in such a situation, which actions are planned to bring their production back into conformity.

On 15 March 2013 only a few Member States had replied to this request from the Commission. From the replies received, it appears that some manufacturers could be in the situation referred in (i), and therefore not complying with the directive. The relevant authorities also referred, in their correspondence, that they have set out action plans to address this issue.

According to the information available to the Commission, all other manufacturers are complying with their obligations under the MAC Directive.

The Commission is not in a position to take action against specific economic operators. In cases of non-compliance with EU legislation, the Member State responsible for the vehicle type-approval is the one responsible for applying appropriate corrective measures directly on the manufacturer. The Commission may launch infringement proceedings against Member States not correctly applying EU legislation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002114/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(26 février 2013)

Objet: Lien entre santé humaine et changement climatique

Il est de plus en plus admis que le changement climatique affecte la santé humaine, à travers des mécanismes directs ou indirects, et agit sur la modification, l'émergence et le déplacement des maladies.

Le Haut Conseil de la santé publique, en France, a détaillé dans son «Avis relatif aux risques pour la santé liés aux effets qualitatifs du changement climatique» les différentes pathologies concernées: les maladies infectieuses (paludisme, chikungunya, leishmanioses, fièvre boutonneuse, légionellose), les accidents (cardiovasculaires, déshydratation …), les maladies de l'immunité (asthme, urticaire), les effets des rayonnements naturels (cataracte …), les souffrances psychiques (dépression) et autres morbidités (pollution chimique, insuffisance rénale).

Néanmoins, le lien de causalité entre le changement climatique et les problèmes de santé reste difficile à établir de façon certaine, compte tenu de la conjonction de différents facteurs et du manque de recul dont dispose la recherche scientifique dans ce domaine.

— Quels efforts la Commission compte-t-elle entreprendre pour développer les données scientifiques sur le lien climat-maladies d'ici 2020?

— Quel bilan peut-elle tirer de la coopération entre États membres en matière de planification de la préparation aux urgences sanitaires, depuis la publication en 2009 du document de travail intitulé «Les effets du changement climatique sur la santé humaine, animale et végétale» accompagnant le Livre blanc sur l'adaptation au changement climatique?

— Quelles initiatives précises prévoit-elle dans le cadre du 7e programme d'action pour l'environnement en ce qui concerne le lien entre santé humaine et climat?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(17 avril 2013)

1. La Commission finance, au titre du 7e programme-cadre de recherche, des projets consacrés à l'étude du changement climatique. Sa proposition relative au programme «Santé» pour la période 2014-2020 inscrit en outre le changement climatique dans une catégorie plus large englobant diverses menaces graves pour la santé. Le Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies (CEPCM) a réalisé une étude de faisabilité complète en vue de la création d'un réseau européen de l'environnement et de l'épidémiologie, réseau qui facilitera le déclenchement de l'alerte rapide à l'échelon européen en présence de pathologies liées aux conditions climatiques.

2. La Commission a présenté une proposition de décision relative aux menaces transfrontières graves pour la santé (dont les événements résultant de menaces d'origine environnementale) qui portera sur l'état de préparation ainsi que sur l'évaluation et la gestion des risques ([1]). En outre, un document de travail des services de la Commission concernant l'adaptation au changement climatique et les effets du changement climatique sur la santé humaine, animale et végétale sera publié en 2013, dans le prolongement du document de 2009. Le CEPCM a également publié, à l'intention des États membres, un manuel expliquant comment réaliser des évaluations de la vulnérabilité et de l'adaptation en rapport avec le changement climatique et les maladies transmissibles.

3. Dans le cadre du nouveau programme d'action pour l'environnement, la Commission a proposé que l'Union adopte et applique une stratégie relative à l'adaptation au changement climatique ([2]), qui consiste notamment à intégrer l'adaptation au changement climatique et les aspects liés à la gestion des risques de catastrophe aux principaux secteurs et initiatives stratégiques de l'Union, y compris la politique de santé. Le programme souligne aussi les avantages que présentent, sur le plan de la santé publique, les mesures visant à renforcer la résilience écologique et la résilience face au changement climatique, telles que la restauration des écosystèmes et l'infrastructure verte, et insiste sur la nécessité de bien gérer les synergies et les compromis possibles entre les objectifs fixés en matière de climat et d'autres objectifs environnementaux, comme la qualité de l'air.

([1]) COM,(2011) 866 — SEC (2011) 1519.
([2]) La stratégie de l'UE relative à l'adaptation au changement climatique devrait être adoptée au printemps 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002114/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Link between human health and climate change

It is increasingly coming to be accepted that climate change is affecting human health, directly or indirectly, and that it is having an impact on the emergence, mutation and geographical occurrence of diseases.

In its 'Communication on the health risks associated with the qualitative effects of climate change', the French High Council for Public Health set out a list of the diseases that are being affected by climate change, namely infectious diseases (malaria, chikungunya, leishmaniases, boutonneuse fever, legionnaires' disease), sudden acute health problems (cardiovascular problems, dehydration, etc.), immune system disorders (asthma, urticaria), conditions caused by exposure to natural radiation (cataracts, etc.), psychiatric illnesses (depression) and other conditions (effects of chemical pollution, kidney failure).

However, given the range of contributory factors involved and the lack of information hampering objective scientific research in this field, it is still difficult to establish with any certainty whether there is a link between climate change and health problems.

— What steps does the Commission plan to take to increase the stock of scientific data on the link between climate change and disease by 2020?

— What is the Commission's assessment of the way Member States have cooperated on preparedness planning for public health threats since the 2009 publication of the working document entitled 'Human, animal and plant health impacts of climate change', which accompanied the White Paper on adapting to climate change?

— What specific initiatives concerning the link between health and climate change is the Commission planning as part of the Seventh Environment Action Programme?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

1. The Commission funds projects under the 7th Research Framework Programme which study climate change. The Commission proposal for the Health Programme 2014-2020 further includes climate change in a wider category encompassing a number of serious threats for health. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) developed a comprehensive feasibility study for a European Environment and Epidemiology Network, which will facilitate European early warning for climate-related diseases.

2. The Commission proposed a decision on serious cross-border threats to health — including events caused by threats of environmental origin — that will cover preparedness, risk assessment and risk management ([1]). In addition, a Commission Staff Working Document on 'Adaptation to climate change impacts on human, animal and plant health' will be published in 2013, as a follow-up to the 2009 document. The ECDC has also published a Handbook for EU Member States on how to conduct vulnerability and adaptation assessments related to climate change and communicable diseases.

3. As part of the new EU Environment Action Programme, the Commission has proposed that the EU agree and implement an EU climate adaptation strategy ([2]), including the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management considerations into key EU policy initiatives and sectors including health policy. The programme also underscores the benefits for public health of measures aimed at enhancing ecological and climate resilience, such as ecosystem restoration and green infrastructure, and the need to adequately manage synergies and potential trade-offs between climate and other environmental objectives, such as air quality.

([1]) COM(2011) 866 — SEC(2011) 1519.
([2]) The EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change is scheduled to be adopted in spring 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002115/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Armonizzazione delle normative inerenti ai prodotti di medicina complementare nei vari Stati membri

In Italia è stato recentemente attuato il cosiddetto decreto Balduzzi (D.Leg. 219/2006) sulla sanità che ha recepito la direttiva europea relativa alla farmacia complementare (omeopatia e allopatia).

Nonostante ciò, rimangono ancora numerose lacune in materia di armonizzazione nelle normative inerenti ai prodotti di medicina complementare nei vari Stati membri.

In Italia, ad esempio, non è ancora possibile inserire nelle confezioni il «foglietto illustrativo», fare pubblicità per questo tipo di prodotti e indicare il «campo d'applicazione», come invece accade in altri paesi.

In Italia, inoltre, non è possibile inserire nuovi farmaci di medicina complementare sin dal 1995, anche se con il decreto Balduzzi di cui sopra questi prodotti saranno registrati presso l'AIFA (Agenzia italiana di vigilanza sui farmaci).

Considerato che nonostante tutte queste restrizioni il mercato della medicina complementare riesce a resistere alla congiuntura sfavorevole, è la Commissione in grado di dire se si prospetta una direttiva o un regolamento che armonizzi la situazione inserendo uno standard europeo uguale per tutti gli Stati membri?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 aprile 2013)

La legislazione dell'UE definisce regole chiare in merito a certe classi di prodotti farmaceutici usati nella medicina complementare, come ad esempio medicinali omeopatici e medicinali di origine vegetale. Molte di queste regole stabiliscono la piena armonizzazione. Esse introducono in particolare una procedura semplificata di registrazione per i medicinali omeopatici e vegetali tradizionali, a condizione che soddisfino certi criteri. Inoltre, alcune di queste regole consentono agli Stati membri di spingersi oltre introducendo una procedura di autorizzazione semplificata.

La Commissione sostiene le attività del gruppo di lavoro sui medicinali omeopatici istituito dai direttori delle agenzie per i medicinali per coadiuvare l'applicazione di tali regole. L'obiettivo primario del gruppo di lavoro è armonizzare la valutazione di prodotti omeopatici tra gli Stati membri e costituire una rete di valutatori per agevolare la cooperazione nell'ambito delle procedure di riconoscimento nazionale e reciproco.

Poiché il quadro giuridico tiene conto delle specificità di questi medicinali, la Commissione non prevede di proporre nuovi strumenti legislativi nell'ambito menzionato dall'onorevole deputato.

Essa pubblicherà però entro la fine del 2013 una relazione sulla disponibilità dei medicinali che tratterà anche della disponibilità dei prodotti omeopatici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002115/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Harmonisation of laws relating to complementary medicinal products in the Member States

Italy recently implemented the so-called Balduzzi Decree (Legislative Decree No 219/2006) on health, thereby transposing into Italian law the European directive on complementary (homeopathic and allopathic) medicines.

Nevertheless, there are still many gaps in the harmonisation of laws relating to such products in the various Member States.

In Italy, for example, it is not yet permitted to include information leaflets about such products in packaging, or to advertise or indicate possible uses for complementary medicines, as is the case in other countries.

Furthermore, in Italy, it has not been permitted since 1995 to bring new complementary medicines onto the market; however, under the abovementioned Balduzzi Decree, such products will now be registered with the AIFA (Italian Pharmaceutical Products Supervisory Agency).

Given that the market in complementary medicines has been able to survive the economic downturn in spite of all these restrictions, can the Commission say whether it intends to draw up a directive or a regulation to harmonise the situation by introducing EU standards applicable to all Member States equally?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

EU legislation already sets out clear rules on certain classes of pharmaceuticals used in complementary medicine, such as homeopathic and herbal medicines. Many of these rules provide for full harmonisation. They introduce in particular a simplified registration procedure for homeopathic and traditional herbal medicinal products on the condition that they fulfil certain criteria. In addition, some of the rules allow Member States to go even further by introducing a simplified authorisation procedure.

The Commission supports the work of the Homeopathic Medicinal Products working group established by the Heads of Medicines Agencies in order to assist the application of these rules. The primary aim of the working group is to harmonise the assessment of homeopathic products amongst the Member States and to create a network of assessors to facilitate cooperation in National and Mutual Recognition Procedures.

As the legal framework takes into account the specificities of these medicines, the Commission has no plans to propose new legislation in the field mentioned by the Honourable Member.

However, it will publish by the end of 2013 a report on availability of medicines, which will also address the availability of homeopathic products.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002116/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Öffentliche Konsultation zu dem Vorschlag zu lärmbedingten Betriebsbeschränkungen

Am 1. Dezember 2011 hat die Kommission im Rahmen des EU-Flughafenpakets auch einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung über Regeln und Verfahren für lärmbedingte Betriebsbeschränkungen auf Flughäfen der Union im Rahmen eines ausgewogenen Ansatzes (KOM(2011)0828) vorgelegt.

Dazu frage ich die Kommission:

1. Hat zu diesem Vorschlag zuvor eine öffentliche Konsultation stattgefunden?

2. Wenn ja, wo sind die Ergebnisse dieser Konsultation einsehbar? Wenn nein, warum fand eine solche Konsultation nicht statt?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

Die Konsultation im Vorfeld des Vorschlags für eine Verordnung über Regeln und Verfahren für lärmbedingte Betriebsbeschränkungen auf Flughäfen der Union im Rahmen eines ausgewogenen Ansatzes (KOM(2011)0828) wurde in zwei Phasen durchgeführt.

Im Jahr 2007 hatte ein externer Berater einen Bericht über die Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2002/30/EG ([1]) erstellt und eine Vielzahl von Interessenträgern zum weiteren Vorgehen konsultiert. Dieser Bericht und diese Konsultationen lieferten einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Mitteilung der Kommission KOM(2008)66 endg., in der ebenfalls zur Abgabe von Stellungnahmen aufgefordert wurde.

2010 setzte die Kommission ihre vorbereitenden Arbeiten fort und konsultierte die Interessenträger erneut. Bei dieser Gelegenheit weitete die Kommission auch den Kreis der Interessenträger aus, um ihn repräsentativer zu gestalten durch Einbeziehung 1) der Autorité de Contrôle des Nuisances Aéroportuaires (unabhängige französische Fluglärmkommission, ACNUSA), 2) der Aviation Environmental Federation, die britische, deutsche und französische Aktionsgruppen auf Gemeindeebene vertritt, und 3) des Europäischen Verbands der Luftfahrt-, Raumfahrt- und Verteidigungsindustrie (ASD).

Der Vorschlag der Kommission (KOM(2011)0828) baute auf den im Verlauf dieses Konsultationsprozesses abgegebenen Stellungnahmen auf, z. B. indem eine stärkere Verknüpfung der Richtlinie 2002/30/EG mit der Richtlinie 2002/49/EG ([2]) im Hinblick auf die Kartierung befürwortet oder eine strengere Definition sogenannter „knapp die Vorschriften erfüllender Luftfahrzeuge", der lautesten Flugzeuge in der Flotte, gefordert wird.

Die Einzelheiten des Konsultationsverfahrens werden im Folgenabschätzungsbericht erläutert, der auf der entsprechenden Website des Generalsekretariats der Kommission öffentlich zugänglich ist:
(http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/cia_2011_en.htm#move).

([1]) ABl. L 85 vom 28.3.2002.
([2]) ABl. L 189 vom 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002116/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Public consultation on the proposal concerning noise-related operating restrictions

On 1 December 2011, within the framework of the EU airports package, the Commission also tabled a proposal for a regulation on the establishment of rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports within a Balanced Approach (COM(2011)0828).

1. Was a public consultation on this proposal carried out beforehand?

2. If so, where can the results of this consultation be found? If not, why did such a consultation not take place?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The consultation process leading to the proposal for a regulation on the establishment of rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports within a Balanced Approach (COM(2011)0828) was carried out in two phases.

In 2007 an external consultant had produced a report on the implementation of Directive 2002/30/EC ([1]) and consulted a wide range of stakeholders on the way forward. This report and these consultations formed an important input for the Commission communication COM(2008)66 final, which itself also contained an open invitation for comments.

In 2010, the Commission continued its preparatory work and consulted stakeholders again. On this occasion, the Commission also widened the range of stakeholders to improve representativeness to include (1) Autorité de Contrôle des Nuisances Aéroportuaires (ACNUSA), the French independent noise council; (2) the Aviation Environmental Federation, representing UK, DE, FR community action groups; and (3) the Aerospace and Defence industries Association in Europe (ASD).

The Commission proposal (COM(2011)0828) has built on the comments expressed during this process of consultation, e.g. when advocating the need for a stronger link between Directive 2002/30/EC and Directive 2002/49/EC on environmental mapping ([2]); or when calling for a stricter definition of so-called 'marginally compliant aircraft', the noisiest aircraft in the fleet.

The details of the consultation process are described in the impact assessment report, publicly available at the relevant site of the Secretariat-General of the Commission:
http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/cia_2011_en.htm#move

([1]) OJ L 85, 28.3.2002.
([2]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002117/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Aussagen der Kommission zu grenzüberschreitendem Gigaliner-Verkehr

In seiner Antwort vom 23. Oktober 2010 auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-008149/2012 antwortete Kommissionsmitglied Kallas im Namen der Kommission: „Grenzüberschreitende Fahrten von Fahrzeugen mit einem Gewicht von über 44 Tonnen sind *ausnahmslos* zulässig, wenn diese Fahrzeuge einen 40-Fuß-ISO-Container im Rahmen des kombinierten Verkehrs befördern“ [eigene Hervorhebungen].

In der englischen Sprachfassung heißt es jedoch: „Cross-border use of vehicles up to 44 tonnes is permissible *without derogation* if these vehicles carry a 40 foot ISO container as part of a combined transport operation“ [eigene Hervorhebungen].

Kann die Kommission deshalb folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Welche der widersprüchlichen Sprachfassungen ist maßgeblich und spiegelt die Rechtsauffassung der Kommission wider?

2. Ist das schwedische Gesetz vom 16. August 2012 (SFS 2012:553) zur Genehmigung von grenzüberschreitenden Fahrten von LKW mit einem Gewicht von mehr als 40 Tonnen mit der Rechtsauffassung der Kommission vereinbar? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(23. April 2013)

1. Die englische Fassung ist korrekt.

2. Die Kommission wurde über das schwedische Gesetz, auf das sich der Herr Abgeordnete bezieht, bisher nicht informiert. Sie geht der Sache jedoch derzeit nach.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002117/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Statements of the Commission concerning cross-border large heavy goods vehicle traffic

In his answer of 23 October 2010 to Written Question E-008149/2012, Commissioner Kallas stated, on behalf of the Commission: 'Grenzüberschreitende Fahrten von Fahrzeugen mit einem Gewicht von *über 44 Tonnen* sind *ausnahmslos* zulässig, wenn diese Fahrzeuge einen 40-Fuß-ISO-Container im Rahmen des kombinierten Verkehrs befördern.' [Cross-border use of vehicles *greater than 44 tonnes* is permissible *without exception* if these vehicles carry a 40 foot ISO container as part of a combined transport operation.] [Italics added]

However, the English version reads: 'Cross-border use of vehicles *up to 44 tonnes* is permissible *without derogation* if these vehicles carry a 40 foot ISO container as part of a combined transport operation.' [Italics added]

1. Which of these contradictory language versions is the definitive one that reflects the Commission's interpretation of the law?

2. Is the Swedish Act of 16 August 2012 (SFS 2012:553) on the authorisation of cross-border journeys by heavy goods vehicles with a weight exceeding 40 tonnes compatible with the Commission's interpretation of the law? If so, why? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

1. The English version is the correct one.

2. The Swedish legislative act to which the Honorable Member refers has not been notified to the Commission. The Commission is currently investigating the situation further.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002118/13
an die Kommission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Wohnungssituation der Roma in Tschechien unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Umsetzung des EU-Rahmens und der nationalen Strategie zur Integration der Roma in Tschechien

Am 5. April 2011 nahm die Europäische Kommission einen EU-Rahmen für nationale Strategien zur Integration der Roma bis 2020 an. Darin werden die Mitgliedstaaten aufgefordert, nationale Strategien für die Integration der Roma zu konzipieren bzw. zu überarbeiten.

In ihrer Mitteilung vom 21. Mai 2012 zur Umsetzung des EU-Rahmens stellt die Europäische Kommission fest, dass Tschechien Maßnahmen für den Zugang zu Wohnraum einschließlich Sozialwohnungen ergriffen hat.

Wie bewertet es die Kommission, dass die Stadt Ústí nad Labem 36 Personen, die der Minderheit der Roma angehören, Plätze in Wohnheimen anbietet, die dreckig sind und weder über Strom- noch Warmwasseranschlüsse verfügen?

Wie viel Mittel für die Integration der Roma hat Tschechien aus nationalen Quellen und aus EU-Quellen eingeplant?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(3. Mai 2013)

Die Kommission steht mit den tschechischen Behörden in Verbindung und verfolgt die Situation in der Stadt Ústí nad Labem genau.

Sie hat die von der Tschechischen Republik vorgelegte Strategie zur Integration der Roma bewertet. Der Kommissionsbericht über die Bewertung aller Strategien und die festgestellten Defizite wurde am 21. Mai 2012 veröffentlicht.

Informationen über bestätigte Zuweisungen tschechischer Haushaltsmittel für die Roma-Integration liegen der Kommission nicht vor. Aus dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung wurden in der Tschechischen Republik direkt 14 Mio. EUR investiert, die ausschließlich für auf Roma ausgerichtete Interventionen im Bereich von Dienstleistungen für soziale Integration und Verbesserung heruntergekommener Wohnsiedlungen in sechs Städten (Brno, Ostrava Prerov, Orlova, Most and Kladno) bestimmt sind. Die Maßnahmen des Europäischen Sozialfonds umfassen zwei hauptsächlich auf die Integration der Roma gerichtete Interventionsbereiche. Im operationellen Programm (OP) „Humanressourcen und Beschäftigung“ gibt es den Bereich 3.2 Unterstützung für die soziale Integration von Roma-Wohnsiedlungen mit einer Mittelzuweisung von ca. 47 Mio. EUR. Das Operationelle Programm „Erhalt der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit durch Bildung“ umfasst einen mit 127,3 Mio. EUR ausgestatteten Bereich 1.2 Chancengleichheit für Kinder und Schüler, auch mit besonderen pädagogischen Bedürfnissen.

Die Kommission wird vor dem Sommer über die Fortschritte bei der Umsetzung der nationalen Strategien zur Integration der Roma berichten. Auf der Grundlage der Bewertung der größten Engpässe in den nationalen Strategien arbeitet die Kommission derzeit an einem Vorschlag für eine Empfehlung zur Integration der Roma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002118/13
to the Commission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Housing situation of the Roma in the Czech Republic, in particular as regards the implementation of the EU Framework and the National Roma Integration Strategy in the Czech Republic

On 5 April 2011, the Commission adopted an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020. This framework called on Member States to prepare or revise National Roma Integration Strategies.

In its communication of 21 May 2012 concerning the implementation of the EU Framework, the Commission stated that the Czech Republic had taken measures to provide access to housing, including social housing.

What is the Commission's view of the fact that the town of Ústí nad Labem has offered places to 36 people belonging to the Roma minority in residential accommodation that is filthy and has neither an electricity nor a hot water supply?

How much in the way of resources from national sources and from EU sources has the Czech Republic included in its plan for the integration of the Roma?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission is in contact with Czech authorities and is closely following the situation in the town Ústí nad Labem.

The Roma Integration Strategy submitted by the Czech Republic was assessed by the Commission. The report of the Commission on the assessment of all the strategies and the gaps identified was published on 21 May 2012.

The Commission has no information regarding confirmed budgetary allocations for Roma integration from the Czech national sources. The European Regional Development Fund has directly invested EUR 14 million in the Czech Republic exclusively for Roma oriented interventions in the fields of services for social integration and improvement of degraded housing estates in six towns (Brno, Ostrava Prerov, Orlova, Most and Kladno). As concerns the European Social Fund, there are two areas of intervention that are primarily focused on Roma integration. In the Operational Programme (OP) Human Resources and Employment there is an area 3.2 Support for Social Integration of Roma Localities with an allocation of app. EUR 47 million. In the OP Education for Competitiveness there is an area 1.2 Equal Opportunities for Children and Pupils, including those with special educational needs with an allocation of EUR 127.3 million.

The Commission will report on the progress on the implementation of the national Roma integration strategies before the summer. Based on the assessment of the main bottlenecks in national strategies, the Commission is working on a proposal for a recommendation on Roma integration.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-002120/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(26 februari 2013)

Angående: Varför har kommissionen inte rekommenderat funktionsseparering inom telekommunikationsbranschen?

Kommissionen offentliggjorde i december 2012 ett förslag till en rekommendation om enhetliga icke-diskriminerande krav och kostnadsmetoder för att främja konkurrens och förbättra miljön för bredbandsinvesteringar ([1]). Syftet med att offentliggöra förslaget var inte att inleda ett offentligt samråd utan att formellt begära ett yttrande från Berec (Organet för europeiska regleringsmyndigheter för elektronisk kommunikation), i enlighet med det förfarande som fastställs i artikel 19 i direktiv 2002/21/EG.

Förslaget till rekommendation väcker dock viktiga frågor om kommissionens strategi för befintliga telekommunikationsnät av den gamla typen och nästa generations nät. Särskilt idén om att släppa efter på grossistpriskontrollen och fixera priserna för kopparaccessnätet till nuvarande nivåer verkar inte stå i proportion till de svaga icke-diskrimineringskrav som fastställs i förslaget.

Enligt de senaste siffrorna från kommissionen innehar de etablerade operatörerna i Europa fortfarande en marknadsandel på över 50 procent av bredbandsåtkomsten i slutkundsledet. Kommissionen har vid flera tillfällen det senaste årtiondet konstaterat att en eller flera etablerade europeiska telekomoperatörer har utnyttjat sin dominerande position. Den mest konkurrenskraftiga marknaden för bredbandsåtkomst i Europa är den i Storbritannien, den enda medlemsstat där den nationella tillsynsmyndigheten har beslutat att etablerade operatörer funktionellt ska åtskilja sin grossistverksamhet från sin verksamhet i slutkundsledet och även tillhandahålla grossisttjänster på en fullt likvärdig basis till alla sina grossistkunder, inbegripet det egna detaljistledet.

Varför har kommissionen inte övervägt att i sitt förslag till rekommendation ta med kravet på funktionsseparering inom telekommunikationsbranschen? Skulle inte en funktionsseparering garantera större transparens och den mest vattentäta tillämpningen av icke-diskrimineringsprincipen? Funktionsseparering har i Storbritannien lett till en mycket konkurrenskraftig marknad och stora fördelar för konsumenterna. Varför byggde kommissionen inte sitt förslag till rekommendation på de nationella tillsynsmyndigheternas bästa metoder?

Svar från Neelie Kroes på kommissionens vägnar
(8 april 2013)

De nationella regleringsmyndigheterna kan, i enlighet med artikel 13a i tillträdesdirektivet införa funktionell separation för operatörer av elektroniska kommunikationsnät. I direktivet beskrivs funktionell separation som en undantagsåtgärd. Det ligger således i sakens natur att funktionell separation bör tillämpas med försiktighet, då det är fråga om en långtgående, kostsam och oåterkallelig åtgärd. Funktionell separation bör därför ses som en sista utväg och kan vara lämplig i de fall då andra skyldigheter (som skyldigheter beträffande tillträde, icke-diskriminering och priskontroll) inte har fungerat när det gäller att skapa effektiv konkurrens och det har identifierats stora och bestående konkurrensproblem.

Varje regleringsåtgärd ska grunda sig på proportionalitetsprincipen, dvs. åtgärden måste vara nödvändig för att nå man ska kunna uppnå ett visst mål och det finns inga mindre betungande sätt att uppnå målet. Kommissionen anser att ett strikt genomförande av icke-diskrimineringsskyldigheten utifrån en strategi för likvärdiga proportionerliga insatser tillsammans med andra villkor (som teknisk och ekonomisk replikbarhet, lämplig kostnadsredovisningsmetod och betydande konkurrenstryck på marknaden) är tillräckliga för att de nationella regleringsmyndigheterna ska kunna tillåta viss prisflexibilitet. Sådana villkor är mindre betungande än funktionell separation, men ger samma resultat.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=1254 (på engelska).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002120/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Why has the Commission not recommended functional separation in the telecommunications industry?

In December 2012, the Commission published a draft recommendation on consistent non-discrimination obligations and costing methodologies to promote competition and enhance the broadband investment environment ([1]). The aim of publishing the draft recommendation was not to launch a public consultation but to formally seek the opinion of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), in line with the procedure laid down in Article 19 of Directive 2002/21/EC.

The draft recommendation does, however, raise important questions about the Commission's approach regarding access to existing legacy telecommunications networks and next-generation networks. In particular, the relaxation of wholesale price controls and the fixation of copper access prices to existing levels do not seem to be effectively balanced by the poor non-discrimination obligations laid down in the draft recommendation.

According to recent Commission figures, incumbent operators in Europe still have a market share of more than 50% for retail broadband access. On several occasions in the last decade, one or more European incumbent telecom operators were found by the Commission to have abused their dominant position. The most competitive market for broadband access in Europe is the UK, the only Member State where the national regulator has decided that the incumbent operator should functionally separate its wholesale and retail businesses and also provide wholesale services on a fully equivalent basis to all of its wholesale customers, including its own retail arm.

In its draft recommendation, why did the Commission not consider including the requirement of functional separation in exchange for price relaxation? Would functional separation not guarantee increased transparency and the most watertight implementation of the non-discrimination principle? Functional separation has delivered a very competitive market and enormous consumer benefits in the UK. Why did the Commission's draft recommendation not build on the best practice of national regulatory authorities (NRAs)?

Answer given by Mrs Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The remedy of functional separation can be imposed on electronic communications network operators by national regulatory authorities (NRAs) in accordance with Article 13a of the Access Directive. The directive describes functional separation as an 'exceptional measure'. By its very nature it should be applied with caution, as it is very far reaching, costly to implement and irreversible. Therefore it is a remedy of last resort, which may be appropriate where other obligations (such as for example access, non-discrimination, price control) have failed to achieve effective competition and there are important and persistent competition problems identified.

Any regulatory remedy must be based on the principle of proportionality, i.e. it must be necessary to achieve the aim, and there cannot be any less onerous way of doing it. The Commission believes that a strict implementation of non-discrimination, based on an Equivalence of Input approach where proportionate, together with other conditions (technical and economic replicability, appropriate costing methodology as well as the presence of significant competitive constraints in the market) can be sufficient for NRAs to allow certain pricing flexibility. On the other hand, such conditions are less onerous than functional separation, in achieving the same results.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=1254.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-002121/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(26 februari 2013)

Angående: Vem ska utarbeta det första förslaget till plurilateralt avtal?

I sitt pressmeddelande av den 15 februari 2013 ([1]) tillkännagav kommissionen att man kommer att inleda plurilaterala handelsförhandlingar om tjänster, i vilka inledningsvis 21 partner deltar.

Vilken av dessa inledande förhandlingspartner kommer att vara ansvarig för att utarbeta det första förslaget till plurilateralt avtal?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(29 april 2013)

Ingen förhandlingspart har fått ansvar för att utarbeta det första utkastet till ett plurilateralt avtal om tjänster. Alla parter kan lägga fram förslag som underlag till förhandlingsparternas fortsatta diskussioner. EU lade fram ett första förslag till delar av texten den 18 mars 2013. De kommande veckorna väntas andra parter lägga fram förslag som kompletterar eller ändrar EU:s förslag.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=870

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002121/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Who will draw up the initial draft plurilateral agreement?

In its press release of 15 February 2013 ([1]) the Commission announced the launch of plurilateral trade negotiations on services, initially involving 21 parties.

Can the Commission state which one of these initial negotiating parties will be responsible for drawing up the initial draft text of the agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2013)

No negotiating party has been given the responsibility for drawing up the initial text of the plurilateral services agreement. Rather, each party is free to submit text proposals as a basis for further discussions among the negotiating parties. In this context, the EU tabled a first proposal for parts of a possible future text on 18 March 2013 for further discussion. It is expected that other parties will submit own text proposals complementing or amending the EU proposal in the coming weeks.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=870.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002122/13
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: European Public Prosecutor

What work was carried out in 2010 in relation to the establishment and functioning of a European Public Prosecutor by either (1) the Commission, (2) any agency of the European Union, or (3) any group acting as agent for the Commission?

If work was carried out, what was the nature and cost of that work, and will the Commission provide a breakdown of how taxpayers' money was thus expended?

What work was carried out in 2011 in relation to the establishment and functioning of a European Public Prosecutor by either (1) the Commission, (2) any agency of the European Union, or (3) any group acting as agent for the Commission?

If work was carried out, what was the nature and cost of that work, and will the Commission provide a breakdown of how taxpayers' money was thus expended?

What work was carried out in 2012 in relation to the establishment and functioning of a European Public Prosecutor by either (1) The Commission, (2) any agency of the European Union, or (3) any group acting as agent for the Commission?

If work was carried out, what was the nature and cost of that work, and will the Commission provide a breakdown of how taxpayers' money was thus expended?

What work has been carried out in 2013 in relation to the establishment and functioning of a European Public Prosecutor by either (1) the Commission, (2) any agency of the European Union, or (3) any group acting as agent for the Commission?

If work was carried out, what was the nature and cost of that work, and will the Commission provide a breakdown of how taxpayers' money was thus expended?

In relation to any work carried out by an agency of the EU in each of the years 2010-2013, will the Commission identify that agency?

In relation to any work carried out by a group acting as agent for the Commission in each of the years 2010-2013, will the Commission identify that group? In addition, will the Commission identify the members of that group?

If a group has been acting as agent for the Commission in this matter, will the Commission specify, for each year from 2010 to 2013, the amount of taxpayers' money given (a) to the group as a whole, and (b) to individual members thereof, identifying whether these amounts are grants, expenses or allowances?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

In relation to the establishment and functioning of the European Public Prosecutor, no work was carried out in 2010 and 2011 by the Commission. The Commission is not aware of work of 'any agency of the European Union' in this area in 2010-2012. The Commission is not familiar with the notion of 'any group acting as agent for the Commission'. According to its work programme for 2013, the Commission is planning to adopt a proposal on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office in 2013. Such a legislative proposal has to be accompanied by an Impact Assessment. The preparatory study for this work started in 2012.

In relation to the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, the Commission issued in May 2011 a communication on the protection of the financial interests of the EU by criminal law and by administrative investigations ([1]). In it the Commission set out the line guiding its work in the protection of EU public money against all forms of criminal conduct, including fraud. This included a strengthened institutional framework to ensure that taxpayers' money is equivalently protected across the Union by enhanced criminal prosecution making full use of the opportunities enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty.

Since then the Commission has been consulting widely with the general public and relevant stakeholders via online questionnaires and meetings. Throughout 2012 and at the beginning of 2013, a number of discussions rounds were organised, notably consultation meetings with Prosecutors General and Directors of Public Prosecution from Member States, with the Supreme Judicial Courts of Member States, with several national Parliaments ([2]), with defence lawyers and with the Commission Expert Group on European Criminal Policy.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0293:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) e.g 'The fight against fraud on the EU's finances', 12th report of session 2012-13, European Union Committee, House of Lords.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002123/13
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA) programme — funding query

I have received a query regarding the availability of JESSICA programme funding. My constituent, along with a number of others, is working in a voluntary capacity to help businesses and organisations, and specifically to promote the regeneration of Thomas Street, Dublin 8. The street suffers significant vacant lots, demolished buildings and derelict or semi-derelict housing. A total of 36% of the street is, effectively, non-productive. This group is working on practical and cheap solutions to regenerate the area and is trying to join this up with other national programmes.

Are JESSICA funds under the Regional Development Programme available for such projects, and how might this group be able access these funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

JESSICA is an initiative that promotes the use of financial instruments using ERDF contributions to support urban development and regeneration but it is not a funding programme per se and, accordingly, has no resources to support actual investment projects. JESSICA disposes however, of a technical assistance resource that can be made available to Member States and managing authorities interested in exploring the potential for use of revolving instruments for the sustainable urban development purposes.

Concerning the current period, the ERDF Southern and Eastern Ireland programme is fully committed. No scope therefore exists for investment in the type of regeneration project referred to in the Honourable Member's question.

Following a request submitted by the Irish authorities in 2012, a JESSICA feasibility study is currently being conducted. The conclusions of this study are expected to provide useful material for the Irish authorities in their preparation of the 2014-2020 period for European Structural and Investment Funds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002124/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission efforts to step up work-based learning

The Commission recently presented a new 'Rethinking Education' strategy. What is the Commission doing to encourage EU education ministers to step up their cooperation on work-based learning at Member State and European level?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

As indicated in the communication 'Rethinking Education' ([1]), the Commission will establish a European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA). The Alliance will bring together Member States, social partners, businesses, the Commission and other relevant actors to develop high-quality apprenticeship-type training and excellence in work-based learning.

EAfA will identify a series of practical, well-targeted cooperation measures and actions. Activities will be based around three pillars: the improvement of the quality and the supply of apprenticeship-type systems across the EU through a federation of efforts for targeted knowledge transfer; the change of mind-sets and of the image of apprenticeship-type learning by highlighting and promoting the benefits of apprenticeship systems; and the smart use of EU resources to support apprenticeships, notably through the European Social Fund, the Youth Employment Initiative, the Lifelong Learning Programme and the Commission proposal 'Erasmus for All'.

([1]) COM(2012) 669 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002125/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission efforts towards tertiary level qualification requirements

It is anticipated that more than a third of jobs in the EU will require tertiary level qualifications in 2020. What steps is the Commission pursuing to increase the quality of education and supply of skills?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

As one of the headline targets within the Europe 2020 process, the Commission works with Member States to increase to 40% by 2020 the share of the young adult population (30-34 year olds) who have third-level or equivalent educational qualifications (current rate: 34.6%).

Based on the communication Rethinking Education ([1]) and related Council Conclusions ([2]) the Commission is focusing on the following measures to support the quality of tertiary education and supply of skills:

— improving the evidence base to better anticipate and match skills supply and demand across sectors (e.g. EU Skills Panorama);

— creation of a European Area for Skills and Qualifications using tools that recognise learning outcomes and thus promote mobility of students and workers;

— follow-up on the work of the Pathfinder group of countries testing ways to achieve the automatic recognition of comparable academic degrees;

— follow-up on the High Level Group on Modernisation of Higher Education, which will in 2013 make recommendations on how to promote quality in teaching and learning;

— a European Skills Passport to help improve the presentation of CVs by bringing together their educational and training certificates online;

— supporting higher quality teaching through better use of ICT and Open Educational Resources;

— a debate at EU level with stakeholders on investment in education and training sectors, including higher education, and ways to increase efficiency of spending;

— exploring with Social Partners the options for upskilling adults in the workforce;

— support to, i.a., partnerships between education, business and research, including within the proposed Marie Skłodowska-Curie and Erasmus for All Programmes 2014-2020 and Horizon 2020.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/com669_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:064:0005:0008:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002126/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU 2020 foreign language knowledge targets

The EU has ambitiously aimed for at least 50% of all 15-year-olds to have knowledge of a first foreign language, and at least 75% should study a second foreign language by 2020. Is the EU on track to accomplish these targets?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The European benchmarks for language competences proposed by the European Commission in its recent Communication 'Rethinking Education' ([1]) are based on (1) the findings of the first European Survey on Language Competences ([2]) published in 2012; and (2) the objective to improve basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age, established by the Heads of State and of Government in Barcelona in 2002.

According to the results of the Survey, only 42% of tested pupils could be considered 'independent users' in their first foreign language, and a large number of pupils (14%) did not even achieve the level of basic users. Furthermore, the data collected through Eurostat show that the education systems of the EU fall short of the Barcelona objective of teaching two or more foreign languages: only 40% of pupils in lower secondary education get such language teaching.

To help remedy this situation, the European Commission has proposed a set of measures ([3]) to be adopted at European and national level concerning the quality of teaching, the quantity of language learning opportunities offered, the focus of language teaching, the guidance offered to pupils and families and the monitoring of progress.

The second round of the European Survey is foreseen for 2016-17.

([1]) COM(2012) 669 final and SWD (2012) 372 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/languages/eslc/index.html
([3]) SWD (2012) 372 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002127/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission response to horse meat scandal

What steps is the Commission considering to step up the testing of food products in response to the recent scandal involving horse meat being falsely sold as beef?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

Deceptive practices can be eliminated by appropriate enforcement of EU legislation mainly by means of regular official controls by national competent authorities based on appropriate risk analysis and the imposition of effective dissuasive sanctions, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls ([1]).

The Commission is actively coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned. On the basis of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, the Commission recently adopted a recommendation ([2]) which calls for EU-wide controls at retail level to identify the scale of the fraudulent practices as to the presence of beef as well as to detect possible residues of phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug, whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by mid-April 2013.

The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will also aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

([2]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002128/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Next step towards Trans-Adriatic Pipeline

Following the 13 February 2013 signature of the intergovernmental agreement in preparation of the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline project, what steps is the Commission now considering in order to continue this ambitious project?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

With respect to the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline project (TAP), the Commission's actions focus on ensuring that the project contributes to EU energy policy goals and complies with EC law. The Commission is currently reviewing the proposals of the competent national authorities regarding the project's possible exemptions from some internal market rules, in accordance with Article 36 of the Gas Directive 2009/73/EC. The Commission decides on their compatibility with EC law within two months' time from their submission by the respective Member States. Other Commission activities concerning the TAP-related intergovernmental agreement (IGA) were covered in detail in the Commission's reply to the Written Question E-001714/13 by Ms Kolarska-Bobinska.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002129/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU-Japan discussions on non-tariff barriers

If negotiations between the EU and Japan come to a successful conclusion, it is estimated that the EU's GDP could increase by almost 1% , and its exports to Japan by one-third. What progress is the EU making in its discussions with Japan, particularly in the area of non-tariff barriers?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

Negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the EU and Japan have just been officially launched and are to effectively start with a first round in Brussels on 15-19 April 2013.

It is therefore too early to report on any progress made in the negotiations with Japan. But it should be noted that in recent months Japan has given some positive signs regarding its willingness and commitment to address certain specific non-tariff barriers already before the negotiations have officially started. For example, Japan has recently allowed imports of beef from animals younger than 30 months from France and the Netherlands, granted liquor licenses to European operators that had applied for them, approved one further food additive on the list of those requested by the EU and begun to apply two further United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Regulations in the automotive sector.

Of course, there remains a lot to be done by Japan to address non-tariff barriers that are negatively affecting the EU's exports and this will certainly constitute a key area in the EU-Japan FTA negotiations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002130/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU progress with Japan on a proposed Global Partnership Agreement

What progress is the EU making in its discussions with Japan on a proposed Global Partnership Agreement, which if successful would be the first ever legally binding document between Japan and the EU to comprehensively cover political and security areas?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

On 25 March, Presidents Van Rompuy and Barroso agreed with Japan PM Abe to launch the negotiations for a comprehensive agreement with Japan covering political and sectoral cooperation, as well as our cooperation in addressing regional and global challenges. The first round of negotiations is envisaged mid-April.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002131/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Russia's G20 Presidency and progress on Russia-EU visa-free arrangement

With Russia presiding over the G20 in 2013, is the EU building on this opportunity to help develop negotiations on a Russia-EU visa-free arrangement for short-term travel?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The EU-Russia visa free dialogue is now ongoing since 2007 and the visa-free travel is a common objective shared by both the EU and Russia. During the December 2011 EU-Russia summit both parties agreed on the list of Common Steps towards visa free short-term travel of Russian and EU citizens ([1]).

The implementation of the Common Steps is ongoing and a lot of information on the issues covered by the list has been exchanged both in written form as well as during expert missions organised both in Russia and in the EU.

Once the implementation of the Common Steps is completed the Parties will decide on starting negotiations on an EU-Russia visa waiver agreement.

The implementation of Common Steps is monitored under the EU-Russia Visa Dialogue. The process is substance-based and it is not linked to the Russian presidency of G20.

([1]) Document available at http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/11/st18/st18217.en11.pdf or http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/russia/docs/common_steps_towards_visa_free_short_term_travel_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002132/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU's relationship with the Single Economic Space of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan

What relationship does the EU have with the Single Economic Space encompassing Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, which will be superseded in 2015 by the Eurasian Economic Union?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The EU is following closely the development of the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union and its planned transformation into a Eurasian Economic Union. The EU welcomes regional economic integration schemes as long as they contribute to trade liberalisation and are based on a voluntary approach. A Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC) has been set up and has the task to create an environment conducive to the smooth operation of the Customs union and Single economic space. While not excluding technical informal contacts with the EAEC in its areas of competence, primarily to solve trade irritants and to enhance the alignment of the EAEC's rule-making with the EU regulatory framework, the EU continues to have a formal relationship with each of the countries which are members of the Customs Union, and not with the Customs Union as such.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002133/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission input into the Council of Europe's 'cyber hate' campaign

Has the Commission consulted with the Council of Europe regarding its youth-driven campaign to tackle 'cyber hate'?

Answer given by Ms Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission has not been associated in the preparation and implementation of the campaign, which is a campaign of the Council of Europe, which the Honourable Member refers to.

A link with this campaign may be made in the context of a workshop foreseen by the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership and scheduled for the second semester 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002134/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU efforts to ensure equal terms for persons with disabilities

There are 80 million European citizens with disabilities, representing 15% of the overall EU population. Does the Commission have any forthcoming proposals for legislation ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities in society on equal terms with other citizens?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001562/2013 for both the legislative action and the longer term strategy to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in society on equal terms with other citizens.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002135/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Snus and Swedish solutions to combat smoking popularity

Sweden is said to have the lowest rate of lung cancer and one of the lowest rates of mouth cancer in Europe. However, under current Commission proposals the Swedish smoke-free tobacco product 'snus' is set to continue to be banned. Given that 'snus' is said to have helped people stop smoking and to have aided smokers in reducing their smoking tendencies, has the Commission conducted a measured opinion on 'snus' and its potential effect at discouraging smoking? Furthermore, given the positive statistical evidence linking Sweden to some of the lowest smoking related cancer rates in Europe, has the Commission considered carrying out a case study of Sweden to come up with possible solutions to combat the popularity of smoking throughout Europe?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission is aware that the adverse health effects of snus may differ from those of other tobacco products. However, this does not mean that snus is a safe or a harmless product. Snus is addictive and has adverse health effects, as confirmed by the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks in 2008. The Committee concluded that all smokeless tobacco products contain carcinogenic substances, albeit at different levels, and are associated with a number of adverse health effects. It further concluded that smokeless tobacco in all its forms can cause cancer, increases the risk of death after myocardial infarction and is addictive. The Swedish National Institute of Public Health also supports the current ban on snus on the grounds of its negative impact on health and high level of dependency.

Already before 1992, a number of Member States had banned the product taking into account its significant growth potential and attractiveness for young people. In the public consultation preceding the adoption of the legislative proposal, most Member States rejected the idea of lifting the ban on snus. Snus could develop into an entry gate for tobacco/nicotine addiction and lead into smoking and dual use. Snus has also not proven beyond doubt its capability as a smoking cessation product either.

On this basis, therefore, the proposal maintains the ban on snus in order to prevent the introduction of this product into the internal market.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002136/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Monitoring of European Research Area chairs

One of the stated aims of the Commission pilot project to set up EU-funded chairs at universities in less-developed regions of Europe is to ensure that European Research Area chairs foster transparent and merit-based recruitment, gender equality and external peer assessments for career development. What steps is the Commission taking to monitor such practices?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

As part of its strategy to close the research and innovation divide the Commission is proposing 'ERA Chairs' as a new measure under Horizon 2020. The action will attract outstanding researchers to institutions with a clear potential for research excellence. The ERA Chairs will support these institutions to develop, in a particular field, the level of excellence required to successfully compete internationally, hereby effectively widening participation.

The Commission published a pilot call under FP7 ([1]). Eligible universities and research organisations can submit a proposal which includes a strategy and roadmap to facilitate structural change inspired by ERA best practice based principles, which underpin research excellence, including those actions aimed to foster open recruitment, gender balance and peer review.

The Commission signs with the successful institutions a Grant Agreement in which the agreed measures and actions will be specified. Specific provisions are foreseen to ensure the selection of the ERA Chair holder through an open, transparent and merit based recruitment procedure. His/her selection is the first deliverable and institutions shall provide a report on the selection procedure. Institutions shall also report every 18 months on the state of implementation and a mid-term review will be conducted after 30 months. The Commission will assess at all stages if the deliverables and milestones, have been attained.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/call_FP7?callIdentifier=FP7-ERAChairs-PilotCall-2013&specificProgram=CAPACITIES#wlp_call_FP7

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002137/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission proposals for sanctions on digital environment companies

70% of Europeans are concerned that their data is being used for a purpose other than that for which it was collected. Digital environment companies often do not comply with existing law. What does the Commission propose to do to encourage stronger sanctions for non-complying companies?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

The Commission's Proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([1]) under the examination now of both the European Parliament and Council reinforces the data protection principles set out in Directive 95/46/EC ([2]). The existing principle of purpose limitation is reaffirmed in Article 5 of the proposal and companies will be obliged to inform individuals as clearly, understandably and transparently as possible about how their personal data will be used and for what purposes ([3]). Individuals should in the best position to decide what data they share. In addition controllers of personal data must take account of the principle of 'data protection by default', which means that the default settings should be those that provide the most privacy. In order to prevent non-compliance, Article 79 of the proposal foresees harmonised administrative sanctions of up to 2% of the turnover of company, depending on the gravity of the infringement. When the non-compliance relates to information of the individuals, the maximum applicable fine is of 1% of the turnover.

The proposal is under examination of the co-legislators.

([1]) COM(2012) 11 final.
([2]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281 of 23.11.1995, p. 31.
([3]) Article 14 of the proposal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002139/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission monitoring of effects on euro currency

Is the Commission monitoring the effects on the euro currency of Japan's decision to double its inflation target to 2% in a bid to redress years of deflation and of the situation in the United States, where there is a continuation of low interest rates and an asset-buying programme?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The euro's exchange rate floats freely in foreign exchange markets and, over time; it should reflect the economic fundamentals of the euro area as a whole. The exchange rate of the euro against other major currencies has reacted over the past few months to a range of factors, including shifts in the relative economic growth outlook among major economies, differences in monetary policy expectations and swings in markets' risk assessment. At present, the euro's real effective exchange rate (trade-weighted and adjusted by inflation differentials with the euro area's main trading partners) is in line with its long term average.

The Commission would also like to recall the commitment that G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors reached in February in Moscow: 'We reiterate our commitments to move more rapidly toward more market-determined exchange rate systems and exchange rate flexibility to reflect underlying fundamentals, and avoid persistent exchange rate misalignments and in this regard, work more closely with one another so we can grow together. We reiterate that excess volatility of financial flows and disorderly movements in exchange rates have adverse implications for economic and financial stability. We will refrain from competitive devaluation. We will not target our exchange rates for competitive purposes, will resist all forms of protectionism and keep our markets open.'

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002140/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission's view on negative campaign against EU migrants by UK Government

It has been revealed that the UK Government is considering a negative campaign to dissuade Romanian and Bulgarian migrants from moving to the UK. Does the Commission have a view on this?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

Free movement of workers is one of the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the EU Treaty and is an essential pillar of the EU's Single Market. The restrictions regarding the free movement of Romanian and Bulgarian workers will come to an end on 31 December 2013. After that date, Romanian and Bulgarian workers will be able to exercise their fundamental right without any further restrictions.

Free movement is a powerful and positive symbol of what Europe offers to the individual EU citizen. It is also beneficial to Member States' economies. The European Union and its Member States bear the responsibility to ensure that this freedom is applied in practice and to stand firm against any actions which could undermine this fundamental freedom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002141/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission's monitoring of judicial and media law changes in Hungary

To what extent is the Commission monitoring current judicial and media law changes in Hungary, following attempts in 2012 by the Hungarian Government to assert excessive control over appointments to the key positions of president of the national judicial office and president of the national media authority?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission is following closely the current judicial changes in Hungary, in particular those included in the Fourth Amendment to the Hungarian Fundamental Law adopted by the Hungarian Parliament on 11 March 2013. This constitutional amendment contains several provisions which raise concerns with respect to the principle of the rule of law, EC law and Council of Europe standards. The Commission and the Council of Europe (Venice Commission) are currently making a detailed assessment of these amendments.

The Commission is also following closely the current changes related to the media law in Hungary. After the adoption of the new media law the Commission agreed with the Hungarian authorities on several modifications to bring it in line with the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. These amendments were adopted. The Commission continues to monitor the situation of media freedom and pluralism in Hungary as well as in other Member States and is aware of the concerns raised regarding the independence of the Media Authority. Media freedom and media pluralism are key fundaments of democratic societies. The independent High Level Group was set up by the Digital Agenda Commissioner to reflect exactly on these issues. It provided its report in January 2013 with 30 recommendations. The Commission is currently reflecting how to follow this up and best use its competences to ensure respect for media freedom and pluralism in all Member States. In that view the Commission has recently launched two public consultations on media freedom and pluralism and on the independence of audiovisual regulatory bodies.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002142/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission response to 'One Billion Rising'

Following the successful 'One Billion Rising' initiative that took place on Valentine's Day to raise opposition to violence against women and girls, is the Commission likely to consider any fresh approaches to build on the public attitude and the position of Parliament in encouraging an end to violence against women and girls wherever such events may occur around the world?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

On 6 March 2013 the Commission launched a restricted call for proposals (EUR 3.7 million from PROGRESS) to co-fund information and communication activities on violence against women (VAW). Through this call, the Commission will support projects developed by Member States and their partners aimed at: (1) spreading a clear message about zero tolerance to all forms of VAW; (2) informing women and girls victims of violence about their right to a life free of violence; (3) informing, communicating and giving training on female genital mutilation (FGM).

Through the Daphne III programme, the Commission will also co-fund civil society organisation's projects 'that develop new and innovative awareness raising activities and materials aimed at preventing VAW'.

The Commission also recently launched the 'zero tolerance of FGM' campaign on its social media.

In its development cooperation, the Commission supports approximately 200 projects and programmes worldwide on fostering women's rights. In Ethiopia, a regional circus is touring to raise awareness of VAW with good results. In Morocco, plays are being carried out on women and men's behaviour to raise awareness of VAW such as rapes. In addition, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Commission is planning a long term programme aimed at addressing violence as a 'social norm'.

The EU is currently elaborating terms of reference for thematic regional campaigns under EU Guidelines on Violence and Discrimination against Women and Girls' on sexual violence and rape in armed conflict. In the memorandum of understanding between EU-UN WOMEN, signed in April 2012, combating sexual and gender based violence is one of our joint priorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002143/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU response in relation to International Whaling Commission

At the 2012 International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting, Denmark, representing Greenland, proposed increasing its whaling for aboriginal subsistence purposes. This was rejected by the IWC. Recently, the EU responded to a letter from Greenland about Greenland's desire to kill whales with the approval of the IWC; its letter was kept private, whereas Australia and Latin American countries have made their reactions available on the IWC website. Why has the EU not published the letter online, and will it consider doing so given the precedent set by other IWC members?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The EU is not a member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Given its observer status the EU letter to Greenland dated 14 December 2012, to which the Honourable Member refers, was signed and sent by the Cypriot IWC Commissioner on behalf of EU IWC Commissioners.

Releasing the letter would require the agreement of the Council and would have to be handled by the Presidency. I would therefore refer the Honourable Member to the Council and Presidency.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002144/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(26 février 2013)

Objet: Traçabilité du poisson au sein de l'Union

Une étude réalisée par l'ONG Oceana entre 2010 et 2012 a révélé que, sur 1200 échantillons de poisson prélevés dans 21 états des États-Unis, un tiers était mal étiqueté, des poissons étant vendus sous le nom d'autres poissons.

Au moment où l'affaire de la viande de cheval secoue l'Union européenne, des interrogations légitimes pourraient se poser vis-à-vis du poisson consommé en Europe.

Quelle est la réaction de la Commission vis-à-vis de l'étude susmentionnée? Des études comparables ont-elles été menées au niveau européen afin d'en savoir plus sur la fiabilité du système de traçabilité du poisson en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(7 mai 2013)

La Commission a pris connaissance de l'étude menée par Oceana à propos des produits issus de la pêche et de l'aquaculture commercialisés aux États-Unis. La Commission est également consciente qu'il existe des risques de fraude dans l'étiquetage de ces produits au sein de l'Union européenne.

Le rapport d'analyse d'impact ([1]) relatif à la réforme en cours de la politique commune de la pêche et, notamment, de l'organisation commune des marchés dans le secteur de la pêche et de l'aquaculture a démontré que les consommateurs de l'UE demandent de plus en plus à être informés sur les produits commercialisés dans l'UE.

Dans ce contexte, la Commission a proposé d'afficher d'une manière claire et distincte la désignation commerciale des espèces, la zone de prise ou de collecte, la date et la méthode de production (pêche ou aquaculture). En ce qui concerne les produits préparés et conservés, la Commission a proposé d'inclure la désignation commerciale, la zone de prise ou de collecte et la méthode de production.

Des contrôles sont effectués par les autorités nationales compétentes. En outre, la Commission soutient toutes les initiatives destinées à améliorer la traçabilité et l'étiquetage des produits de la pêche et de l'aquaculture. Ainsi, la Commission a proposé que le nouveau Fonds pour les affaires maritimes et la pêche fournisse des moyens financiers afin de garantir le respect des obligations en matière de mise en œuvre adéquate et de contrôle telles qu'elles ont été établies par le règlement de contrôle relatif à la traçabilité des produits débarqués et/ou commercialisés dans l'UE ([2]).

([1]) COM(2011)416 final.
([2]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif au Fonds européen pour les affaires maritimes et la pêche abrogeant le règlement (CE) n° 1198/2006 du Conseil, le règlement (CE) n° 861/2006 du Conseil et le règlement (CE) n° XXX/2011 du Conseil sur la politique maritime intégrée — COM(2011)804.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002144/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Traceability of fish sold in the EU

A study carried out by the NGO Oceana between 2010 and 2012 revealed that of a total of 1200 samples of fish on sale tested in 21 US states one-third had been mislabelled, in that varieties of fish were being sold under the wrong name.

With the horsemeat scandal currently rocking the EU, legitimate questions could be raised about fish consumed in Europe.

What is the Commission's response to Oceana's investigation? Have any similar studies been carried out at European level to evaluate the reliability of the fish traceability system in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the study conducted by Oceana which relates to fishery and aquaculture products marketed in the US. The Commission is also aware that there are risks of fraud in labeling of these products within the European Union.

The Impact Assessment report ([1]) for the ongoing reform of the common fisheries policy and in particular of the Common organisation of the fishery and aquaculture markets showed that EU consumers are more and more demanding in terms of information for products marketed in the EU.

In this context, the Commission proposed to display in a clear and distinct manner the commercial designation of the species, the catch or harvest area, the date and the production method (fish or farm). For prepared and preserved products, the Commission proposed to include the commercial designation, the catch or harvest area and the production method.

In addition to the controls carried out by the competent national authorities, the Commission supports all initiatives aimed at improving the traceability and labeling of fishery and aquaculture products. Indeed, the Commission proposed that the new Maritime and Fisheries Fund provides financial means to ensure the adequate implementation and control obligations as established by the Control Regulation to trace products landed and/or marketed in the EU ([2]).

([1]) COM(2011) 416 final.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 and Council Regulation(EC) No 861/2006 and Council Regulation No XXX/2011 on integrated maritime policy — COM(2011) 804.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002145/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(26 février 2013)

Objet: Règles de sécurité dans les aéroports

Le 7 février dernier, un enfant de 12 ans a réussi à s'envoler à bord d'un avion reliant Bruxelles à Malaga, sans aucun papier d'identité sur lui et sans billet d'avion. Cet enfant a donc réussi à entrer dans un avion sans carte d'embarquement et à échapper au décompte des passagers avant le décollage de l'appareil.

Cet enfant n'a été repéré par un agent de sécurité qu'une fois dans l'enceinte de l'aéroport de Malaga, peu de temps après son arrivée en territoire espagnol.

Ce fait divers démontre une nouvelle fois qu'il est indispensable de s'assurer de la bonne application des mesures de sécurité dans nos aéroports. Les contrôles de sécurité dans les aéroports peuvent et doivent être renforcés, puisque cet enfant a pu passer les portiques de sécurité de l'aéroport de Bruxelles pour rejoindre la zone d'embarquement.

Cet exemple montre par ailleurs les limites de l'actuelle législation européenne en vigueur depuis 2012, qui n'oblige plus les compagnies aériennes à contrôler l'identité des passagers voyageant dans l'espace Schengen. Suite à cette nouvelle législation, une personne qui voyage sans bagage à enregistrer peut prendre l'avion sans subir le moindre contrôle d'identité.

Cet incident met donc en évidence certaines failles dans la sûreté aérienne européenne et suscite un doute quant à l'efficacité des contrôles de sécurité dans certains aéroports.

L'identification des personnes à bord des appareils est également un sujet sensible en cas d'accident lors d'un vol, afin de connaître la liste exacte des passagers présents au moment des faits, ou dans le but de communiquer une liste précise de victimes.

La Commission compte-t-elle utiliser les conclusions de l'enquête relative à cet incident pour améliorer la législation et les règles de sécurité en vigueur dans les aéroports européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(16 avril 2013)

Les informations dont la Commission dispose sur cet incident indiquent que l'enfant de 12 ans a réussi à passer le point de contrôle initial des cartes d'embarquement donnant accès à la partie non publique du terminal, ainsi que le point de contrôle final à l'embarquement. Rappelons toutefois que cet enfant a fait l'objet d'une inspection complète lors de son passage au point de contrôle de sûreté et qu'il n'a, par conséquent et grâce aux mesures de sécurité en place, jamais représenté une menace pour l'aviation civile.

En vertu du règlement (UE) nº 185/2010 ([1]), la carte d'embarquement d'un passager doit être contrôlée avant de lui accorder l'accès aux zones de sûreté à accès réglementé d'un aéroport et elle doit être présentée au cours du processus d'embarquement afin de veiller à ce que tous les passagers qui ont enregistré un bagage de soute soient également présents à l'embarquement. Par ailleurs, l'annexe III («EU-OPS») du règlement (CEE) nº 3922/91 du Conseil ([2]) et son OPS 1.105, son OPS 1.135 et son OPS 1.1045, appendice 1, prévoient des exigences en matière de transport non autorisé de personnes, d'établissement de listes des passagers par les transporteurs aériens et de procédures de sécurité lors de l'embarquement, y compris des exigences de formation correspondantes. Étant donné que l'enfant a réussi à éviter les points de contrôle des cartes d'embarquement, auxquels est également contrôlée l'identité des passagers, l'ajout d'exigences en matière de contrôle de l'identité d'un passager devant se présenter à l'embarquement n'aurait pas permis d'éviter cet incident. La Commission n'envisage donc pas d'élaborer des contraintes législatives supplémentaires sur la base des conclusions tirées de cet incident.

La Commission sait que les autorités belges examinent cet incident afin de tirer les conclusions qui s'imposent au niveau local.

([1]) JO L 55 du 5.3.2010, p. 1.
([2]) JO L 373 du 31.12.1991, p. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002145/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Airport security rules

On 7 February 2013 a 12-year-old boy flew from Brussels to Malaga without a ticket or an ID document, after managing to board the aircraft without a boarding card and go unnoticed during the passenger count prior to take-off.

He was only spotted by airport security staff after entering the airport terminal in Malaga.

This incident highlights once again how vital it is to ensure that security measures are properly implemented in our airports. Airport security checks can and should be stepped up, given that the child in question managed to get through security at Brussels airport and enter the departure lounge.

The incident also highlights the limited effectiveness of the European legislation that came into force as of 2012, which no longer requires airlines to check the identity of passengers travelling within the Schengen area. These new rules mean that passengers travelling with only hand luggage are able to board a plane without undergoing a single identity check.

The case in question thus exposes shortcomings in European aviation security and raises questions about the effectiveness of security checks at certain airports.

Accurate passenger lists become extremely important in the event of an accident — airlines need to know exactly who was on board the aircraft when it occurred so that, if necessary, they can release the names of people killed or injured.

Does the Commission intend to draw on the conclusions of the inquiry into the incident in order to improve legislation and the security measures currently in force in European airports?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The information available to the Commission on this incident indicate that the 12-year old child managed to pass through the initial boarding pass control leading to the non-public part of the terminal as well as the final control during the boarding of the aircraft. However, the child did undergo full security screening at the security checkpoint and therefore security measures in place guaranteed that he never posed a threat to civil aviation.

Regulation (EU) No 185/2010 ([1]) requires a verification of the boarding card before giving a passenger access to the security restricted area of an airport as well as during the boarding process to ensure that all passengers that checked-in hold baggage are also boarding the aircraft. In addition, Annex III to Council Regulation (EEC) No 3922/91 ([2]) (the so called EU-OPS) and OPS 1.105, OPS 1.135 and Appendix 1 to OPS 1.1045 thereof include requirements on unauthorised carriage of persons, passenger lists to be established by air carriers and security procedures during boarding including relevant training requirements respectively. Adding requirements for a verification of the identity of a passenger boarding an aircraft would not have prevented the incident as the child managed to bypass the boarding pass controls where such an identity check would be carried out. The Commission therefore does not consider developing additional legislative requirements based on the conclusions drawn from this incident.

The Commission is aware that the Belgian authorities are analysing the incident in order to draw the appropriate conclusions at local level.

([1]) OJ L55, 5.3.2010, p.1.
([2]) OJ L 373, 31.12.1991, p.4.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002146/13
aan de Raad
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(26 februari 2013)

Betreft: Grenscontroles zijn nodig

Op zondagavond 24 februari 2013 heeft het NOS Achtuurjournaal bericht over het toenemend succes van de mobiele grenscontroles door de Koninklijke Marechaussee ([1]). Deze mobiele grenscontroles zijn in 2011 ingevoerd. In vergelijking met 2011 zijn in 2012 aan de Nederlandse grenzen meer illegalen aangehouden (1 733 tegen 1 499), meer mensen aangehouden i.v.m. mensenhandel (110 tegen 97) en meer mensen i.v.m. mensensmokkel (141 tegen 86). Deze successen zijn behaald terwijl de marechaussee werkt met de door de EU opgelegde strenge beperkingen ten aanzien van de duur van mobiel toezicht en de te gebruiken hulpmiddelen.

Ik heb al eerder vragen aan de Raad gesteld over grensoverschrijdende misdaad (E-003601/2012, E-005999/2012 en E-008421/2012). Bij deze eerdere vragen over de strenge beperkingen die door de EU worden opgelegd aan grenscontroles heeft de Raad de toename van de grensoverschrijdende misdaad telkens gebagatelliseerd.

1. Constateert de Raad een toename van de grensoverschrijdende misdaad?

2. Vindt de Raad dat deze toenemende grensoverschrijdende misdaad zich niet verhoudt t/m de door de EU aan de lidstaten opgelegde beperking van grenscontroles?

De Nederlandse regeringspartijen VVD en PVDA stellen dat de beperkingen die de EU oplegt aan grenscontroles criminelen in de kaart spelen. Zij pleiten voor een versoepeling van de Europese regels.

3. Onderzoekt de Raad een versoepeling van de regels op grenscontroles?

Antwoord
(7 mei 2013)

1. De analyse van data en statistische informatie over grensoverschrijdende misdaad in de EU wordt uitgevoerd door Europol, Frontex en het Europees Waarnemingscentrum voor drugs en drugsverslaving, op basis van inbreng van de lidstaten. Sommige analyses en rapporten worden aan de Raad aangeboden, met name de dreigingsevaluatie voor zware en georganiseerde criminaliteit (SOCTA) van Europol en de jaarlijkse risicoanalyse van Frontex. In de EU SOCTA Executive Summary van 2013 ([2]) staat: *organised crime is an increasingly dynamic and complex phenomenon",* dat *„Organised Crime Groups are increasingly flexible, adaptable and innovative engaging in multiple forms of criminality",* en dat *„criminals act undeterred by geographic boundaries and the most significant groups are now global in terms of their range of activities, operating areas, levels of cooperation, and nationality of membership"*.

De Raad heeft er in 2012 in zijn conclusies betreffende een intensiever en doeltreffender gebruik van het Europol-informatiesysteem (EIS) ([3]) op gewezen dat *„grensoverschrijdende criminaliteit een ernstig en groeiend probleem vormt in de EU"* en dat *„de lidstaten tegenover een sterke stijging komen te staan van het aantal misdrijven dat wordt gepleegd door mobiele dadergroepen en andere criminelen die over de nationale grenzen heen opereren"*.

2. In de SOCTA van 2013 worden een aantal misdaadbevorderende factoren genoemd en wordt aangegeven dat *„Policies enabling the free trade and movement across the EU are exploited by organised crime in trafficking and fraud"*. In deze evaluatie wordt evenwel niet gezegd dat de grensoverschrijdende misdaad „zich onevenredig verhoudt" tot de beperking van grenscontroles, noch is dit aan Raad gemeld door zijn leden of door de bevoegde agentschappen.

3. In zijn zitting van 8 maart 2012 heeft de Raad JBZ ([4]) onderstreept dat *„vrij verkeer een van de grondbeginselen van de Europese Unie is"* en erop gewezen dat *„het afschaffen van controles van personen bij overschrijding van de binnengrenzen in het Schengengebied een van de meest tastbare Europese verwezenlijkingen is"*.

([1]) http:/nos.nl/artikel/477781-strenge-controle-illegalen-werkt.
([2]) 7368/13 JAI 200 COSI 26 ENFOPOL 75 CRIMORG 41 CORDROGUE 27 ENFOCUSTOM 43 PESC 286 JAIEX 20 RLEX 211.
([3]) 10600/12 ENFOPOL 153.
([4]) Conclusies van de Raad betreffende richtsnoeren voor de versterking van de politieke governance in de Schengensamenwerking (7417/12).

Tevens is het Schengengebied gebaseerd op een pakket regels (het Schengenacquis), dat niet alleen de afschaffing van het toezicht aan de binnengrenzen en gemeenschappelijke regels voor het toezicht aan de buitengrenzen omvat, maar ook een gemeenschappelijk visumbeleid, samenwerking tussen politie en justitie, gemeenschappelijke regels voor de terugkeer van illegale migranten en de oprichting van gemeenschappelijke databanken zoals het Schengeninformatiesysteem (SIS).

In dat verband hebben de Europese Raad ([5]) en de Raad JBZ ([6]) verklaard dat „*De beleidslijnen en de samenwerking in het Schengengebied verder [moeten] worden versterkt, evenals het wederzijdse vertrouwen tussen de lidstaten, die in gelijke mate verantwoordelijk zijn voor de effectieve hand-having van alle Schengenregels volgens de overeengekomen gemeenschappelijke normen en grondbeginselen en -regels*".

Het is het geachte parlementslid wellicht bekend dat de Raad en het Parlement momenteel de „Schengen governance"-voorstellen aan het bespreken zijn, bestaande uit een Voorstel voor een verordening tot wijziging van de Schengengrenscode teneinde te voorzien in gemeenschappelijke regels inzake de tijdelijke herinvoering van het grenstoezicht aan de binnengrenzen in uitzonderlijke omstandigheden ([7]) en een Voorstel voor een verordening betreffende de instelling van een evaluatie- en toezichtmechanisme voor de controle van de toepassing van het Schengenacquis ([8]).

([5]) EUCO 23/1/11 REV 1.
([6]) 7417/12.
([7]) 14359/11.
([8]) 14358/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002146/13
to the Council
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Necessity of border controls

On Sunday, 24 February 2013, the 8.00 NOS evening TV news bulletin reported on the growing success of the mobile border controls by the Royal Netherlands Constabulary ([1]). These mobile border controls were introduced in 2011. More illegal immigrants were apprehended at the Dutch borders in 2012 than in 2011 (1 733 as against 1 499), more people were arrested for trafficking in persons (110 as against 97) and more people were arrested for people smuggling (141 as against 86). These successes were achieved despite the fact that the Royal Netherlands Constabulary has to operate under the strict constraints imposed by the EU as regards the duration of such controls and the resources which may be used.

I have previously put questions to the Council on cross-border crime (E-003601/2012, E-005999/2012 and E-008421/2012). In its replies to these previous questions concerning the strict restrictions which the EU imposes on border controls, the Council has consistently downplayed the rise in cross-border crime.

1. Has the Council observed a rise in cross-border crime?

2. Does the Council consider there to be a disproportion between this rising cross-border crime and the restrictions on border controls which the EU imposes on Member States?

The parties which make up the Netherlands Government, VVD and PVDA, claim that the restrictions which the EU imposes on border controls make life easy for criminals. They advocate that the European rules be relaxed.

3. Is the Council investigating the possibility of relaxing the rules on border controls?

Reply
(7 May 2013)

1. The analysis of data and statistical information regarding cross-border crime within the EU is carried out by Europol, Frontex and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction on the basis of Member States' contributions. Some analyses and reports are submitted to the Council, in particular the Europol Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) and Frontex Annual Risk Assessment. The 2013 EU SOCTA Executive Summary ([2]) points out that 'organised crime is an increasingly dynamic and complex phenomenon', that 'Organised Crime Groups are increasingly flexible, adaptable and innovative engaging in multiple forms of criminality', and that 'criminals act undeterred by geographic boundaries and the most significant groups are now global in terms of their range of activities, operating areas, levels of cooperation, and nationality of membership'.

In 2012 the Council indicated in its conclusions on the increased and more effective use of the Europol Information System (EIS) ([3]) that 'cross-border crimes are a serious and growing problem in the EU' and that 'Member States are faced with an extensively growing number of crimes committed by mobile crime groups and other criminals operating across national borders'.

2. The 2013 SOCTA mentions a number of crime enablers and indicates that 'Policies enabling the free trade and movement across the EU are exploited by organised crime in trafficking and fraud'. However, a 'disproportion' between cross-border crime and restrictions on border controls has neither been mentioned in this assessment nor has it been referred to the Council either by its members or by the relevant Agencies.

3. At its meeting on 8 March 2012, the JHA Council ([4]) underlined that 'free movement is a defining principle of the European Union' and stressed that 'the absence of any controls on persons when crossing internal borders within the Schengen area is one of the most tangible European achievements'.

([1]) http:/nos.nl/artikel/477781-strenge-controle-illegalen-werkt.
([2]) 7368/13 JAI 200 COSI 26 ENFOPOL 75 CRIMORG 41 CORDROGUE 27 ENFOCUSTOM 43 PESC 286 JAIEX 20 RLEX 211.
([3]) 10600/12 ENFOPOL 153.
([4]) Council Conclusions regarding guidelines for the strengthening of political governance in the Schengen cooperation (7417/12).

At the same time, the Schengen area is based on a body of rules (the Schengen *acquis*) which encompasses not only the abolition of border control at internal borders and common rules on the control of external borders but also a common visa policy, police and judicial cooperation, common rules on the return of irregular migrants and the establishment of common databases such as the Schengen Information System (SIS).

In that regard, both the European Council ([5]) and the JHA Council ([6]) have stated that 'political guidance and cooperation in the Schengen area need to be further strengthened, enhancing mutual trust between Member States, which are equally responsible for guaranteeing that all Schengen rules are applied effectively in accordance with the agreed common standards and with fundamental principles and norms'.

The Honourable Member will be aware that the Council and the Parliament are currently examining the 'Schengen governance' proposals, comprising a proposal for a regulation amending the Schengen Borders Code in order to provide for common rules on the temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders in exceptional circumstances ([7]) and a proposal for a regulation on the establishment of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis* ([8]).

([5]) EUCO 23/1/11 REV 1.
([6]) 7417/12.
([7]) 14359/11.
([8]) 14358/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002147/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU-US trade negotiations and US market access for haggis

The EU and US are expected to launch negotiations for a comprehensive trade and investment agreement expected to commence within the time period of the Irish Presidency. One of the stated aims of the agreement is to get as close as possible to the removal of all duties on transatlantic trade in industrial and agricultural products. One of Scotland's most famous products, haggis, is currently subject to US import restrictions.

Will the Commission consider haggis, and equivalent traditional foodstuffs from other EU nations, to be among the products covered by the negotiations on market access to the US?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The EU and the US are expected to launch negotiations for a comprehensive trade and investment agreement within the time period of the Irish Presidency. Negotiations will aim to tackle duties on transatlantic trade in industrial and agricultural products. The Commission therefore plans to engage in constructive discussions with the US in this respect. In order to further tackle import requirements, the negotiation will also include a chapter dedicated to addressing Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) issues of both sides which will aim at facilitating trade between the parties and to minimise trade barriers resulting from the operation of our systems. The Commission is aware of the issue signalled by the Honourable Member. However, at this stage it is not possible to provide details due to the fact that negotiations have not started yet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002148/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Discussion of US-Russia relationship during EU-US trade negotiations

In light of the recent announcement by the EU and the United States of the opening of new trade negotiations, and the announcement by Russia on 30 January 2013 of a ban on US meat imports, will the Commission consider these negotiations as an appropriate opportunity to discuss the wider relationship between the United States and Russia, especially as they come at a time when the EU and the United States are seeking to remove existing trade barriers?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The main objective of the envisaged negotiations between the EU and the United States is to agree on a comprehensive framework for bilateral trade and investment. These negotiations will not be a forum for the EU and the US to discuss their respective bilateral relations with other countries even if they may provide an opportunity to address issues where both the EU and the US share concerns, including with regard to some of the third countries.

Both the EU and the US face Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) import restrictions from Russia.Whereas the measures may be different in their nature and also in the type of products targeted, the use by Russia of unjustified and disporportionate of SPS measures to restrict trade is a concern to both the EU and the US. The Commission has been analysing the current Russian SPS restrictions and urging Russia to comply with provisions negotiated during Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation. On the other hand, Russia sometimes aligns with EU standards. The ongoing restrictions imposed on meat from USA are linked to the use in USA of a growth promoter prohibited in the EU, and on this aspect are in substance similar to EU requirements: exports are possible for hormone free productions. Sharing of information on common trade barrier issues with US could have as result a better understanding of the situation and possibly a broader view on how to find solutions for them.

In other areas like the automotive industry, the US also share the same concerns as the EU about Russia's the trade restrictive measures.

The convergence on regulatory aspects, which will be a key aspect of the negotiations, will help us having a stronger unified stance vis a vis protectionist measures taken by third countries.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002149/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Negotiations with Ukraine following its decision to raise tariffs

Following the decision by Ukraine in September 2012, under the rules of the World Trade Organisation, to raise tariffs on the import of 370 products, will the Commission follow up on the advice of the Council to enter into negotiations with Ukraine in order to seek compensation from it for losses resulting from these changes?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

Further to Ukraine's notification under Article XXVIII of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the Commission has now been authorised by the Council to enter into negotiations. However, Ukraine has not yet provided the necessary information to affected World Trade Organisation (WTO) Members about the magnitude of the envisaged tariff changes. Therefore, negotiations with Ukraine have not yet started.

At this stage and considering the scope of the list of products affected, the Commission continues to have strong doubts as to whether it will be possible to maintain a 'general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions not less favourable to trade' as required by Article XXVIII of the GATT. This is why the EU has requested the Government of Ukraine to review the country's plans and withdraw its notification to the WTO. In parallel, the EU has been a leading voice among the many WTO Members that have raised their strong systemic concerns linked to this notification in several WTO bodies, including the Organisation's General Council.

The Commission remains open to negotiate with Ukraine under Article XXVIII GATT provided that the proposed tariff changes do not represent a risk for the stability of the multilateral trading system as a whole and provided that it will indeed be possible to maintain a general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions not less favourable to trade than the present situation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002150/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Building on the Nobel Peace Prize legacy

Following the success of the EU in winning the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize, what steps is the Commission taking to build on the human rights legacy of winning the Nobel Peace Prize?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission, as well as the Council, have adopted strategies to ensure that fundamental rights are taken into account in all EU policies, both externally and internally. The Commission adopted in 2010 a strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([1]). The Charter strategy provides for an approach to ensure that fundamental rights are systematically taken into account in all external as well as internal EU policies, including in the area of justice and home affairs policies. Furthermore, in June 2012, the Council adopted an external strategy and action plan for human rights in relation with third countries, which provides for actions to ensure that human rights underpin the external dimension of work in the area of justice and home affairs ([2]).

The money received with the Nobel Peace Prize together with additional EU funding has been dedicated to humanitarian aid projects for children affected by conflict situations. One of the best ways to help and protect children when they suffer from violent conflict is to give them the opportunity to learn again and get education. This is why the EU Children of Peace initiative funded with the Nobel Peace Prize money provides assistance and reaches out to over 23,000 girls and boys in four projects where they get access to basic education and child-friendly spaces in camps at the border between Iraq and Syria, in Colombia and Ecuador, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Ethiopia, and in Pakistan.

([1]) Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union, COM(2010) 573 final, Brussels, 19.10.2010.
([2]) EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, 11855/12, Luxembourg, 25 June 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002151/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU investments in cultural and creative sectors

In the coming years the EU is expected to invest more than ever in its cultural and creative sectors. These sectors contribute significantly to economic growth, employment, innovation and social cohesion. However, currently there is insufficient data on the sector's actual financing needs, which hinders effective policy making.

How is the Commission planning to assess the situation and address the knowledge gap?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's views on the importance to invest in cultural and creative sectors (CCS) in order to generate growth, employment, innovation and social cohesion.

Existing studies on access to finance and financing needs of the CCS stress that SMEs operating in the sectors face specific difficulties in accessing finance, which constitutes a core barrier to growth.

In order to improve access to finance for the CCS, the European Commission has proposed to set up a financial instrument within the new Creative Europe Programme (2014-2020) which will specifically target SMEs in the field of CCS. This instrument will be a guarantee facility that shares the credit risk related to loans made to the CCS by European lending institutions. It will also include a capacity-building scheme to address the lack of understanding lending institutions have with regard to the specificities of SMEs in these sectors.

The European Commission has launched a study to refine the estimation of the financial gap that has been reported in the impact assessment of the Creative Europe Programme (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/creative-europe/index_en.htm). The study is being carried out by IDEA Consult and will provide quantitative information on the financing needs of each sub-sector in the different national markets. An online survey is currently being carried out on http://www.eu-for-creativity.eu as part of the study. The final report will be available in July 2013 and published on the Europa website.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002152/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: European literature grant for minority languages

The Commission recently launched a grant programme with a total budget of EUR 2 700 000 for the translation of European works of literature. Whilst the purpose of the grant is to stimulate the widest circulation of European literature among European citizens by supporting the translation of high-quality European literature into the different languages of the countries participating in the programme, will the grant also take into consideration requests for translation into minority languages as part of the initiative?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The EU Culture Programme 2007-2013 can support translations of literary works from an official European language (plus Latin and ancient Greek) into another. Since 2007, more than 2 700 books have been translated, involving more than 30 languages. The annual budget devoted to this kind of support is around EUR 3 million.

Eligible languages are the official languages as defined by the Constitution or by the basic law of the respective country. By way of example, Catalan, Galician and Basque are mentioned in the Spanish constitution and are hence eligible. This is also the case for Irish which is an official EU language.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002153/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission efforts to encourage greater uptake of entrepreneurship education

Given that investing in entrepreneurship education is one of the highest-return investments that policymakers in Europe can make to support growth and business creation, and the fact that three quarters of Europeans say that they have never taken part in an entrepreneurship course, what is the Commission considering doing to encourage greater uptake of entrepreneurship education?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission's Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([1]) has a strong focus on entrepreneurial education. It proposes reinforced cooperation at European level, and sets ambitious targets for Member States. Current efforts are focusing on preparing and training teachers. Already in 2012 two workshops with Member States looked at sharing and disseminating entrepreneurship education methods related to initial teacher education and in-service training, whose results shall be captured in a practical guide in 2013.

Rethinking Education ([2]) also highlights the importance of entrepreneurial skills by calling Member States to offer at least one entrepreneurial experience to all young people during the school life. As also announced ([3]), the Commission has, in collaboration with OECD, been developing a framework for entrepreneurial universities to help them assess themselves and improve their capability. A similar framework will now be prepared for schools and VET institutions. As a follow-up to Rethinking Education, the Commission will publish further policy guidance in autumn 2013.

The Commission also financially supports projects in entrepreneurship education through its Lifelong Learning and CIP programmes, and will continue to do so with the proposed Erasmus for All programme and COSME. In 2012, 7 new European projects have started addressing teacher training, creating online spaces for educators, and developing skills assessment methods in entrepreneurship education.

Programmes of the European Institute of Technology (EIT) also give science students exposure to entrepreneurship education.

([1]) COM(2012) 795 final, 9 January 2013.
([2]) COM(2012) 669 final, 20 November 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 669 final, 20 November 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002154/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission actions to tackle forgery and counterfeiters

It is thought that since the euro currency was introduced in 2002 that at least EUR 500 million of forged euro coins and banknotes have been produced.

What measures are the Commission considering to tackle forgery and what actions are the Commission pursuing to tackle counterfeiters?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-4161/2012.

Counterfeiting of the euro remains a concern throughout the EU. The Commission thus has taken in particular the following measures to improve the protection of the euro:

— Policy/legislative. In February 2013, the Commission proposed a directive ([1]) to strengthen the protection of the euro and other currencies against counterfeiting through criminal law measures. These measures shall improve the sanctions against production and distribution of counterfeits, cross-border investigations and the analysis of counterfeits during judicial proceedings. They will complete the legal framework of criminal law and administrative measures ([2]).

— Training and technical assistance, based mainly on the Pericles programme; negotiations are ongoing to extend the programme over 2014-2020 ([3]) (Pericles 2020). These programmes aim at exchange, assistance and training in the area of combating euro-counterfeiting ([4]). In 2012 OLAF co-financed 16 training actions.

— The technical analysis of counterfeit euro coins, through the European Technical Scientific Centre ([5]) (ETSC) delivers technical assistance to the Member States, police agencies and third countries' authorities in ongoing investigations and in the analysis and classification of new type of counterfeit euro coin ([6]).

In January 2013 through a joint investigation against currency counterfeiting, the Italian authorities dismantled an illegal mint; OLAF/ETSC supported the investigation. This recent successful police operation which led to capture of 3 criminals shows the high quality and effectiveness of the cooperation between national police agencies and OLAF.

([1]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of the euro and other currencies against counterfeiting by criminal law and replacing Council Framework Decision 2000/383/JHA (COM(2013)42; 2013/0023 (COD)).
([2]) Council Regulations (EC) 1338/2001 and 1339/2001; Regulations 2182/2004 and 2183/2004; Regulation 1210/2010; Commission Decision 2005/37/EC; Council Decisions 2001/923/EC and 2001/924/EC; Council Framework Decision 2000/383/JHA.
([3]) 19.12.2011, COM(2011)913 final and COM(2011)910 final (extending to the non-participating Member States the application of the regulation).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/euro-protection/training/index_en.htm
([5]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/fight_against_fraud/antifraud_offices/l33314_en.htm
([6]) Article 2 in line with provision of Article 5 Regulation 1338/2001; In accordance with Article 5(5) of the Council Decision of 6 April 2009 establishing the European Police Office (Europol), Europol's activities against euro counterfeiting include not only technical and operational assistance to law enforcement authorities of the EU Member States and third countries; but also, upon request, Europol may financially support investigations into euro counterfeiting. Europol has financially supported law enforcement activities against euro counterfeiting since 1January 2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002155/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission actions to aid Kosovo in the fight against organised crime and corruption

Given that Kosovo's current capacity to fight organised crime and corruption remains limited, with a potentially severe impact on the EU's internal security, and that this is also affecting Kosovo's ability to fulfil the requirements of the visa liberalisation roadmap, has the Commission given any advice or planned how to help Kosovo make satisfactory improvements?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

Under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, the Commission provides some EUR 15 million in support of rule of law projects in Kosovo ([1]) each year. This includes projects aimed at fighting organised crime and corruption. The projects are targeted to address priority challenges identified in the Commission's annual Progress Reports ([2]). Assistance also aims to help solve issues related to the requirements included in the visa liberalisation roadmap.

The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) is the largest civilian mission under the European Security and Defence Policy. Its key purpose is to assist and support the Kosovo authorities in the rule of law. EULEX mentors, monitors and advises the Kosovo authorities whilst retaining some executive powers. The areas covered by EULEX relate also to various topics covered by the visa liberalisation roadmap.

([1]) 'This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence'.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002156/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Affordability of Wireless Insole for Independent and Safe Elderly Living (WIISEL) technology

If the prototype proves successful, the WIISEL shoe will be able to predict the likelihood of falling, which has obvious benefits in avoiding fatal injuries in the over-60 age group.

However, how does the Commission propose to make such technology affordable to as many people as possible?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The main goal of WIISEL (Wireless Insole for Independent and Safe Elderly Living) is to develop an insole for elderly, which monitors their way of walking, so that the doctor, caregiver or nurse can detect increases in the risk of falling.

Principally it is the competence and responsibility of Member States' to make medical solutions available to their citizens. Yet, as any FP7 project WIISEL will deliver a plan for dissemination and exploitation, which will undergo careful scrutiny by the EC.

The affordability of WIISEL is warranted by the use of printed electronics, which allow for low cost production. Furthermore options will be explored for standardisation and 'mainstreaming' the application for fitness, gait balance and other domains, to enable low cost mass production.

After finalising the project, EU support for bridging the gap with the market could be provided via two instruments of the H2020 Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP): Pilot B (pilots stimulating the uptake of innovative ICT-based services and products) or Public Procurement of Innovative solutions (PPI).

Further programs that could support the deployment of applications like WIISEL in the practice of care and cure are the Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Joint Programme, the Artemis Joint Undertaking and Eureka. Fall Prevention, finally, is one of the priority action areas of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, a key objective of which is to reduce the market barriers for innovative products and services like WIISEL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002157/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: 'Active and Healthy Ageing': promoting technical ideas to older generations

As part of the 'Active and Healthy Ageing' strategy, the Commission has recently introduced a number of ideas that overlap with the EU Digital Agenda, including 'Hector the CompanionAble robot', 'CommonWell' and 'ROSETTA', all of which are designed to enable greater ease of life for people as they get older.

Has the Commission carried out tests to understand how practical such ideas are? How does it intend to promote these technical ideas to older generations of European citizens?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

Commission has for several years been funding research and innovation projects exploring how new innovative solutions based on information and communication technologies can help to address the challenges and opportunities of societal challenges such as the ageing population.

While it may seem that such solutions do not find easily user acceptance, the facts show that the opposite is true, provided good design and close involvement and training of end-users is ensured. More than one hundred end user organisations have been involved in r EU funded research and innovation projects to ensure clear evidence of socioeconomic impact. For example the CommonWell project consisted of a series of pilot services with involvement of more than five hundred older citizens as well as their carers. Service users were very happy with the CommonWell integrated eCare services they received, for example improving a sense of security and safety, reduced stress for carers and better support in critical situations. The evaluation results can be found at http://commonwell.eu/commonwell-home/

The promotion of innovative solutions towards older generations is an integral part of the Commission's activities on active and healthy ageing. For example there are annual events organised around Europe where project results are presented with exhibitions open to the public. Many important umbrella organisations play an active part in the projects. These efforts also underpin the recent European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing which aims to scale up successful innovation in response to the ageing population across Europe with involvement of numerous stakeholders from across all of Europe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002158/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Eleventh anniversary of the detention of Shaker Aamer

In relation to the fast-approaching eleventh anniversary of Shaker Aamer's detention in Guantanamo Bay, has the Commission been in contact with the relevant authorities to encourage basic human freedoms for a man who has been imprisoned for such a long time and without charge, and the potential transfer of Mr Aamer, as had been agreed to on two previous occasions?

Answer given by High-Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The EU has consistently called for the closure of the Guantánamo Bay detention facility. The issue has been discussed regularly with the US at different levels, including most recently, after the adoption of the US National Defence Authorisation Act for 2013 that renews provisions preventing the use of US federal budget for the closure of this facility.

In the past years, the EU has established a framework to support the closure of Guantánamo, particularly through the JHA Council Conclusions of 4 June 2009 and the annexed information exchange mechanism as well as through the Joint Statement of the European Union and its Member States and the United States of America (USA) on the Closure of the Guantánamo Bay Detention Facility and Future Counter-Terrorism Cooperation of 15 June 2009.

However the EU as such does has not dealt with individual cases. The abovementioned texts clearly states that the decisions on the reception of former detainees and the determination of their legal status fall within the sole responsibility and competence of a receiving Member State or Schengen associated country.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002159/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Commission approach to doping in commercial and popular sport

In light of increasing evidence of doping in commercial and popular sport will the European Commission seek to update their approach to tackling this problem?

Does the Commission have any plans to meet with the Member States, the Council of Europe, the World Anti-Doping Agency and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation to collectively tackle this issue?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-008069/2011 by Giorgos Papanikolau; E-6117/2012 by Liam Aylward; and E-3166/2012 and E-3684/2012 by Marietta Giannakou and Giorgos Papanikolau ([1]).

In addition, cooperation between public authorities and sport organisations has taken place in the framework of the EU Expert Group on Anti-Doping established by the EU Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014 ([2]). Its work has led to the submission by the Council of the European Union of three EU contributions to the revision of the World Anti-Doping Code. The last contribution was sent to WADA by the Irish Presidency on 1 March 2013.

Furthermore, the Commission proposal for 'Erasmus for All', the future programme for education, training, youth and sport, includes a Sport Chapter whose objectives are, amongst others, to tackle transnational threats to sport such as doping.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a European Union Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014 [OJ C 162, 1.6.2011].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002160/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Facebook's new privacy policy

According to recent claims made by the Deputy Commissioner at the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner in Ireland, Facebook's new privacy policy conflicts with European law, as it would make more data available to advertisers without users' explicit consent.

Is the Commission aware of this situation, and what does it propose to do to safeguard the privacy of the estimated 150 million-plus users of Facebook in Europe?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

Facebook is a controller of personal data established in the European Union, and therefore it is subject to the obligations of national laws implementing Directive 95/46/EC ([1]). Those obligations apply to any Facebook processing of personal data including those related to advertising.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty, it is the national authorities, in particular the national data protection supervisory authorities which are competent to monitor the application of the national measures implementing Directive 95/46/EC. As you point out, the Irish authority conducted an in depth analysis of Facebook personal data processing activities in the course of 2012. A summary of the analysis has been published ([2]). According to this summary, the Irish DPA has not taken any formal decision so far regarding Facebook Ireland and its privacy policy.

The Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([3]) under the examination of both the European Parliament and Council clarifies and strengthens the rights of data subjects in the context of online activities, such as social networking. In particular, providers must take account of the principle of 'data protection by default', which means that the default settings should be those that ensure the highest level of personal data protection. Companies will be obliged to inform individuals as clearly, understandably and transparently as possible about how their personal data will be used, so that they are in the best position to decide what data they share.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the. processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281 of 23.11.1995, p. 31.
([2]) http://www.dataprotection.ie/documents/press/Facebook_Ireland_Audit_Review_Report_21_Sept_2012.pdf p.2.
([3]) COM(2012) 11 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002161/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Balancing solutions to EU raw material shortage with sustainability of mining

Mining and quarrying activities in Europe vary widely in profitability, employment and geographical distribution. As part of the European Competitiveness Report 2012, the Commission noted the need for more detailed and systematic monitoring of raw materials.

What steps is the Commission considering taking to encourage the EU mining industry to form part of the solution to Europe's raw material shortage, whilst balancing this with the sustainability of mining?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

In order to strengthen European industry, it is vital that industry is able to access raw material inputs on time and at a reasonable market price. Significant increases in the prices of non-EU sourced raw materials are of concern to policy-makers and manufacturers alike, as they make European manufacturing less competitive vis-à-vis emerging countries. It is therefore critical for the relative competitiveness of European industry that resource efficiency is increased so as to get more added value from those materials, and that products are designed so that materials can be effectively retrieved, recycled and reused.

With a view to increasing the availability of primary and secondary raw materials, the Commission has launched the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Raw materials ([1]), targeting non-energy, non-agricultural raw materials. The EIP brings together, among others, Member States, raw materials producing, using and recycling industries, researchers and NGOs along the entire value chain of raw materials to promote innovative solutions to Europe's raw materials challenge. This includes exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution of raw materials.

The EIP plans to deliver its Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) endorsed by its High Level Steering Group in July 2013. A Call for Commitments will be launched in September 2013 to allow stakeholders to express their concrete intention to contribute to the implementation of the EIP priorities and actions. The Commission will thereafter issue a communication in response to the SIP.

The Commission is also working with Member States through the exchange of best practice in order to assess how to improve the framework conditions for sustainable mining within the EU ([2]).

([1]) On 12 February 2013.
([2]) Under the second pillar of the raw materials strategy — COM(2011) 25 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002164/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Standardisation of food supplements

With regard to the proposed standardisation of the size and type of food supplements, does the Commission intend to put maximum safe levels on vitamin and mineral supplements which have until now been consumed at high-potency levels with no evidence of any harm being caused as a result of this?

How does the Commission intend to determine and define maximum safe levels with regard to both the size of food supplements and the intake of such supplements?

What research has the Commission done, or will the Commission do, in order to determine safe levels of intake with regard to food supplements?

Does the Commission believe that it is necessary to standardise and place maximum safe levels on vitamins and food supplements where there is no evidence of higher-potency dosages causing harm to an individual?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

Vitamins and minerals are essential nutrients but in some cases excessive intake can lead to adverse health effects. The maximum amounts of vitamins and minerals present in food supplements foreseen by Article 5 of Directive 2002/46/EC ([1]) will be established on a safety basis taking into account scientific assessment carried out by the European Food Safety Authority ([2]) and by other recognised scientific assessment bodies. Those criteria listed in Article 5 include:

— upper safe levels of the vitamins and minerals established by scientific risk assessment (UL, the maximum level of total chronic intake of a nutrient judged to be unlikely to pose risk of adverse health effects to humans)

— intake of vitamins and minerals from other dietary sources.

The reference intakes of vitamins and minerals for the population will also be considered when establishing these maximum amounts.

On the basis of these criteria the need to set maximum amounts for all vitamins and minerals will be considered.

The work on setting maximum amounts is ongoing, but no proposal has yet been presented. The Commission has consulted extensively with Member States and interested stakeholders on the issue.

The Commission will take proportionate risk management measures to ensure that the widest possible range of safe food supplement is available for consumers, avoiding at the same time the risks of both deficiency and excessive intakes.

([1]) OJ L 183, 12.7.2002, p. 51-57.
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178633962601.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002165/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Bulgaria's and Romania's accession to the Schengen area

The UK's restrictions on workers from Romania and Bulgaria are due to be lifted at the end of 2013. Given the large amounts of net migration which the UK has experienced over the last 10 years with the enlargement of the Schengen area, could the Commission comment on whether or not it has prepared estimated figures for the impact on the UK's economy, employment market and social provisions?

Can the Commission provide evidence that Romania and Bulgaria are fully compliant with all requirements to join the Schengen area, in particular with regard to the fight against corruption and the ability to protect borders with Ukraine, Moldova and Turkey and, in the case of Bulgaria, with regard to the fight against organised crime?

The Commission previously stated that residency tests and attaching conditions to future employment and social provisions in Member States will not be prohibited; could the Commission explain the EU legal base for this provision and elaborate further on exactly what is permitted?

Can the Commission explain why access to the relevant documents concerning Bulgaria's and Romania's application to join the Schengen area is being restricted and whether these documents will be made available to Parliament in due course?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

Question 1:

The Commission has not prepared estimates of the impact of the end of the restrictions on free movement of Bulgarian and Romanian workers on the UK's economy and labour market. Nevertheless, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the Commission's report on the functioning of the transitional arrangements adopted in November 2011 ([1]).

Questions 2 and 4:

As for the membership of Romania and Bulgaria in the Schengen area, the decision on the extension of the Schengen area is taken by the Council. The European Parliament adopted its legislative resolution approving the accession of Romania and Bulgaria by a large majority on 8 June 2011. The Justice and Home Affairs Council of 9 June 2011 concluded that both Romania and Bulgaria fulfil the Schengen criteria concerning external borders, visa, police cooperation and SIS and data protection. For its part, the Commission has repeatedly made clear that it fully supports Romania and Bulgaria's accession to Schengen as well as the Presidencies' efforts towards this goal.

The Schengen evaluation process is under the responsibility of the Member States, and the decision on the lifting of internal border control taken in unanimity by the Council. Therefore also the access to documents, which are established by the Council, falls under the responsibility of the Council.

Question 3:

The Commission is not aware of any such statement. Member States can require EU nationals to show they are 'habitually resident', that is having their factual centre of interests in the Member State, in order to be entitled to social security benefits within the meaning of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

([1]) COM(2011) 729 and SEC(1343).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002166/13
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Proposed amendment to the Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) with regard to the duration of medical training

The Commission has proposed an amendment to the Professional Qualifications Directive. The original requirement was that medical students would undergo 6 years of study or 5 500 hours of supervised study.

A proposal was advanced by a number of Member States in 2012 to revise the duration of basic medical training to 5 years and 5 500 hours. The Commission adopted the proposal.

The EU Medical Committee has recently proposed a further change to the Commission proposal, amending the requirement laid down in Article 24 of the directive to 6 years *and* 5 500 hours, making it a combined requirement.

The tabled amendments to the current proposal are of great concern to Irish and British institutions, since they would increase the duration of basic medical training from the Commission's current legislative proposal — a minimum of 5 years and 5 500 hours — to 6 years and 5 500 hours (amendments 456, 457 and 459). The medical profession is increasingly concerned about the implications of shifting the duration of training to a minimum of 6 years and 5 500 hours.

In effect, such a change would exclude Irish and UK graduates from mobility within the EU. It would also signal that the EU considers medical training in the United States, Canada and Australia to be substandard. Furthermore, the proposal is to include a derogation system whereby individual courses could qualify even if they do not meet the 6 years *and* 5 500 hour requirement. This appears to be contrary to the EU principle of mutual recognition of qualifications.

Finally, the proposal represents a change to what was until recently an agreed consensus.

Does the Commission propose to stand by the consensus?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

Doctors who have received basic medical training may benefit from an automatic recognition of their qualifications on the basis of harmonised minimum training requirements provided for in Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]). Under this directive, the minimum duration of basic medical training is expressed in terms of years or hours. Member States may therefore comply with the minimum requirement by either requesting six years or 5500 hours of training. This has led to an unclear situation.

During 2010-2011, the Commission carried out a thorough evaluation ([2]) of the directive, including the minimum requirements of medical training. Most Member States and stakeholders asked for a clarification of the training requirements. There were different views on the minimum length of the training — some supported 5 years, whilst others were in favour of 6 years.

As a result of this evaluation, the Commission published its legislative proposal in December 2011. The proposal foresees to amend the requirements of basic medical training by setting clearly enforceable cumulative conditions (at least 5 years of study which shall consist of at least 5500 hours of training). Such a compromise would not prevent Member States from keeping their 6-year programmes, but could confirm the acceptability of the shorter, but more intense, programmes provided in some Member States, such as Ireland and the United Kingdom. This approach was also supported by the European Parliament ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.

([2]) First the European Commission asked competent authorities and national coordinators of the directive to share their own experiences. In a second step, the Commission launched a technical consultation in January 2011. Finally, in June 2011, the Commission published its Green Paper on the modernisation of the directive.

([3]) The Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee's draft report on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications and Regulation on administrative cooperation through the internal market Information System.

This proposal is now being actively debated in the European Parliament and Council. The objective is to seek a political agreement on this proposal by June, with formal adoption before the end of the year.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002167/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Staff cuts in EU agencies

As the European Parliament Environment Committee's contact point for the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC), I recently learned that this agency had been asked to make staffing cuts of 20 posts.

Given my longstanding support for making EU agencies more efficient and accountable, I would ask the Commission provide information on the following:

1. Is the ECDC the only agency to have been asked to make cuts to its staff? If not, can the Commission provide details of the number of staff being cut from each of the EU's 48 agencies? Could the Commission express the figures both in actual numbers and as a percentage of total staff?

2. Will the staffing cuts involve redeployment back to other EU institutions, the non-renewal of contracts of temporary/contract staff or other proposals?

3. Has the Commission considered alternative or additional savings to the running costs of the agencies, such as reducing mission or communications budgets? If such proposals are under consideration, could the Commission provide more details?

4. Has the Commission considered merging the functions of any of the EU agencies, e.g. the European Training Foundation and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training or the European Institute for Gender Equality and the Fundamental Rights Agency?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

1. The European Council at its meeting of 7-8 February confirmed the 5% staff reduction applied to all EU institutions and agencies over the period 2013-2017 (i.e. ca. 1% reduction per year). This reduction will be accompanied by an increase in working hours without a corresponding rise in salary.

For 2014 Draft Budget, the Commission proposes to apply a 1% staff cut to the cruising speed agencies, like ECDC, and to those which have been assigned new tasks, but to exempt newly created agencies. In addition, a tax on the posts of cruising speed and new task agencies should be applied to offset staff increases for new tasks. The Commission is currently examining the multiannual programming of each agency. The results will determine the exact scope and size of the redeployment pool to serve the needs identified.

2. It is up to agencies to identify the means by which the reduction can be implemented. The staff reduction should not entail early termination of contracts. It will not involve the transfer of staff between agencies nor to EU institutions.

3. The principle of sound financial management requires that agencies make a permanent effort to reduce their administrative costs. These efforts are additional to the reduction of staff.

4. In line with the Joint Statement and Common Approach on decentralised agencies agreed in 2012 with the Parliament and the Council, the Commission committed, in its Roadmap, to explore potential synergies between agencies and in particular to consider the merger of agencies where their tasks are overlapping, where synergies can be contemplated or when agencies would be more efficient if inserted in a bigger structure. The Commission has just adopted a proposal to merge CEPOL with Europol. It will study other potential cases.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002168/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Carne equina e sicurezza alimentare

Facendo seguito ad una recente interrogazione (n. E-001832/2013) sull'etichettatura d'origine per i prodotti alimentari, nella quale chiedevo di rendere obbligatoria la tracciabilità di tutte le carni, cavallo e coniglio compresi, osservo che anche nelle dichiarazioni diffuse ufficialmente si esclude qualsiasi rischio per la sicurezza alimentare legato alla carne equina. È vero infatti che, la presenza della carne di cavallo di per sé non sarebbe pericolosa per la salute umana, in quanto combatte l'anemia, il colesterolo e l'ipertensione. Se però vengono macellati animali che non devono entrare nella catena alimentare, come i cavalli da corsa, allora la situazione di rischio si presenta senza alcun dubbio, in quanto per i cavalli sono ammessi farmaci vietati per l'uomo, come il fenilbutazone, che può provocare effetti collaterali anche gravi, a livello midollare, neurologico, cardiovascolare, gastrointestinale, genito-urinario.

Ritiene la Commissione che la tracciabilità non solo sia necessaria, ma che sia oltremodo opportuno procedere a controlli obbligatori sulla carne di cavallo per verificare la presenza o meno di farmaci dannosi per l'uomo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(9 aprile 2013)

Spetta principalmente agli operatori del settore alimentare assicurare che i prodotti commercializzati soddisfino le prescrizioni della legislazione alimentare dell'Unione, mentre le autorità nazionali competenti sono incaricate di farle rispettare eseguendo i controlli appropriati e imponendo sanzioni dissuasive ed efficaci.

La Commissione sta coordinando le inchieste in corso negli Stati membri interessati a livello sia politico che tecnico. Sulla base del regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo ai controlli ufficiali intesi a verificare la conformità alla normativa in materia di mangimi e di alimenti ed alle norme sulla salute e sul benessere degli animali, ([1]) la Commissione ha recentemente approvato una raccomandazione ([2]) che esorta ad eseguire controlli in tutta l'Unione a livello di vendita al dettaglio per identificare la portata delle pratiche fraudolente per quanto riguarda la presenza o meno di carne bovina, così come per rilevare possibili residui di fenilbutazone, un medicinale veterinario il cui uso è consentito solo negli animali non destinati alla produzione alimentare. Una sintesi di tutte le conclusioni sarà disponibile entro aprile 2013. In base alla valutazione delle conclusioni la Commissione deciderà la linea di azione appropriata. Il piano è cofinanziato dall'Unione a un tasso del 75 %.

La futura proposta della Commissione sui controlli ufficiali punterà a rinforzare ulteriormente il sistema vigente, comprese le disposizioni relative alle sanzioni.

([1]) GU L 165 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1.
([2]) 2013/99/UE: Raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 febbraio 2013, relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo volto a stabilire la prevalenza di pratiche fraudolente nella commercializzazione di determinati prodotti alimentari, GU L 48 del 21.2.2013, pag. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002168/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Horsemeat and food safety

Further to a recent question (E-001832/2013) on origin labelling for food products, in which I called for the traceability of all the meat, including horse and rabbit, contained therein to be made mandatory, I note that even official declarations rule out any food safety risks linked to horsemeat. It is in fact true that horsemeat in itself is not harmful to human health, since it helps to prevent anaemia, cholesterol and hypertension. If, however, animals that ought not to enter the food chain, such as racehorses, are slaughtered, then there is definitely a risk, since horses are given drugs, such as phenylbutazone, which are banned for humans, and this can cause side effects — which can be serious — in the medulla, nervous system, heart and blood vessels, stomach and intestines, and genital and urinary organs.

Does the Commission believe not only that traceability is necessary, but also that it is highly advisable to carry out mandatory checks on horsemeat in order to verify the presence or otherwise of drugs harmful to humans?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

Food business operators are primarily responsible for ensuring that the products placed on the market comply with Union food law requirements, while the national competent authorities are responsible for enforcing them by conducting appropriate controls and imposing dissuasive and effective penalties.

The Commission is actively coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned both on a political and a technical level. On the basis of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules ([1]), the Commission recently adopted a recommendation ([2]) which calls for EU-wide controls at retail level to identify the scale of the fraudulent practices as to the presence of beef as well as to detect possible residues of phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug, whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. Depending on the assessment of the findings, the Commission will decide on an appropriate course of action. The plan is co-financed by the Union at a rate of 75%.

The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

([1]) OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([2]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002169/13
al Consiglio
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti sull'accordo di riammissione UE/Turchia

Per quanto attiene al documento «Decisione del Consiglio relativa alla conclusione dell'accordo di riammissione delle persone in posizione irregolare tra l'Unione europea e la repubblica di Turchia» (COM(2012)0239) del 22.6.2012, in particolare il suo articolo 2 «Il presidente del Consiglio designa la persona abilitata a procedere, a nome dell'Unione europea, alla notifica di cui all'articolo 24, paragrafo 2, dell'accordo, per esprimere il consenso dell'Unione europea ad essere vincolata dall'accordo», può il Consiglio specificare in base a quali criteri e modalità viene designata questa persona?

Risposta
(7 maggio 2013)

Si attira l'attenzione dell'onorevole Parlamentare sul fatto che l'Unione segue una procedura standard riguardo alla notifica del consenso ad essere vincolata da accordi internazionali di cui all'articolo 24, paragrafo 2 dell'accordo cui egli fa riferimento.

Secondo tale procedura la presidenza del Consiglio designa il Segretariato generale del Consiglio per l'invio di una *nota verbale* all'altra parte dell'accordo internazionale che esprima il consenso dell'Unione ad essere vincolata da tale accordo. Il Segretariato generale agisce in base a tale autorizzazione.

Occorre inoltre rilevare che i paesi terzi firmatari di tali accordi internazionali ricorrono ad una procedura simile basata su una *nota verbale* per notificare l'intenzione di essere vincolati dagli stessi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002169/13
to the Council
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Clarification on the EU/Turkey readmission agreement

With regard to the Council Decision of 22 June 2012 concerning the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation (COM(2012)0239), in particular Article 2 thereof, 'The President of the Council shall designate the person empowered to proceed, on behalf of the European Union, to the notification provided for in Article 24(2) of the Agreement, in order to express the consent of the European Union to be bound by the Agreement', can the Council specify which criteria and methods are used to designate that person?

Reply
(7 May 2013)

The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the fact that the Union follows a standard procedure in regard to notifications of consent to be bound by international agreements, as provided for in Article 24(2) of the Agreement to which he refers.

This procedure is for the Presidency of the Council to designate the General Secretariat of the Council to send a *note verbale* to the other party to the international agreement, conveying the consent of the Union to be bound by the said agreement. The General Secretariat acts under this authorisation.

It is also noted that third countries, which are signatories to such international agreements, use a similar *note verbale* procedure in order to notify their intention to be bound by them.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002170/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Lack of communication between Member States regarding medical doctors struck off national medical registers or subject to disciplinary proceedings

It has been brought to my attention that, despite a very welcome recent change in EU legislation allowing competent medical registration authorities in receiving Member States to test the language skills of medical staff with medical degrees from other Member States before they are licensed to practise medicine in their new country of residence, there is no communication between Member States regarding, or any common database on, medical practitioners who have been removed (erased) from the local national medical registers of other Member States and who are either banned from practising medicine or subject to disciplinary proceedings resulting in restrictions on their rights to practise.

This glaring lack of a transparent and coordinated approach by the national competent medical registration authorities theoretically leaves these struck-off or disciplined doctors immediately free to relocate to, and apply for the right to practise in, another Member State, including their country of origin, by registering as medical practitioners without the registration authorities in the receiving Member State being able to check whether or not the applicant has been subject to erasure or other disciplinary proceedings due to serious professional medical misconduct in another EU country.

Is the Commission aware of this loophole, which is dangerous to EU citizens' health, and would it consider making available, on a 'need-to-know basis', a common database containing information on all doctors who have been registered and subsequently subject to erasure or disciplinary proceedings, in order to prevent such abuses from occurring and endangering EU patients' lives?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

Under Article 56 of Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]), the competent authorities of the home and the host Member States shall exchange information, upon request from the other Member State, regarding disciplinary actions, criminal sanctions taken or any other serious specific circumstances which might have consequences for a professional's activities. Moreover, the host Member State may request a certificate from the home Member State confirming the good reputation or status of the professional.

In December 2011, the Commission presented its proposal for the modernisation of the directive. This proposal foresees the introduction of an EU-wide alert system covering professionals who have been prohibited from pursuing their professional activities in a Member State. The alert system, complementing the existing general cooperation obligation, would also cover medical doctors and include temporary prohibitions. According to the Commission's proposal, Member States would be required to send an alert within three days from the adoption of the relevant prohibition decision. The information would be exchanged via the internal market Information System (IMI) on a confidential basis.

However, due to the Member States' different data protection regimes, the proposal does not envisage publicly available central blacklists.

It is expected that a political agreement should be reached on this proposal in June, with formal adoption before the end of the year.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002171/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Umsetzung der schwarzen Liste in der Richtlinie über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken und Überarbeitung der Richtlinie über irreführende und vergleichende Werbung

Seit Ende der Frist für die Umsetzung der Richtlinie über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken (2005/29/EG) im Jahre 2007 gibt es eine Vielzahl von Fällen, in denen Mitgliedstaaten Schlüsselbestimmungen, insbesondere die schwarze Liste verbotener, irreführender und aggressiver Geschäftspraktiken (z. B. gegen das Verbot von Schneeballsystemen zur Verkaufsförderung), nicht richtig umsetzen oder anwenden.

Seitens der Kommission existieren nur nicht verbindliche Leitlinien aus dem Jahr 2009, sie ist außerdem in einen unbefristeten „strukturierten Dialog" mit den Mitgliedstaaten eingetreten, die offensichtlich gegen die Richtlinie verstoßen haben. Mit diesen Maßnahmen werden die Mitgliedstaaten jedoch nicht ausreichend unter Druck gesetzt und können den Status quo auf unbestimmte Zeit aufrechterhalten, weil sich die Kommission de facto verbietet, Vertragsverletzungsverfahren vor dem Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union (EuGH) einzuleiten.

Vor diesem Hintergrund ist fraglich, ob die von der Kommission in der Mitteilung KOM(2012)0702 angekündigte Überarbeitung der Richtlinie über irreführende und vergleichende Werbung (2006/114/EG) dem Binnenmarkt wirklich zugutekommen wird. Die Kommission plant die Einführung einer schwarzen Liste verbotener irreführender Vermarktungspraktiken zwischen Unternehmen nach dem Modell der Richtlinie 2005/29/EG. Das bisherige Vorgehen der Kommission legt die Vermutung nahe, dass sie auch bei der Umsetzung dieser neuen schwarzen Liste nicht mit den ihr zur Verfügung stehenden Mitteln gegen die Mitgliedstaaten vorgehen wird.

1. Warum hat die Kommission noch kein einziges Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen Mitgliedstaaten, die eindeutig gegen die Richtlinie 2005/29/EG verstoßen, eingeleitet?

2. Die nicht verbindlichen Leitlinien und der „strukturierte Dialog" mit den Mitgliedstaaten haben bei der Umsetzung der schwarzen Liste verbotener, irreführender und aggressiver Geschäftspraktiken in der Richtlinie über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken nicht geholfen. Welche anderweitigen konkreten Maßnahmen beabsichtigt die Kommission einzuleiten, um die richtige und vollständige Umsetzung dieser schwarzen Liste durchzusetzen?

3. Welche Schritte wird die Kommission unternehmen, um von vornherein eine einheitliche und richtige Umsetzung der schwarzen Liste verbotener, irreführender Vermarktungspraktiken zwischen Unternehmen in der überarbeiteten Richtlinie über irreführende und vergleichende Werbung sicherzustellen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2013)

Der Herr Abgeordnete dürfte wissen, dass sich die Kommission stets für die ordnungsgemäße Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2005/29/EG über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken (UGPRL) eingesetzt hat.

Neben den beiden Vertragsverletzungsverfahren, die 2007 gegen Belgien und 2008 gegen Frankreich eingeleitet wurden, hat die Kommission umfangreiche Umsetzungskontrollen durchgeführt, um die ordnungsgemäße Umsetzung der Konzepte und des vollständigen Harmonisierungseffekts der Richtlinie zu gewährleisten. Infolgedessen wurden einige Mahnschreiben versendet, die sich insbesondere auf die unkorrekte Umsetzung der sogenannten „schwarzen Liste" im Anhang I zur Richtlinie einschließlich des Verbots von Schneeballsystemen bezogen haben. Die Kommission wird nicht zögern, die Angelegenheit nach einer sorgfältigen Analyse der Antworten weiter zu verfolgen und erforderlichenfalls Vertragsverletzungsverfahren einzuleiten.

Durch den Bericht der Kommission über die Durchführung der am 14. März 2013 angenommenen UGPRL ([1]) wird deutlich, dass der rechtliche Rahmen der UGPRL gut geeignet ist, um die Lauterkeit von Werbetechniken zu überprüfen. Insbesondere die „schwarze Liste“ hat sich als nützliches Instrument erwiesen. Außerdem geht aus den Statistiken im Bericht über die Anwendung der Verordnung über die Zusammenarbeit im Verbraucherschutz für das Jahr 2012 ([2]) hervor, dass auf die UGPRL fast 50 % der Amtshilfeersuchen entfallen.

Dennoch bedarf es weiterer Anstrengungen im Bereich der Durchsetzung, um ein hohes Verbraucherschutzniveau zu gewährleisten, und zwar insbesondere im grenzüberschreitenden Handel. Zu den Handlungsschwerpunkten zählen die Weiterentwicklung der Leitlinien sowie die Ausdehnung der UGPRL-Datenbank, die Veranstaltung von thematischen Workshops mit nationalen Durchsetzungsbehörden in Bereichen, die für Verbraucher von zentraler Bedeutung sind, und die Einleitung von Vertragsverletzungsverfahren, wenn der Kommission Nachweise vorliegen, dass Mitgliedstaaten den Umsetzungs- und Durchsetzungsverpflichtungen nicht ordnungsgemäß nachkommen.

([1]) KOM(2013)139 endg.

([2]) Bericht der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat über die Anwendung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2006/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 27. Oktober 2004 über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den für die Durchsetzung der Verbraucherschutzgesetze zuständigen nationalen Behörden („Verordnung über die Zusammenarbeit im Verbraucherschutz“), KOM(2012)100 endg., 12.3.2012; abrufbar unter: http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0336:FIN:DE:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002171/13
to the Commission
Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the 'black list' in the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive and review of the directive concerning misleading and comparative advertising

Since the expiry of the deadline for implementing the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC) in 2007 there have been numerous cases of Member States not correctly implementing or applying key provisions, in particular the black list of banned, misleading and aggressive commercial practices (e.g. contrary to the ban on pyramid promotional schemes).

The only document produced by the Commission is a non-binding guidance document dating from 2009. It has also entered into an open-ended 'structured dialogue' with the Member States which have clearly contravened the directive. These measures have not put the Member States under sufficient pressure, however, and the latter will be able to maintain the status quo indefinitely because the Commission de facto will not allow itself to initiate infringement proceedings before the European Court of Justice.

Against this background, it is open to question whether the review of the directive concerning misleading and comparative advertising (2006/114/EC) announced by the Commission in Communication COM(2012)0702 will really benefit the internal market. The Commission is planning to introduce a black list of banned misleading marketing practices between companies following the model in Directive 2005/29/EC. The Commission's approach to date makes it seem highly likely that it will not use the means at its disposal to take action against Member States in connection with the implementation of this new black list either.

1. Why has the Commission still not initiated any infringement proceedings against Member States that are clearly contravening Directive 2005/29/EC?

2. The non-binding guidance document and the 'structured dialogue' with Member States have not helped with the implementation of the black list of banned, misleading and aggressive commercial practices in the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive. What other specific measures does the Commission intend to take in order to ensure the correct and complete implementation of this black list?

3. What steps will the Commission take in order to ensure, from the outset, that there is uniform and correct implementation of the black list of banned, misleading marketing practices between companies in the revised Directive concerning misleading and comparative advertising?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

The Honourable Member should know that the Commission has always been committed to ensure a correct implementation of Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices (the UCPD).

Next to the two infringement procedures opened against Belgium in 2007 and France in 2008, the Commission has launched a wide transposition check to ensure an adequate transposition of the concepts and the full harmonisation character of the directive. Consequently, a number of pre-infringement letters have been sent, pointing in particular to the incorrect transposition of the so called black list of Annex I to the directive, including the ban on pyramid schemes. Based on a careful analysis of the replies received, the Commission will not hesitate to further pursue the matter and open infringement procedures, where appropriate.

The Commission's Report on the application of the UCPD ([1]) adopted on 14 March 2013 shows that the legal framework of the UCPD is proving well suited to assess the fairness of advertising sales techniques. In particular, the black list has proved to be a useful tool. Furthermore, the statistics contained in the 2012 Report on the application of the CPC Regulation ([2]) show that the UCPD accounts for almost 50% of mutual assistance requests.

([1]) COM(2013) 139 final.
([2]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws ('The regulation on consumer protection cooperation'), COM(2012) 100 final, 12.3.2012; available at: http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0336:FIN:EN:PDF

However, further enforcement efforts should be made to guarantee a high level of consumer protection, particularly in cross-border trade. Key priorities for action include further developing the Guidance document, expanding the UCPD database, organising thematic workshops with national enforcers on areas of key concern for consumers and opening infringements procedures where the Commission has confirmation that Member States do not adequately comply with their transposition and enforcement obligations.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002172/13
à la Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(26 février 2013)

Objet: Contrôles suite au scandale des lasagnes à la viande de cheval

Suite au scandale dit «de la viande de cheval», qui a éclaté le 8 février 2013, après l'annonce de la découverte, en Grande-Bretagne, de viande de cheval dans des lasagnes à la viande de bœuf du géant agroalimentaire international Findus, il m'apparaît plus que jamais impératif de restaurer la confiance des consommateurs dans la chaîne alimentaire.

En tant que députée européenne membre de la commission de la santé publique du Parlement européen, mais également en tant que consommatrice, je suis d'avis qu'un renforcement des contrôles à tous les échelons s'impose plus que jamais.

Dans son Livre blanc sur la sécurité alimentaire, publié le 12 janvier 2000 (COM(1999)0719), la Commission précise que les crises récentes concernant la sécurité alimentaire ont mis en évidence les lacunes des systèmes nationaux de contrôle et que l'absence d'approche harmonisée dans la conception et la mise au point de ces systèmes est au cœur du problème. Un cadre communautaire pour les systèmes de contrôle nationaux, qui améliorera la qualité des contrôles à l'échelon communautaire et par conséquent rehaussera le niveau de sécurité alimentaire à travers l'Union européenne, y est défini (la gestion de ces systèmes de contrôle demeurant une compétence nationale). Il est clairement écrit que pour s'assurer que les systèmes de contrôle soient efficaces, la Commission conduit, par l'entremise de l'Office alimentaire et vétérinaire (OAV), un programme d'audits et d'inspections. Ces contrôles évaluent le fonctionnement des autorités nationales quant à leur capacité à mettre en œuvre et à gérer des systèmes de contrôle efficaces, et sont appuyés par des visites d'installations pour vérifier que des normes acceptables sont effectivement respectées.

Qu'en est-il de ces audits sur l'état des contrôles et des inspections annoncés par la Commission? Combien la Commission en a-t-elle déjà mené depuis la parution du Livre blanc? Quels sont les résultats obtenus? Un nouvel audit sera-t-il mené suite au nouveau scandale de la viande de cheval dans les lasagnes?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(22 avril 2013)

La Commission européenne, par l'intermédiaire de son Office alimentaire et vétérinaire (OAV), établit un programme d'audit annuel des contrôles officiels des États membres, des pays candidats et des pays tiers qui exportent des denrées alimentaires, des aliments pour animaux, des animaux ou des végétaux vers l'Union européenne et présente dans des rapports les résultats de ces audits et inspections.

Depuis sa création, en 1997, l'OAV a effectué près de 3 600 audits dans le domaine de la sûreté et de la qualité des denrées alimentaires, de la santé et du bien-être des animaux, ainsi que de la santé des végétaux. Le programme d'audit pour 2013 prévoit près de 250 inspections, dont 159 seront réalisées dans des États membres.

La Commission renvoie l'auteur de la question au site web de l'OAV ([1]), où figurent des liens vers les programmes d'audit annuels de l'Office (dont celui de l'année en cours) comme vers des rapports d'audit individuels, des rapports de synthèse portant sur des séries d'audits et des rapports annuels.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002172/13
to the Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Food safety checks following the horsemeat lasagne scandal

On 8 February 2013 it was revealed that horsemeat had been discovered in lasagne marketed in the UK by global food-processing giant Findus; the products in question were supposed to contain only beef. In the light of this scandal, it is more important than ever to restore consumer confidence in the food supply chain.

As an MEP and member of Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, and also as a consumer, I believe that it is now more essential than ever to step up checks at all stages of the supply chain.

In its White Paper on food safety (COM(1999)0719) published on 12 January 2000, the Commission said that recent food safety crises had revealed shortcomings in national control systems, and shown that the lack of a harmonised approach to the design and development of these systems was at the heart of the problem. The White paper envisaged a Community framework of national control systems, which would improve the quality of controls at Community level, and consequently raise food safety standards across the European Union (though the operation of the systems would remain a national competence). The paper clearly states that the Commission carries out a programme of audits and inspections, through the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), to ensure that these control systems are effective. These controls evaluate the performance of national authorities against their ability to deliver and operate effective control systems, and are supported by visits to individual premises to verify that acceptable standards are actually being met.

What progress has been made with the audits and inspections announced by the Commission? How many audits and inspections has the Commission conducted since the white paper was published? What were the results? Will it carry out another audit in the light of the recent horsemeat lasagne scandal?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The European Commission, through its Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), establishes an annual programme of audits of official controls in Member States, candidate countries and third countries exporting food, feed, animals and plants to the EU and reports on the outcome of these audits and inspections.

Since its establishment in 1997, the FVO has carried out almost 3 600 audits in the areas of food safety and quality, animal health and welfare, and plant health. The audit programme for 2013 proposes almost 250 audits of which 159 will be carried out in Member States.

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the FVO's website ([1]), which contains links to the FVO's annual audit programmes, including the ongoing 2013 programme, reports of individual audits, overview reports on audit series and annual reports.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002173/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(26. februar 2013)

Om: Sukkerpriserne i EU

Over de senere år er prisen på sukker i EU i stigende grad harmoniseret. Det har betydet, at for forbrugere af sukker — herunder virksomheder, hvori sukker indgår i produktionskæden — er der ikke længere forskel på sukkerpriserne, uanset hvor man køber sukker i EU. Effekten af at købe sukker i store voluminer er ligeledes aftagende.

Endvidere har adskillige sukkerproducenter oplevet fremgang i indtjeningen over de senere år. Det er sket trods en nedgang i økonomien og et faldende forbrug af sukker.

På baggrund af ovenstående vil Kommissionen tage skridt til at undersøge, om der fortsat er tilstrækkelig konkurrence på det europæiske sukkermarked i overensstemmelse med traktatens præambel om »ligevægt i samhandelen og redelig konkurrence«?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Joaquín Almunia
(24. april 2013)

Som følge af reformen i 2006 har sukkersektoren kunnet stabilisere sig og blive omkostningseffektiv med det resultat, at europæiske virksomheder er blevet mere internationalt konkurrencedygtige.

Selvom der er opnået effektivitetsgevinster, øget konkurrencedygtighed og told- og kvotefri adgang for sukker fra de mindst udviklede lande og AVS-landene, påvirkes sukkersektorens økonomiske resultater stadig af tilstedeværelsen af kvoter, som sammen med det begrænsede antal leverandører er en hindring for fuldstændig og ufordrejet konkurrence.

Som fastsat i reformen fra 2006 og Kommissionens forslag til udformningen af den fælles landbrugspolitik efter 2013 forventes kvoterne at ophøre i 2015, men i den igangværende lovgivningsproces om reformen af den fælles landbrugspolitik har både Rådet og Europa-Parlamentet vedtaget forhandlingsmandater om forlængelse af kvoterne indtil henholdsvis 2017 og 2020.

Sukkersektoren er underlagt løbende tilsyn og overvågning, som foretages af Generaldirektoratet for Landbrug og Udvikling af Landdistrikter, der i de senere år gentagne gange har været nødt til at gribe ind med interventionsforanstaltninger for at modvirke markedsforstyrrelser forårsaget af høje priser i EU.

Kommissionen og de nationale tilsynsmyndigheder har endvidere flere gange tidligere håndhævet konkurrencereglerne i sukkersektoren, hvad angår karteller, øvrige kartel- og monopolregler og fusioner. Ved vurderingen af Südzuckers erhvervelse af kontrol med ED&F MAN godkendte Kommissionen for nylig fusionen, som blev underkastet væsentlige forpligtelser for at forhindre en svækkelse af konkurrencen på et vigtigt europæisk marked.

Uafhængigt af lovgivningsproceduren vedrørende sukkerkvoter arbejder Kommissionen — i tilfælde af at den bliver gjort opmærksom på særlige forhold eller oplysninger — for at forbedre de nuværende konkurrenceregler i forsyningskæden i sukkersektoren gennem sine almindelige beføjelser på konkurrenceområdet i henhold til TEUF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002173/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Sugar prices in the EU

In recent years the price of sugar in the EU has increasingly been harmonised. This has meant that for sugar consumers — including businesses which use sugar in their production chains — there is no longer any difference in the sugar price, wherever one buys it in the EU. The benefit of buying sugar in large volumes is also diminishing.

Furthermore various sugar producers have increased their earnings in recent years, in spite of a recession in the economy and falling sugar consumption.

In the lightof the above, will the Commission take measures to investigate whether there is still sufficient competition on the European sugar market, in accordance with the principle set out in the preamble to the Treaty of 'balanced trade and fair competition'?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The 2006 reform has enabled the sugar sector to stabilise and achieve efficiencies, making EU firms more competitive internationally.

In spite of gains in efficiency and competitiveness and duty-free quota-free access of sugar from the least developed and ACP countries, sugar sector performance remains largely influenced by the existence of quotas which, together with the limited number of suppliers, are an obstacle to full and undistorted competition.

While quotas are supposed to end in 2015, as set out in the 2006 reform and in the Commission's proposals for the CAP after 2013, in the ongoing legislative process of the CAP reform, both Council and Parliament adopted negotiation mandates to prolong quotas, until 2017 and 2020 respectively.

The sugar sector is subject to continuous monitoring and supervision by Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development who in recent years had to repeatedly resort to intervention measures to remedy market disturbances, such as high prices in the EU.

Furthermore, the Commission and National Competition Authorities have enforced competition rules in the sugar sector several times in the past, in the context of cartels, other antitrust infringements and mergers. Recently, during the assessment of the acquisition of control by Südzucker over ED&F MAN, the Commission cleared the merger subject to important commitments to prevent the lessening of competition in a primary European market.

Independently of the legislative procedure on sugar quotas, the Commission is committed to enforcing current competition provisions in the sugar supply chain, via its ordinary competition powers under the TFEU, should any specific fact or information be brought to its attention.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002174/13
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Benachteiligung Schwerbehinderter

Sowohl die UN-Konvention über die Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderungen als auch die Europäische Strategie zugunsten von Menschen mit Behinderungen stellen die Förderung der Rechte Behinderter auf Chancengleichheit mit dem Ziel eines Lebens ohne Einschränkungen in den Mittelpunkt.

Vielen Menschen mit Behinderung wird dennoch nach wie vor eine Einstellung verweigert. Die Hälfte der Unternehmen in Deutschland hält die gesetzliche Quote von fünf Prozent nicht ein; ein Drittel der Unternehmen stellt gar keine Schwerbehinderten ein.

Die Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit ist insbesondere bei Schwerbehinderten hoch. Bis 2011 erhielten Arbeitgeber, die besonders schwervermittelbare Arbeitslose einstellten, 75 % des Entgeltes als Zuschuss. Durch die Kürzung dieses Zuschusses hat sich der Anteil derer, die Schwervermittelbare einstellen, verringert.

1. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission, um die Chancen Schwerbehinderter auf dem Arbeitsmarkt europaweit zu verbessern?

2. Welche Maßnahmen können seitens der Kommission ergriffen werden, um Sanktionsmaßnahmen gegen Unternehmen durchzusetzen, die nicht eine bestimmte Quote von Schwerbehinderten einstellen?

3. In wie weit können behindertengerechte Arbeitsplatzbedingungen subventioniert werden, so dass eine größere Anzahl behinderter Menschen einer angemessenen Tätigkeit nachgehen kann?

4. Im Rahmen der Beschäftigung behinderter Menschen in Europa stellt sich auch die Frage nach einer europäischen Regelung für die Schwerbehindertenvertretung in Betrieben. Plant die Kommission derzeit dahin gehende Schritte?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

Was die Beschäftigungsmaßnahmen angeht, weist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-1151/2013 zur Strategie für die Sicherstellung der gleichberechtigten Teilhabe behinderter Personen an der Gesellschaft, einschließlich der Beschäftigung, hin.

Zu spezifischen Beschäftigungsquoten sowie deren Durchsetzung verweist sie auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-010626/2011.

Bezüglich verfügbarer Subventionen für die Anpassung von Arbeitsplätzen an die Bedürfnisse behinderter Personen verweist die Kommission auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-1151/2013.

Die Modalitäten der Einbeziehung behinderter Menschen in die repräsentativen Gremien in Betrieben — falls solche bestehen — fallen in die Zuständigkeit der Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten. Derzeit plant die Kommission keine entsprechende Initiative.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002174/13
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Disadvantage faced by severely disabled people

Both the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy focus on promoting the rights of persons with disabilities to equal opportunities, with the goal of them living their lives without restrictions.

Many people with disabilities are still being denied a job, however. Half of the companies in Germany are not complying with the legal quota of five per cent, and a third employ no severely disabled people at all.

Long-term unemployment is particularly high among the severely disabled. Up to 2011, employers who took on people who were particularly difficult to employ received 75% of the remuneration in the form of a grant. As a result of cuts in this grant, the proportion of those employing severely disabled people has fallen.

1. What measures does the Commission plan to take in order to improve the opportunities for severely disabled persons on the labour market throughout Europe?

2. What steps could the Commission take in order to impose penalties on companies that do not employ a specific quota of severely disabled persons?

3. To what extent can workplace conditions suitable for disabled persons be subsidised so that a larger proportion of disabled persons can engage in appropriate work?

4. In connection with the employment of disabled persons in Europe, the question of a European system for the representation of severely disabled persons in enterprises also arises. Does the Commission currently have plans to take any steps in this regard?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

Regarding employment measures, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1151/2013 for the strategy to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in society, including employment, on equal terms with other citizens.

Regarding specific employment quotas as well as their enforcement, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010626/2011.

Regarding subsidies available for adjusting workplaces to the needs of persons with disabilities, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1151/2013.

The modalities for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the representative bodies of enterprises, where they exist, belong to the competences of authorities in the Member States. The Commission is not currently planning an initiative in this area.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002175/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Uran in Düngemitteln

Düngemittel können Uran enthalten, meldet der Verein für Konsumenteninformation (VKI) in Österreich. Bei acht von 18 getesteten Düngemitteln seien „hohe Werte" festgestellt worden. Für Uran im Dünger existieren in Österreich weder Grenzwerte noch Deklarationspflichten. Untersucht wurden 18 mineralische Phosphordünger, darunter Rasen-, Blumen-, Obst- und Gemüsedünger. Bei acht Produkten wurden Uranwerte zwischen 82 und 387,5 Milligramm pro Kilogramm Phosphat gemessen — laut VKI seien das „hohe Werte".

Uran ist ein schwach radioaktives Schwermetall, das in der Natur praktisch überall vorkommt: in Gestein, im Boden, in der Luft und im Wasser. Es kann daher in Spuren in vielen Lebensmitteln enthalten sein. Was Uran gefährlich macht, sei nicht vorrangig seine Strahlung, sondern dass es bei anhaltender Aufnahme höherer Urankonzentrationen oder beim Einatmen größerer Mengen des giftigen Düngerstaubs zu Schäden an Nieren, Lunge, Knochenmark und Leber kommen könne, so der VKI.

In Deutschland empfiehlt die deutsche Kommission Bodenschutz beim Umweltbundesamt (KBU) eine Kennzeichnung ab 20 Milligramm Uran und einen Grenzwert von 50 Milligramm Uran je Kilogramm Phosphat.

1. Besteht in anderen Ländern der EU eine Kennzeichnungspflicht?

2. Gibt es EU-weit Bestrebungen, eine einheitliche Kennzeichnungspflicht einzuführen?

3. Gibt es EU-weit Bestrebungen, eine Obergrenze von Uran in Düngemitteln festzusetzen?

4. Wenn ja, wie hoch soll diese sein?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(30. April 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass Phosphatdünger bestimmte Mengen Uran enthalten können, und sie verfolgt aufmerksam die wissenschaftliche Diskussion zu dieser Frage. Unter anderem nahmen die für die Düngemittelverordnung zuständigen Dienststellen kürzlich an einer Anhörung des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats für Düngungsfragen des (deutschen) Bundesministeriums für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz teil, bei der auch Sachverständige aus den Niederlanden, Frankreich und Belgien vertreten waren.

Etwaige Kennzeichnungspflichten für Uran in Phosphatdüngemitteln seitens der Mitgliedstaaten sind der Kommission nicht bekannt.

Im Rahmen einer Überarbeitung der EU-Düngemittelverordnung wird geprüft, ob für einige Kontaminanten Grenzwerte festgelegt werden müssen. Bei Uran bestehen wie auch bei anderen Kontaminanten in der EU erhebliche regionale Unterschiede bei der natürlichen Hintergrundkonzentration in Böden und im Wasser. Wegen der naturgegebenen Unterschiede innerhalb der EU könnten sich zu diesem Zeitpunkt regionale Maßnahmen — z. B. in Trinkwassergewinnungsgebieten — anstatt von Kennzeichnungspflichten oder der Festlegung von Grenzwerten als wirkungsvoller erweisen. Die Kommission wird die Entwicklung weiter verfolgen.

Ferner befasst sich die Kommission mit dem nachhaltigen Einsatz von Phosphor. In diesem Zusammenhang unterstützt sie Bestrebungen zur Wiederverwendung von Phosphor organischen Ursprungs, was dazu führen sollte, dass weniger phosphathaltiger Mineraldünger verwendet und somit in der EU weniger Uran in die Umgebung freigesetzt wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002175/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Uranium in fertilisers

The Austrian Association for Consumer Information (VKI) has reported that uranium may be found in fertilisers. 'High levels' were found in eight of 18 fertilisers tested. There are no limit values in Austria for uranium in fertilisers, and there is no obligation to declare uranium content. Eighteen phosphorus-based mineral fertilisers were investigated, including lawn, flower, fruit and vegetable fertilisers. Between 82 and 387.5 mg of uranium per kg of phosphate were measured in eight products, which according to the VKI are 'high levels'.

Uranium is a weakly radioactive heavy metal which occurs practically everywhere in nature: in rocks, in the soil, in the air and in water. Traces of it can therefore be found in many foodstuffs. According to the VKI, it is not mainly radiation that makes uranium hazardous, but the fact that the sustained ingestion of high concentrations of uranium or the inhalation of large amounts of poisonous fertiliser dust may result in damage to the kidneys, lungs, bone marrow and liver.

In Germany, the Soil Protection Committee of the Federal Environment Agency (KBU) recommends that fertiliser with a uranium content of 20 mg or over should be labelled, and that a limit value of 50 mg of uranium per kg of phosphate should be put in place.

1. Have any other EU Member States introduced mandatory labelling?

2. Are any efforts being undertaken at EU level to introduce uniform mandatory labelling?

3. Are any efforts being undertaken at EU level to impose an upper limit for uranium in fertilisers?

4. If so, what should the limit be?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission is aware that phosphate fertilisers may contain certain amounts of uranium and follows attentively the scientific debate on this issue. Among others, the services responsible for the Fertilisers Regulation participated at a recent hearing of the scientific committee for fertiliser issues of the German Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, also attended by experts from the Netherlands, France and Belgium.

The Commission is not aware of any labelling requirement for uranium in phosphate fertilisers in the Member States.

The need for setting limits for a range of contaminants is being studied in the context of the preparations for a revision of the European Fertilisers Regulation. For uranium, as for other contaminants, there are significant regional differences with regard to the natural background concentrations in soils and water throughout the EU. Furthermore, due to the natural differences throughout the EU, at this stage regional measures such as specific measures in drinking water abstraction areas could prove effective instead of mandatory labelling or setting of limits. The Commission will keep the situation under review.

In addition, the Commission is working on the sustainable use of phosphorus. In this context the Commission supports efforts to re-use phosphorus from organic sources, which should also lead to a reduction of the input of new uranium into the EU environment by decreasing the use of mineral phosphate fertilisers.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002176/13

an die Kommission

Andreas Mölzer (NI)

(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Lebensmittel aus China

Rund 37 % der gesamten Weltproduktion an Obst und Gemüse werden mittlerweile in China angebaut. Laut Schätzungen sind 80 % der in Marmelade und Joghurts verwendeten Erdbeeren, 90 % des Apfelsaftkonzentrates sowie ein Drittel aller Tomaten für Ketchup, die im EU-Handel erhältlich sind, aus China. Die Tendenz für den Lebensmittelimport aus China ist stark steigend. Der Import von Fisch aus China hat sich innerhalb der letzten zehn Jahre auf 941 Tonnen pro Jahr gesteigert.

Laut Experten unterliegt die chinesische Produktion einer weit geringeren Kontrolle als die Produktion innerhalb der EU und ist weit entfernt von europäischen Hygienestandards. Dieser Umstand ist vor allem beim Anbau von Obst und Gemüse problematisch, denn massiver Pestizideinsatz gehört auf Chinas Feldern zum Alltag. Im Jahr 2012 musste die EU-Lebensmittelkontrolle 3 697 mal bei Produkten aus China Alarm schlagen. Die Kontrolleure konnten unter anderen Schimmelpilze in Tiefkühlerbsen, Hepatitis-A-Viren in Tiefkühlerdbeeren, Noroviren in Tiefkühlerdbeeren, mit Maden durchzogene, nach Italien importierte Pasta, genveränderte Reiscracker, krebserregende Stoffe im Speiseöl und Glassplitter in Kürbiskernen feststellen.

Bei vielen Produkten werden die Lebensmittel aus China importiert, in Europa verpackt und ohne Herkunftshinweis auf der Verpackung in den Handel gebracht. Die nicht informierten Verbraucher kaufen importierte Waren in dem Glauben, einheimische Produkte zu konsumieren (Fertigpizzen, Dosenobst, etc.).

1. Gibt es Erhebungen, wie viele Lebensmittelprodukte aus China von den Lebensmittelkontrolleuren in der EU aus dem Handel genommen wurden?

2. Gibt es seitens der EU Bemühungen, den Import aus China einzuschränken und die europäische Lebensmittelproduktion zu stärken?

3. Gibt es geplante Maßnahmen für verpflichtende Herkunftsangaben der einzelnen Zutaten der Produkte, die im europäischen Handel erhältlich sind, um die Verbraucher ausreichend zu informieren?

4. Gibt es seitens der EU weitere Bemühungen, die Verbraucher über die Herkunft der Produkte ausreichend zu informieren?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission

(2. Mai 2013)

1. Ja. Datenquelle ist das Schnellwarnsystem für Lebens- und Futtermittel (RASFF). Die EU-Mitgliedstaaten führen an den EU-Grenzen und im EU-Binnenmarkt Kontrollen durch. Falls ein Produkt nicht den Vorschriften genügt und ein Gesundheitsrisiko darstellt, muss der betreffende Mitgliedstaat dies der Kommission unverzüglich mithilfedes RASFF melden. Die Kommission leitet die Information dann umgehend an alle Netzmitglieder weiter. Wird ein Produkt an der EU-Grenze zurückgewiesen, so teilt die Kommission dies sofort allen Grenzstellen und dem Ursprungsland des Produkts mit. In den Jahren 2011 und 2012 war China von 581 bzw. 549 RASFF-Meldungen betroffen.

2. Im Oktober 2011 hat die Kommission ein Bündel mit Legislativvorschlägen für eine Reform der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik vorgelegt. Ziel ist es, das Potenzial der EU zur Lebensmittelproduktion und damit zugleich die langfristige Versorgung der europäischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger mit hochwertigen und vielfältigen Lebensmitteln zu sichern, die nachhaltig und im Einklang mit den EU-Bestimmungen in den Bereichen Umwelt, Wasser, Tiergesundheit und -schutz, Pflanzengesundheit und öffentliche Gesundheit hergestellt werden.

3./4. Gemäß der Richtlinie 2000/13/EG ([1]) sind Ursprungsangaben auf einem Lebensmittel zwingend, wenn deren Fehlen den Käufer in die Irre führen könnte. Die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 ([2]) schreibt für unverarbeitetes Schweine-, Hühner-, Schaf- und Ziegenfleisch ab dem 13. Dezember 2014 die Angabe des Ursprungslandes oder des Herkunftsortes vor. Zudem muss die Kommission Berichte über eine eventuelle Ausweitung der verpflichtenden Ursprungsangabe auf folgende Produkte erstellen: andere Arten von Fleisch als Rind-, Schweine-, Schaf- und Hühnerfleisch; Milch; Milch, die als Zutat in Milchprodukten verwendet wird; Fleisch als Zutat; unverarbeitete Lebensmittel; Erzeugnisse aus einer Zutat; Zutaten, die über 50 % eines Lebensmittels ausmachen.

([1]) ABl. L 109 vom 6.5.2000, S. 29.
([2]) ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002176/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Food from China

Around 37% of the entire global production of fruit and vegetables is now grown in China. According to estimates, 80% of the strawberries in jams and yoghurts, 90% of apple juice concentrates and a third of all tomatoes for ketchup on the EU market are from China. There is a strong upward trend in importing food from China. The import of fish from China has risen to 941 tonnes per year in the last 10 years.

According to experts, Chinese production is subject to far fewer controls than production within the EU and is a long way from meeting European hygiene standards. This situation is particularly problematic with regard to the cultivation of fruit and vegetables, as it is customary to use enormous quantities of pesticides on China's fields. In 2012, the EU food inspection authorities had to sound the alarm 3697 times in connection with products from China. Some of the things the inspectors were able to find were mould in frozen peas, hepatitis A virus in frozen strawberries, norovirus in frozen strawberries, pasta imported into Italy riddled with maggots, genetically modified rice crackers, carcinogenic substances in edible oil and splinters of glass in pumpkin seeds.

Many of these food products were imported from China, packaged in Europe and placed on the market without any indication of the products' origin on the packaging. Uninformed consumers are buying imported goods in the belief that they are consuming domestic products (ready-made pizzas, tinned fruit, etc.).

1. Have any surveys been carried out on how many food products from China have been removed from sale by food inspectors in the EU?

2. Are any efforts being made by the EU to limit imports from China and to increase European food production?

3. Are there any plans for measures for the mandatory indication of the origin of the individual ingredients of the products available on the European market in order to provide consumers with adequate information?

4. Are any efforts being made by the EU to provide consumers with adequate information on the origin of products?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

1. Yes. Information is given by the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). EU Member States perform inspections at EU borders and in the EU internal market. If a product is non-compliant and presents a health risk, the EU Member State must immediately notify the Commission using RASFF. The Commission immediately transmits it to all members of the network. In case of rejection at the border of the EU, the Commission immediately notifies all border posts and the country of origin. China-related RASFF notifications accounted for 581 and 549 notifications in 2011 and 2012.

2. In October 2011, the Commission presented a package of legislative proposals for the reform of the common agricultural policy to preserve the food production potential on a sustainable basis throughout the EU, to guarantee long-term food security for European citizens with quality, value and diversity of food produced sustainably, in line with the EU's environmental, water, animal health and welfare, plant health and public health requirements.

3 and 4. Under Directive 2000/13/EC [1], the indication of origin of foods is mandatory where its omission could mislead the purchaser. Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 [2] requires the indication of country of origin or place of provenance for unprocessed meat of pigs, poultry, sheep and goats as of 13 December 2014. It requires the Commission to prepare reports on the possible extension of mandatory origin labelling to: types of meat other than beef, swine, sheep, goat and poultry; milk; milk used as ingredient in dairy products; meat used as an ingredient; unprocessed foods; single ingredient products; ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food.

---

[1] OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29-42.
[2] OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18-63.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002177/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Umsatzsteuerbetrug mit Energie

Schätzungen zufolge wird allein in Deutschland jede Kilowattstunde Strom sieben bis achtmal weiterverkauft, bevor sie beim Kunden landet. Dem Vernehmen nach sollen kriminelle Geschäfte auf dem Strommarkt für Kontrolleure kaum überprüfbar sein. Bei einem Marktvolumen für den Strom- und Gashandel von mehreren hundert Milliarden Euro könnte hier Umsatzsteuerbetrug in großem Ausmaß erfolgen.

Während die meisten europäischen Staaten in Bezug auf Umsatzsteuerbetrug im Emissionshandel gesetzliche Schlupflöcher geschlossen haben, ist dies beim Handel mit Energie problematisch. Dem Vernehmen nach soll der Nachweis von Kettengeschäften so gut wie unmöglich sein, da der Verkauf zumeist nicht mit einer physischen Lieferung verbunden ist.

1. Welche Maßnahmen werden auf europäischer Ebene ergriffen, um Umsatzsteuerbetrug beim Energiehandel entgegenzuwirken?

2. Welche Ansätze gibt es, um den Nachweis von Kettengeschäften beim Energiehandel zu ermöglichen?

3. In der EU gab es bereits mehrfach Anläufe, das gesamte Umsatzsteuersystem so umzugestalten, dass der milliardenschwere Betrug mit der Umsatzsteuer nicht mehr möglich sein soll. Wie ist der derzeitige Stand dieser Initiative?

4. Welche europäischen Staaten haben gesetzliche Schlupflöcher in Bezug auf Umsatzsteuerbetrug im Emissionshandel bereits geschlossen und bei welchen steht dies noch aus?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2013)

In Zusammenarbeit mit den Mitgliedstaaten verfolgt die Kommission die Situation genau. Die MwSt.-Beobachtungsstelle von Eurofisc untersucht derzeit die neuen Betrugstendenzen beim Strom- und Gashandel im Einzelnen und geht auch der Frage des Nachweises von Kettengeschäften nach. Damit ist ein schneller Informationsaustausch über betrügerische Händler gewährleistet.

Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission ein umfassendes Gesetzeswerk verabschiedet, das für mehr Transparenz und eine bessere Überwachung des Energiehandels sorgen soll. So wird mit der Verordnung über die Integrität und Transparenz des Energiegroßhandelsmarkts (REMIT) von 2011 eine wirksame Überwachung des Energiehandels durch nationale Regulierungsbehörden und die Agentur für die Zusammenarbeit der Energieregulierungsbehörden (ACER) sichergestellt und damit die Gefahr einer Marktmanipulation im Energiesektor verringert.

Zum Mehrwertsteuersystem wurde am 6.12.2011 eine Mitteilung verabschiedet ([1]), in der die grundlegenden Merkmale eines robusteren und weniger betrugsanfälligen MwSt.-Systems skizziert wurden und aus der eine erste Rechtsetzungsinitiative für einen Schnellreaktionsmechanismus hervorging, auf dessen Grundlage Mitgliedstaaten innerhalb eines Monats ermächtigt werden können, bei unvermitteltem und schwerwiegendem Betrug eine Ausnahmeregelung zum Zwecke der Betrugsbekämpfung anzuwenden ([2]). Leider konnten sich die Mitgliedstaaten noch nicht auf diesen Vorschlag einigen, der auch geeignet ist, Betrug im Energiesektor zu bekämpfen.

Im Rahmen der geltenden Richtlinie ([3]) sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, die Kommission zu unterrichten, wenn sie beim Handel mit Treibhausgas-Emissionszertifikaten auf die Option des Reverse-Charge-Verfahrens zurückgreifen. Der Kommission wurde die Anwendung dieser Option von folgenden Mitgliedstaaten gemeldet: Belgien, Dänemark, Deutschland, Irland, Spanien, Frankreich, Luxemburg, Ungarn, Niederlande, Österreich, Rumänien, Slowenien, Slowakei, Finnland und Schweden.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament, den Rat und den Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss zur Zukunft der Mehrwertsteuer: Wege zu einem einfacheren, robusteren und effizienteren MwSt.-System, das auf den Binnenmarkt zugeschnitten ist (KOM(2011)851 endg.).

([2]) Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Rates zur Änderung der Richtlinie 2006/112/EG des Rates über das gemeinsame Mehrwertsteuersystem in Bezug auf einen Schnellreaktionsmechanismus bei Mehrwertsteuerbetrug (KOM(2012)428).

([3]) Richtlinie 2010/23/EU des Rates vom 16. März 2010 über das gemeinsame Mehrwertsteuersystem im Hinblick auf eine fakultative und zeitweilige Anwendung des Reverse-Charge-Verfahrens auf die Erbringung bestimmter betrugsanfälliger Dienstleistungen (ABl. L 1 vom 20.03.2010, S. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002177/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Turnover tax fraud in connection with energy

According to estimates, in Germany alone every kilowatt hour of electricity is sold on seven to eight times before it reaches the customer. Criminal dealings on the electricity market are reported to be difficult for inspectors to investigate. With a market volume for exchanges in electricity and gas amounting to several hundred billion euros, turnover tax fraud could be taking place here on a large scale.

Whereas most EU Member States have closed any legal loopholes in connection with turnover tax fraud in emissions trading, this is problematic when it comes to trade in energy. According to reports, chain transactions are virtually impossible to prove, as the sale is not usually associated with any physical delivery.

1. What measures are being taken at EU level to tackle turnover tax fraud in energy trading?

2. What initiatives exist to enable proof to be obtained of chain transactions in energy trading?

3. There have already been several attempts in the EU to restructure the entire turnover tax system in order to make turnover tax fraud, which runs into billions, impossible. What is the current status of this initiative?

4. Which EU Member States have already closed legal loopholes with regard to turnover tax fraud in emissions trading, and which are yet to do so?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, is monitoring the situation closely.

In the VAT Observatory of Eurofisc, new fraud trends with supplies of gas and electricity, are currently being looked at in detail, including the matter of proof to be obtained of chain transactions. This guarantees a quick exchange of information on fraudulent traders.

In addition, the Commission has created a comprehensive set of legislation for more transparency and better monitoring of energy trade. Notably the regulation on wholesale market integrity and transparency ('REMIT') of 2011 will ensure effective supervision of energy trade by national regulators and the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER), to minimise risks of market manipulation in the field of energy.

On the VAT system, a communication was adopted on 6/12/2011 ([1]) setting out the fundamental characteristics of a possible more robust and fraud proof VAT regime of which the Quick Reaction Mechanism was the first legislative initiative aimed at providing Member States, within one month, a legal basis for derogating anti-fraud measures against sudden and massive fraud ([2]). Unfortunately, Member States have not yet agreed on this proposal which could, potentially, deal with fraud in the energy sector.

Under the relevant Directive ([3]), Member States are obliged to inform the Commission if they make use of the option to apply the reverse charge mechanism to supplies of greenhouse gas emission allowances. The Commission received notification of application of the option from the following Member States: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

([1]) Communication from the commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee on the future of VAT: towards a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system tailored to the single market (COM(2011) 851 final).

([2]) Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax as regards a quick reaction mechanism against VAT fraud (COM(2012)428).

([3]) Council Directive 2010/23/EU of 16 March 2010 amending Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax, as regards an optional and temporary application of the reverse charge mechanism in relation to supplies of certain services susceptible to fraud (OJ L72, 20.3.2010, p. 1).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002178/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(26 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διαχείριση του πλακούντα από κατ' οίκον τοκετούς

Η Περιφέρεια Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας εξέδωσε Οδηγία για τους κατ' οίκον τοκετούς, όπου χαρακτηρίζεται ως Επικίνδυνο Ιατρικό Απόβλητο Μολυσματικού Χαρακτήρα (ΕΙΑ-ΜΧ) ο πλακούντας. Σύμφωνα με την υπ. αριθμ. Η.Π. 37591/2031/03 ΚΥΑ (ΦΕΚ 1419/Β) «η διαχείριση των ΕΙΑ-ΜΧ θα πρέπει να γίνεται από φορείς οι οποίοι έχουν εγκεκριμένη άδεια». Σημειώνεται ότι οι γυναίκες που επιλέγουν να γεννήσουν στο σπίτι συνήθως θέλουν να διαχειρίζονται οι ίδιες τον πλακούντα τους, με σεβασμό στο ότι αποτελεί σημειολογικά τη σύνδεση μάνας-βρέφους. Επίσης, η αποτέφρωση του πλακούντα από ιδιωτική εταιρεία κοστίζει 100-150 ευρώ επιβαρύνοντας έτσι επιπλέον το κόστος του κατ' οίκον τοκετού, ενώ δεν υπάρχει επαρκής έλεγχος του τι συμβαίνει μετά την παράδοση προς αποτέφρωση, γεγονός που θέτει και ζητήματα βιοηθικής. Ως αποτέλεσμα αυτής της Οδηγίας, τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 στην Θεσσαλονίκη, καταδικάστηκε πειθαρχικά μαία που αναλάμβανε τοκετούς στο σπίτι με βασική κατηγορία την μόλυνση του περιβάλλοντος από «επικίνδυνα ιατρικά απόβλητα» (εννοώντας τον πλακούντα της λεχώνας) που παράγονται στους κατ' οίκον τοκετούς, με αποτέλεσμα να της αφαιρέσουν την άδεια ασκήσεως επαγγέλματος για ένα χρόνο. Το πειθαρχικό συμβούλιο δέχθηκε ως κύριο πειθαρχικό παράπτωμα το ότι η μαία δε διαχειρίστηκε τον πλακούντα ως επικίνδυνο-μολυσματικό ιατρικό απόβλητο, δίνοντας τον για αποτέφρωση σε κάποια υγειονομική μονάδα. Είχε προηγηθεί έρευνα από δημόσιους φορείς, προκειμένου να εντοπιστούν ονομαστικά όλοι οι επαγγελματίες υγείας και οι γονείς που συμμετείχαν σε τοκετούς στο σπίτι και να εξεταστούν από τις δικαστικές αρχές ως ύποπτοι τέλεσης αδικημάτων. Ακολούθησε ποινική δίωξη 79 ατόμων (5 ιατρών, 1 μαίας και 73 γονέων) με κύριο αδίκημα την ρύπανση του περιβάλλοντος κατ' εξακολούθηση από τη μη «παράδοση» του πλακούντα σε εταιρίες διαχείρισης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εκτιμά ότι θα πρέπει να παρέχεται η δυνατότητα στη λεχώνα να διαχειρίζεται η ίδια τον πλακούντα της, αντί να της επιβάλλεται ο συγκεκριμένος τρόπος διαχείρισης;

2. Εκτιμά ότι η Οδηγία που εξέδωσε η Περιφέρεια Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας για τους κατ' οίκον τοκετούς, αλλά και για την δημιουργία αρχείου προσώπων που συμμετέχουν σε τοκετούς στο σπίτι είναι συμβατή με την Ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία;

3. Διαθέτει πληροφορίες για τη σχετική νομοθεσία σε άλλα κράτη μέλη;

4. Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για τα ποσοστά των γυναικών που γεννούν στο σπίτι σε άλλα κράτη-μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Απριλίου 2013)

Οι ερωτήσεις που έθεσε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου αφορούν θέματα, τα οποία εμπίπτουν στην ευθύνη της Ελλάδος. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει κανένα στοιχείο σχετικά με τα προαναφερθέντα θέματα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002178/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Disposal of placentas from home births

The Region of Central Macedonia has issued a directive on home births, which classifies placentas as Hazardous Medical Waste of an Infectious Nature. According to Joint Ministerial Decision No 37591/2031/03 (Government Official Journal 1419 / B) 'the disposal of Hazardous Medical Waste of an Infectious Nature should be carried out by entities that are authorised to do so.' It should be noted that women who choose to give birth at home usually want to dispose of their own placenta, mindful of its symbolic role as link between mother and child. Furthermore, the incineration of a placenta by a private company costs between EUR 100 and EUR 150, adding to the cost of home births, and there is inadequate control over what happens after the placenta is handed over for incineration, which raises issues of bioethics. As a result of this directive, in December 2012 a midwife who had carried out home births faced a main charge of polluting the environment with 'hazardous medical waste' (i.e. the placenta following confinement) produced at home births and was sentenced in disciplinary proceedings in Thessaloniki: she was suspended for one year. The Disciplinary Board accepted as the main disciplinary offence that the midwife had failed to dispose of the placenta as dangerous and infectious medical waste, since she had give it for incineration to some healthcare unit. These proceedings followed an investigation by public bodies to identify the names of all healthcare professionals and parents involved in home births who were examined by the judicial authorities on suspicion of committing an offence. As a result, 79 individuals were prosecuted (five doctors, one midwife and 73 parents) on the main charge of repeatedly polluting the environment by failing to 'surrender' placentas to the disposal companies.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it take the view that a woman should be able to dispose of her placenta herself after giving birth, instead of being obliged to dispose of it in a specified manner?

2. Does it believe that the directive issued by the Region of Central Macedonia governing home births and opening a file on persons involved in home births is compatible with EC law?

3. Does it have any information on relevant legislation in other Member States?

4. Does it have any statistics on the percentage of women who give birth at home in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The questions raised by the Honourable Member relate to issues which fall within the responsibility of Greece. The Commission does not possess any information on the subjects mentioned.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002179/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(26 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: ΟΠΑΠ — Διαδικασία αίθουσας πληροφοριών (data room)

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό Τύπο ([1]) σχετικά με την αποκρατικοποίηση του ΟΠΑΠ, «τα σχήματα που έχουν προκριθεί στη δεύτερη φάση έχουν κληθεί να προχωρήσουν σε έλεγχο της εταιρείας μέσω διαδικασίας αίθουσας πληροφοριών (data room). Καθώς, όπως αποδείχθηκε, στους ενδιαφερόμενους δεν δόθηκε το σύνολο των στοιχείων αναφορικά με κρίσιμες συμβάσεις που έχει υπογράψει ο Οργανισμός, όπως για παράδειγμα αυτή για την ανάληψη των Κρατικών Λαχείων …, διατυπώθηκαν προς το ΤΑΙΠΕΔ έντονες αντιδράσεις».

Η κυβέρνηση απέσυρε τελικά σχετική τροπολογία η οποία θα παρείχε στο ΤΑΙΠΕΔ τη δυνατότητα να αξιώνει από τις διοικήσεις των ΔΕΚΟ και των άλλων εταιρειών των οποίων είναι μέτοχος στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος αποκρατικοποιήσεων, «όλες εν γένει τις πληροφορίες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των απορρήτων, που αφορούν στο νομικό πρόσωπο και τη δραστηριότητα των εταιρειών αυτών, αποκλειστικά και μόνον προς εξυπηρέτηση του νομικού, οικονομικού και τεχνικού ελέγχου των εταιρειών, στο πλαίσιο της αποκρατικοποίησης» ([2]).

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί την πρόοδο στην εφαρμογή των εν λόγω πολιτικών κατά την τακτική εξέταση που διενεργείται στο πλαίσιο του Προγράμματος Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας, ότι τα σχετικά έσοδα θα χρησιμοποιηθούν για την αποπληρωμή δημόσιου χρέους που αφορά πλέον κατά κύριο λόγο τον επίσημο τομέα και ότι ο συγκεκριμένος διαγωνισμός συνεχίζεται χωρίς την πρόσβαση των ενδιαφερομένων στα απαραίτητα οικονομικά στοιχεία, θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι μπορεί να γίνει σωστά η αποτίμηση και να βελτιστοποιηθεί, συνεπώς, η τιμή του ΟΠΑΠ, χωρίς την πρόσβαση των ενδιαφερομένων στα σχετικά στοιχεία;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν δύναται να σχολιάσει συγκεκριμένες εμπορικές πτυχές μεμονωμένων ιδιωτικοποιήσεων. Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση είναι υπεύθυνη για τα προπαρασκευαστικά μέτρα που απαιτούνται για την επιτυχή δρομολόγηση της πώλησης εταιρικών και ακίνητων περιουσιακών στοιχείων, συμπεριλαμβανομένου και του ΟΠΑΠ. Αυτό περιλαμβάνει ένα ευρύ φάσμα μέτρων που απαιτούνται ως προς τη δημιουργία κατάλληλου πλαισίου για τη διαδικασία ιδιωτικοποίησης, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ανταλλαγής επαρκών στοιχείων και της εξασφάλισης ισότιμων όρων ανταγωνισμού για τους δυνητικούς επενδυτές. Το ταμείο ιδιωτικοποιήσεων (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) εφαρμόζει το πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποίησης της κυβέρνησης λαμβάνοντας υπόψη διεθνείς βέλτιστες πρακτικές, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των συμβουλών από τεχνικούς, νομικούς και χρηματοοικονομικούς συμβούλους.

([1]) http://www.capital.gr/Articles.asp?id=1722060
([2]) http://www.capital.gr/News.asp?id=1724752

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002179/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: OPAP — Data Room Procedure

According to Greek press reports ([1]) about the privatisation of the Greek Organisation of Football Prognostics S.A. (OPAP), 'companies that have been selected for the second phase have been asked to inspect the company through a data room procedure. Since, as it has emerged, stakeholders were not given all the data relating to key contracts signed by OPAP, such as the contract taking over the State Lotteries, the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund (HRADF) has received numerous complaints'.

The government has finally withdrawn an amendment which would have enabled the HRADF to demand from the administrations of public utilities (DEKO) and the other companies of which it is a shareholder under the privatisation programme, 'all information in general, including confidential information, relating to the legal person and the activity of these companies, solely and exclusively for the purposes of carrying out a legal, financial and technical audit of companies as part of privatisation' ([2]).

Given that the Commission monitors progress in the implementation of these policies during the regular examination conducted as part of the Economic Adjustment Programme in Greece, given also that the revenue will be used to pay off public debt now concerning primarily the formal sector and given finally that the tender procedure in question is continuing without stakeholders having access to indispensable financial data, does the Commission consider that a proper evaluation can be made and an optimal price be achieved for OPAP if stakeholders have no access to this information?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The Commission cannot comment on specific commercial aspects of individual privatisations. The Greek Government is responsible for the preparatory measures needed to launch successfully the sale of corporate and real estate assets, including for OPAP. This involves the diverse set of measures needed to create the right framework for the privatisation process, including sharing adequate information and ensuring a level playing field for potential investors. The privatisation fund (HRADF) implements the government's privatisation program taking into account international best practices, including advice from technical, legal and financial advisors.

([1]) http://www.capital.gr/Articles.asp?id=1722060
([2]) http://www.capital.gr/News.asp?id=1724752

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002181/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the 2005 Council Directive on passenger car related taxes

With regard to the implementation of the 2005 Council Directive on passenger car related taxes, can the Commission outline the extent to which each Member State has implemented this directive?

Is the Commission aware of cases, such as that of Ireland, whereby a carbon dioxide (CO_2) motor tax system is only applied to passenger cars registered after 1 July 2008?

If so, what other Member States have implemented this directive in the same manner?

Does the Commission believe that the use of an engine capacity motor tax system on passenger cars registered before 1 July 2008 contravenes the principles of this directive?

If so, what does the Commission intend to do to rectify this?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The proposal for a Council Directive on passenger car related taxes (COM(2005) 261 final), presented by the European Commission on 5 July 2005, has not been adopted by the Council. Consequently, Member States are not under an obligation to implement the provisions of the directive.

In the absence of harmonisation in the field of car taxation, Member States remain free to lay down national rules on taxation of passenger cars. However, those rules must comply with the general principles of EC law. In particular, they may not give rise to border-crossing formalities in trade between Member States and they must respect the non-discrimination principle.

In its communication adopted on 14 December 2012 (COM(2012) 756), the Commission has clarified EU rules on car taxation and recommended a number of measures to strengthen the Single Market in this area and to remove obstacles for cross-border car rentals.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002182/13
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Carburante ricavabile dai rifiuti

I rifiuti sono una risorsa e non un problema. Attraverso tecnologie sempre più avanzate ed efficienti, la tendenza predominante nel campo dei rifiuti è di diminuire gli sprechi, riciclando e recuperando il più possibile per ricavare energia da quelli che non sono altrimenti ritrattabili e smaltire soltanto le tipologie che non permettono altre soluzioni.

Grazie ad alcuni servizi di uno dei programmi televisivi serali più seguiti in Italia, nelle ultime settimane sta riscuotendo molta attenzione un metodo alternativo e abbastanza recente di produzione di carburante. Si tratta di un processo ideato dall'ingegnere chimico Christian Koch nel 2003, che prevede la conversione di rifiuti in diesel. Fra i tipi di rifiuti utilizzabili rientrano principalmente sostanze plastiche e organiche, ma anche oli usati idonei al riciclaggio.

A livello europeo esistono già alcuni impianti che sfruttano questa tecnologia con importanti vantaggi non solo economici:

l'unico residuo di questo processo di conversione, infatti, è una cenere che, una volta disintossicata dai metalli pericolosi, può esser riutilizzata come concime sui terreni agricoli. Ancora, le emissioni di anidride carbonica sono bassissime, giacché questo gas viene rimesso all'interno del ciclo chimico, ad eccezione di una piccola parte fuoriuscente dallo scarico del generatore. Il diesel prodotto avrebbe una qualità superiore allo standard europeo previsto per i motori convenzionali e avrebbe un costo pari a circa un terzo rispetto a quello ricavabile con le più classiche procedure che iniziano dal petrolio.

Detto ciò, può la Commissione far sapere se:

— è a conoscenza di questo processo chimico di conversione dei rifiuti in carburante;

— ha condotto degli studi al riguardo e ritiene veritieri i benefici ambientali e economici di questa conversione;

— ha intenzione di promuovere questo processo in alternativa agli impianti di termovalorizzazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2013)

Sono state sviluppate diverse tecnologie chimiche per convertire i rifiuti organici in biocarburanti. Il processo più comune è la transesterificazione degli oli vegetali esausti in biodiesel, che rappresenta oggi il 5 % della produzione di biodiesel nell'UE. La Commissione riconosce che il KDV ([1]) è un processo chimico maturo, in grado di convertire in biodiesel una vasta gamma di rifiuti/residui.

La Commissione non ha condotto nessuno studio economico ed ambientale specifico sul processo KDV. Secondo la direttiva 2008/98/CE ([2]), il riciclaggio dei rifiuti ha la priorità sul recupero di energia. Rispetto ai biocarburanti classici, l'utilizzo di rifiuti e residui per produrre combustibile destinato al trasporto ha dimostrato di avere vantaggi ambientali ed è incoraggiato dalle politiche europee. In particolare, nella direttiva sulle energie rinnovabili (direttiva RED) ([3]), la quantità dei biocarburanti prodotti a partire da questo tipo di materia prima è considerata equivalente al doppio di quella dei biocarburanti classici nel raggiungimento dell'obiettivo stabilito dalla politica pertinente, e potrebbe addirittura essere il quadruplo in caso di adozione della proposta di revisione della direttiva RED. Inoltre, la politica regionale ha scelto l'energia come una delle priorità per il periodo 2007-2013, con un sostegno previsto di circa 4,7 miliardi di EUR per le attività relative all'energia rinnovabile, di cui 1,7 miliardi di EUR per la bioenergia. La

([1]) «Katalytische drucklose Verölung» (depolimerizzazione catalitica senza pressione), sviluppato da Christian Koch.
([2]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.
([3]) Direttiva 2009/28/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2009, sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili, GU L 140 del 5.6.2009.

prossima proposta di politica regionale per il 2014-2020 sostiene un incremento dei fondi dedicati all'energia rinnovabile e identifica le tecnologie per i biocarburanti di seconda e terza generazione tra le aree importanti di investimento. In ultimo, attraverso i programmi quadro, la Commissione ha sostenuto e continua a sostenere i progetti di R&S aventi come oggetto la produzione di biocarburanti da rifiuti organici. Tuttavia, poiché il processo KDV è tecnologicamente maturo, la Commissione non prevede di sostenere attività di R&S in questo senso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002182/13
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Waste-derived fuel

Waste is a resource, not a problem. Through increasingly advanced and efficient technologies, the prevailing trend in the waste sector is to reduce waste, by recycling and recovering as much as possible so as to derive energy from waste that cannot otherwise be reprocessed and to dispose of only those types for which no other treatment is possible.

Thanks to some features broadcast on one of Italy's most popular evening television programmes, in recent weeks an alternative and relatively recent fuel production method has been receiving a great deal of attention. It consists of a process for converting waste into diesel, which was devised in 2003 by the chemical engineer Christian Koch. The usable waste mainly consists of plastics and organic matter, but it also includes waste oils suitable for recycling.

Some plants in the EU are already using this technology and seeing significant benefits, which are not just financial: the only residue of this conversion process, in fact, is ash which, once detoxified to remove any hazardous metals, can be reused as fertiliser on agricultural land. Furthermore, the carbon dioxide emissions are extremely low, as the gas re-enters the chemical cycle, apart from a small amount that escapes from the generator flue. The diesel produced is said to be of a superior quality to the European standard provided for conventional engines and to be around a third of the cost of diesel produced using the most traditional petroleum-based procedures.

Can the Commission therefore say whether:

— it is aware of this chemical process for converting waste into fuel;

— it has conducted any studies on the matter and believes that this type of conversion does have environmental and financial benefits;

— it intends to promote this process as an alternative to waste-to-energy plants?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

Several chemical technologies have been developed to convert organic waste into biofuels. The most common process is the transesterification of waste vegetable oil into biodiesel, which represents today 5% of the biodiesel production in the EU. The Commission acknowledges that the KDV process ([1]) is a mature chemical process, able to covert a wider range of wastes/residues to biodiesel.

The Commission has not conducted any specific economic and environmental study of the KDV process. According to the directive 2008/98/EC ([2]), the recycling of waste has the priority over energy recovery. The use of waste and residues to produce transport fuel has shown to have environmental benefits with respect to conventional biofuels and it is promoted by European policies. Notably, in Renewable Energy Directive (RED) ([3]), the amount of biofuels produced from this kind of feedstock counts twice towards the relevant policy target compared to conventional biofuels, and could even count quadruple if the proposed revision of the RED is adopted. In addition, the regional policy has chosen energy as one of the priorities for the period 2007-2013 with a planned support of approximately EUR 4.7 billion for renewable energy activities, of which EUR 1.7 billion for bioenergy. The next regional policy proposal for 2014-2020 supports an increased budget dedicated to renewable energy and identifies second and third generation biofuels technologies among the important investment areas. Finally, the Commission has supported and continues to support R&D projects targeting the production of biofuels from organic waste through its Framework Programmes. However, as the KDV process is technologically mature, the Commission does not plan to support R&D on this specific pathway.

([1]) 'Katalytische drucklose Verölung' (Catalytic Pressureless Depolymerisation), developed by Christian Koch.
([2]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([3]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources — OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002183/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(26 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Βαθμός οργάνωσης παραγωγών γεωργικών προϊόντων

Στο πλαίσιο της υπό αναθεώρηση ΚΑΠ κεντρική προτεραιότητα συνιστά η ενδυνάμωση της διαπραγματευτικής θέσης των παραγωγών στην αλυσίδα εφοδιασμού τροφίμων, μεταξύ άλλων, μέσω της επέκτασης της δυνατότητας αναγνώρισης Οργανώσεων Παραγωγών (ΟΠ), ενώσεων Οργανώσεων Παραγωγών και Διεπαγγελματικών Οργανώσεων σε όλους πλέον τους γεωργικούς τομείς. Προβλέπονται επίσης, πρόσθετες δυνατότητες ως προς τη χρηματοδότηση — υπό τον δεύτερο πυλώνα — της σύστασης ΟΠ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Μπορεί να μου παραθέσει συγκριτικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τον βαθμό οργάνωσης ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά γεωργικό τομέα, ιδίως ως προς τη διάρθρωση/μέγεθος των συνεταιρισμών (cooperatives) ή άλλων μορφών οργανώσεων παραγωγών, το μερίδιό τους στην αγορά σε εθνικό επίπεδο, το ποσοστό συγκέντρωσης της προσφοράς και εμπορίας της παραγωγής;

Σε ποιούς παράγοντες αποδίδει την ενισχυμένη προώθηση σύστασης και λειτουργίας των οργανώσεων παραγωγών σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη (νομοθετικό πλαίσιο, εθνικά μέτρα στήριξης — συμπληρωματικά εκείνων σε επίπεδο ΕΕ);

Ποιές προκρίνει ως «βέλτιστες πρακτικές», μεταξύ αυτών που εφαρμόζουν εθνικοί ή διακρατικοί συνεταιρισμοί (είδος των υπηρεσιών που προσφέρουν στα μέλη τους, εύρος των δραστηριοτήτων που αναπτύσσουν), οι οποίες συμβάλλουν αποτελεσματικά στην ενδυνάμωση της θέσης των παραγωγών στην εφοδιαστική αλυσίδα;

Ποιος είναι ο βαθμός συγκέντρωσης της παραγωγής οπωροκηπευτικών που διατίθενται στο εμπόριο μέσω αναγνωρισμένων Οργανώσεων Παραγωγών στην Ελλάδα έναντι των λοιπών κρατών μελών; Ποια η τρέχουσα αξιοποίηση — ανά κράτος μέλος — ενωσιακών πόρων για τη χρηματοδότηση των «επιχειρησιακών ταμείων» στον τομέα των οπωροκηπευτικών; («Ενιαίος Κανονισμός ΚΟΑ», Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1234/2007 του Συμβουλίου, ΕΕ L 299 της 16.11.2007).

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Απριλίου 2013)

Η μελέτη της Επιτροπής «Στήριξη των αγροτικών συνεταιρισμών» ([1]), η οποία παρέχει επισκόπηση του μεριδίου τους στην αγορά ανά τομέα, της δομής τους και των ιδιαιτεροτήτων τους στην ΕΕ, περιλαμβάνει και διεξοδική ανάλυση των συνεταιρισμών.

Τα κράτη μέλη προσεγγίζουν το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο που διέπει τη συνεργασία των παραγωγών βασιζόμενα σε μία πληθώρα στόχων πολιτικής, συμπεριλαμβανομένων εκείνων που αφορούν τη γεωργία, τη φορολογία, τον ανταγωνισμό κ.λπ. Επιπλέον, η προαναφερθείσα μελέτη αναφέρεται στις διαφορές στους οργανωτικούς, περιφερειακούς και ιστορικούς παράγοντες που διαδραματίζουν κάποιο ρόλο στη συνεργασία των παραγωγών.

Λόγω του ευρέως φάσματος παραγόντων που επηρεάζουν τις επιδόσεις των οργανώσεων παραγωγών (ΟΠ) σε σχέση με την ενδυνάμωση της θέσης των παραγωγών στην εφοδιαστική αλυσίδα καθώς και άλλες παροχές, είναι δύσκολο να προσδιοριστεί μία βέλτιστη πρακτική «ενιαίας αντιμετώπισης». Σύμφωνα με την προαναφερθείσα μελέτη, οι παροχές αυτές προϋποθέτουν την ύπαρξη κοινωνικών, οικονομικών και οργανωτικών πόρων, καθώς και την ικανότητα σύστασης οργάνωσης.

Η αξία των οπωροκηπευτικών προϊόντων που διατέθηκαν στο εμπόριο μέσω οργανώσεων παραγωγών και ομάδων παραγωγών (ΟΜ.Π.) στην Ελλάδα ανήλθε στο 15,1 % ([2]) της συνολικής αξίας των οπωροκηπευτικών προϊόντων που διατέθηκαν στο εμπόριο κατά το 2010. Το συνολικό ποσοστό των οργανώσεων (οργανώσεις παραγωγών και ενώσεις τους, και ομάδες παραγωγών) στην ΕΕ ανήλθε στο 44 %, με μεγάλες διακυμάνσεις μεταξύ των κρατών μελών. Το υψηλότερο ποσοστό παρατηρήθηκε στις Κάτω Χώρες (95,5 %) και το Βέλγιο (91,2 %) και το χαμηλότερο ([3]) στη Βουλγαρία (0,4 %) και τη Ρουμανία (0,8 %).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/external-studies/2012/support-farmers-coop/fulltext_en.pdf
([2]) Δεδομένα που διαβιβάστηκαν από τα κράτη μέλη στο πλαίσιο των ετήσιων εκθέσεων για το 2010.
([3]) Η Εσθονία, το Λουξεμβούργο, η Λιθουανία και η Σλοβενία δεν διαθέτουν οργανώσεις παραγωγών και ομάδες παραγωγών.

Το 2011 ([4]), οι συνολικές δαπάνες της ΕΕ για τη χρηματοδότηση των επιχειρησιακών ταμείων των ΟΠ σε όλη την ΕΕ ανήλθαν σε 785,5 εκατ. ευρώ. Η πραγματική χρήση της ενωσιακής στήριξης από τις ΟΠ στην Ελλάδα ανήλθε σε 9,3 εκατ. ευρώ. Τα ποσά που ελήφθησαν από άλλα κράτη μέλη ποίκιλλαν ανάλογα με τον αριθμό και το μέγεθος των ΟΠ που κατήρτισαν επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα και τα μέτρα που υλοποιήθηκαν από αυτές.

([4]) Οικονομικό έτος 2011 (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των δαπανών για την κρίση λόγω του βακτηρίου E.Coli).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002183/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Degree of organisation of agricultural producers

In the context of the review of the CAP, a key priority is to strengthen the bargaining position of producers in the food chain, including through increasing the recognition potential of producers' organisations (POs), their associations and interbranch organisations in all agricultural sectors. Provision is also made for additional opportunities for funding the creation of POs under the second pillar.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Can it provide comparative data on the degree of organisation by Member State and agricultural sector, particularly as regards the structure/size of cooperatives or other forms of producers' organisation, their share of the market at a national level and the level of concentration in supplying and marketing produce?

Why is the establishment and operation of producers' organisations more actively promoted in some Member States (legislative framework, national support measures complementing those at EU level)?

Which practices of national or transnational associations (the type of services they offer to their members, the range of activities they develop) does it consider 'best practices' which contribute effectively to strengthening the position of producers in the supply chain?

What is the degree of concentration of the production of the fruit and vegetables marketed through recognised producer organisations in Greece, compared to other Member States? What is the current use — per Member State — of EU funds to finance 'operational funds' in the fruit and vegetables sector ('Single CMO Regulation', Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007, OJ L 299, 16.11.2007)?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

In depth analysis on cooperatives is available in the Commission study 'Support for Farmers' Cooperatives' ([1]), which provides an overview of their market share per sector, their structure and specificities in the EU.

Member States seem to approach the legislative framework governing producer cooperation based on a broad set of policy objectives, including those on agriculture, taxation, competition, etc. In addition, the aforementioned study refers to differences in organisational, regional and historical factors that play a role in producer cooperation.

Due to the wide range of factors affecting the performance of producer organisations (POs) in relation to strengthening the position of producers in the supply chain as well as other benefits, a 'one size fits all' best practices are difficult to identify. According to the study mentioned above, the achievement of these benefits requires social, economic, organisational resources, and capacity for building the organisation.

The value of fruit and vegetable products marketed by the POs and producers groups (PGs) in Greece was 15,1% ([2]) of total value of fruit and vegetable products marketed in 2010. The overall organisation rate (POs and their associations, PGs) in the EU was 44% with great variation between Member States. The highest organisation rate was in the Netherlands (95.5%) and Belgium (91.2%) and the smallest ([3]) in Bulgaria (0.4%) and Romania (0.8%).

In 2011 ([4]), the total EU expenditure to finance the POs operational funds across the EU was EUR 785.5 million. The actual use of the EU support by the POs in Greece was EUR 9.3 million. The amounts received by other Member States varied depending on the number and size of POs setting up operational programmes and measures implemented by them.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/external-studies/2012/support-farmers-coop/fulltext_en.pdf
([2]) data transmitted by the Member States in the Annual Reports 2010.
([3]) Estonia, Luxembourg, Lithuania and Slovenia have no POs and PGs.
([4]) budget year 2011 (including expenditures for E.Coli crisis).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002184/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Uccisioni mirate in Afghanistan

Il 19 febbraio 2013, un certo numero di agenzie di informazione hanno riferito che in Afghanistan, seppure nell'ultimo anno il numero complessivo delle vittime civili è sceso, si è registrato un aumento del 700 % di uccisioni mirate di dipendenti pubblici afghani, di donne e di ragazze. La Missione di assistenza dell'ONU nel paese ha documentato un calo complessivo del 12 % delle morti di civili nel 2012.

Sono particolarmente vulnerabili le donne che lavorano in settori governativi e la relazione afferma inoltre che: «i civili hanno subito un aumento di minacce, intimidazioni e interferenze con i loro diritti all'istruzione, alla sanità, alla giustizia e alla libertà di movimento da parte di militanti». Molti degli attacchi contro i civili sono perpetrati da bambini che hanno subito un lavaggio del cervello e che sono costretti a portare a termine missioni suicide, con ordigni esplosivi improvvisati.

1. Alla luce di questo crescente pedaggio di morte di dipendenti pubblici afghani, quali passi è pronta ad effettuare l'Unione europea per collaborare con altri enti pubblici e con le Nazioni Unite per sostenere la tutela dei lavoratori, che è essenziale per l'amministrazione e l'economia dell'Afghanistan?

2. Quali piani di emergenza sono in preparazione da parte della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per adattare l'assistenza dell'UE alle esigenze dell'Afghanistan, dopo la partenza delle forze NATO nel 2014?

3. In particolare, quali passi sta effettuando la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per la protezione delle donne afghane?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 aprile 2013)

Le conclusioni delle conferenze di Bonn e di Chicago e il quadro di responsabilità reciproca concordato alla conferenza di Tokyo del luglio 2012 disciplineranno la nostra cooperazione nei prossimi anni. La comunità internazionale continuerà a fornire assistenza finanziaria e tecnica a condizione che l'Afghanistan tenga fede ai propri impegni, anche per quanto riguarda i diritti umani e, in particolare, i diritti delle donne. L'UE esorta le autorità afghane a rispettare integralmente gli impegni di Tokyo. L'attuale fase di transizione sta per concludersi e l'Afghanistan deve assumersi le proprie responsabilità in termini di sviluppo e di sicurezza.

I progressi dell'Afghanistan devono basarsi sul rispetto della Costituzione nazionale e sulla rinuncia alla violenza e al terrorismo. Sebbene spetti alle autorità afghane garantire la sicurezza dei propri cittadini, l'UE fornisce assistenza per creare un contesto favorevole alle operazioni di polizia, alla gestione dei settori della polizia e della giustizia e alla governance in generale.

Anche se finora non è stata presa nessuna decisione in merito ai futuri finanziamenti del bilancio UE a favore dell'Afghanistan, l'Unione intende mantenere perlomeno l'attuale livello di assistenza. A Chicago l'UE si è impegnata a continuare a rafforzare le operazioni della polizia afghana e nei prossimi mesi rifletterà sia sul futuro della missione di formazione della polizia EUPOL che sui finanziamenti destinati alle retribuzioni e allo sviluppo delle capacità in questo settore. I diritti umani saranno un elemento essenziale dell'accordo di cooperazione UE-Afghanistan, attualmente in fase di negoziato, che conterrà una serie di disposizioni fondamentali sulle donne. La situazione generale in termini di sicurezza costituirà tuttavia un criterio determinante per stabilire le modalità di attuazione dell'assistenza fornita dall'Unione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002184/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Targeted killings in Afghanistan

On 19 February 2013, a number of news agencies reported that in Afghanistan, even though the overall civilian death toll has dropped, there has been an increase in the last year of 700% in targeted killings of Afghan government employees, women and girls. The UN's Assistance Mission in the country documented an overall fall of 12% in civilian deaths in 2012.

Women working in governmental sectors are especially vulnerable, and the report also states: 'Civilians also faced an increase in threats, intimidation and interference with their rights to education, health, justice and freedom of movement from militants'. Many of the attacks on civilians are perpetrated by brainwashed children who are forced to carry out suicide missions, using improvised explosive devices.

1. In the light of this rising death toll of Afghan government workers, what steps is the EU prepared to take to work with other government bodies and the UN to support the protection of employees which is essential to Afghanistan's administration and economy?

2. What contingency plans are being prepared by the Vice-President/High Representative to adapt EU assistance to Afghanistan's needs after the departure of NATO forces in 2014?

3. In particular, what steps is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to work for the protection of Afghan women?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The conclusions of the Bonn and Chicago conferences and the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework of July 2012 set the framework for our cooperation in the coming years. The International Community will continue to provide financial and technical assistance, provided Afghanistan lives up to its own commitments, including on human right, and the rights of women in particular. The EU urges the Afghan authorities to implement the Tokyo commitments in full. With the current transition phase coming to an end, Afghanistan must take responsibility both for development and for security.

Progress in Afghanistan must be based on the respect for the Afghan constitution and the renunciation of violence and terrorism. While it is for the Afghan authorities to ensure the safety of their nationals, the EU is supporting the enabling framework: policing, administration of the police and justice sectors, and governance generally.

No decisions are taken yet on future funding for Afghanistan from the EU budget, but the EU aims at maintaining assistance at least at current levels. The EU committed at Chicago to continue to strengthen Afghan policing and will consider both the future of the EUPOL police training mission and the funding for police salaries and capacity-building later in the course of the year. In the EU-Afghanistan Cooperation Agreement currently being negotiated, the human rights dimension will be an essential element and the Agreement will contain a number of core provisions on women. The overall security situation will, however, be a key factor in determining how EU assistance can be implemented.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002185/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Interruzione dei finanziamenti a Hezbollah

Il 20 febbraio 2013 varie fonti di informazione hanno riportato una dichiarazione del ministro israeliano della Difesa e della protezione civile, Avi Dichter, secondo cui, in caso di inserimento di Hezbollah nella lista nera da parte dell'Unione europea, il movimento militante sciita, pur mantenendo gli aiuti della Repubblica islamica dell'Iran, non potrà più raccogliere finanziamenti nelle capitali europee. In Europa i finanziamenti sono spesso raccolti e riciclati attraverso società di beneficenza e di copertura.

Il ministro Dichter ha osservato che in effetti è l'Europa la vera base di Hezbollah, e che se il movimento non potrà più raccogliere fondi o finanziamenti in Europa, si troverà in difficoltà.

Se da un lato la Francia è restia a soddisfare gli appelli a iscrivere Hezbollah nella lista nera, per timore di mettere a rischio la stabilità interna del Libano, dall'altro, secondo il ministro Dichter, il Libano ha così tanti problemi che la classificazione di Hezbollah come organizzazione terroristica non rappresenta la questione fondamentale.

Di quali informazioni dispone il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante in relazione alla presunta instabilità che l'inserimento di Hezbollah nella lista delle entità terroristiche creerebbe in Libano?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2013)

Le indagini sull'attentato terroristico a Burgas, per cui le autorità libanesi si sono impegnate a collaborare strettamente, sono tuttora in corso. A tempo debito, l'UE e gli Stati membri stabiliranno qual è il modo più opportuno per rispondere sulla base della totalità degli elementi forniti dagli investigatori.

Per quanto riguarda la possibilità di qualificare Hezbollah come organizzazione terroristica, qualunque modifica all'elenco UE delle organizzazioni terroristiche richiede una decisione unanime degli Stati membri. In tale contesto, Hezbollah è stato oggetto di discussione in diverse occasioni in passato, ma gli Stati membri non hanno mai raggiunto un consenso in merito. Nel caso in cui le indagini e i processi giudiziari in corso comportino delle conseguenze per Hezbollah, l'UE esaminerà le varie opzioni di risposta, che potrebbero includere azioni nell'ambito della cooperazione investigativa e giudiziaria a livello dell'UE, nonché la possibilità di modificare gli elenchi delle organizzazioni, entità e persone designate.

Le modifiche agli elenchi si basano su considerazioni politiche e giuridiche, soggette a valutazione da parte degli Stati membri. Le eventuali conseguenze per la stabilità del Libano rientrerebbero in tali considerazioni complessive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002185/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Disruption of Hezbollah financing

On 20 February 2013, various news sources reported that Israel's Minister for Civil Defence, Avi Dichter, says that if the EU were to blacklist Hezbollah, the Shi'ite militant movement would not be able to raise finance in European capitals, although it would still receive aid from the Islamic Republic of Iran. In Europe, funding is often raised and laundered through charity and front companies.

As Minister Dichter noted, 'Europe, that's the real base of Hezbollah … If they are unable to gather money or to raise finances in Europe, they are going to be in trouble'.

While France is resistant to calls to blacklist Hezbollah, due to concerns about stability inside Lebanon, Minister Dichter says that as 'Lebanon has so many problems, defining [Hezbollah] as a terror organisation is not the key issue.'

What information does the Vice-President/High Representative have which alludes to the fact that listing Hezbollah as a terrorist entity would create instability in Lebanon?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The investigations of the Burgas terrorist attack continue. The Lebanese authorities have committed to close cooperation with the investigation. In due course, the EU and Member States will discuss the appropriate response based on all elements identified by the investigators.

Regarding the option of designating Hizbullah as a terrorist organisation, all amendments to the EU list of terrorist organisations require a unanimous decision of Member States. Hizbullah was, in this context, discussed on several occasions in the past, but there has never been consensus among Member States. Should the ongoing investigative and judicial processes bear implications for Hizbullah, the EU will consider a range of options to respond, which could include steps in the framework of investigative and judicial cooperation at EU level; as well as possibilities of amendments to the lists of designated organisations, entities and persons.

Amendments to the lists are based on legal as well as political considerations, subject to assessment by Member States. Possible impacts on stability in Lebanon would be part of such comprehensive considerations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002186/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Stranieri arrestati in Libia per diffusione del cristianesimo

Il 16 febbraio 2013, un certo numero di agenzie di informazione hanno riferito che quattro stranieri erano stati arrestati nella città libica di Bengasi. I quattro sono stati accusati di attività missionaria e di stampare libri recanti un messaggio cristiano. Secondo un funzionario della sicurezza, Hussein Bin Hmeid, «il proselitismo è proibito in Libia. Siamo un paese al 100 per cento musulmano e questo tipo di azione minaccia la nostra sicurezza nazionale».

Hmeid è portavoce di un gruppo di sicurezza affiliato al governo chiamato apparato di sicurezza preventiva, istituito nel 2011 per imporre l'autorità del governo. I quattro arrestati sono cittadini rispettivamente di Egitto, Sud Africa, Corea del Sud e Svezia. A parte il fatto che devono essere interrogati dalle autorità di intelligence, non è stato annunciato nessun dettaglio del loro arresto. Si crede che abbiano distribuito opuscoli biblici e altri testi religiosi.

In Libia, il proselitismo è considerato un reato punibile con la morte. Non vi è alcuna minoranza cristiana nel paese, e si teme che gli islamisti del paese possano cercare di introdurre altre norme punitive contro le minoranze del Paese.

1. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è a conoscenza dell'arresto di quattro stranieri in Libia, e qual è la sua posizione quanto alle sanzioni per proselitismo di cui alla legge libica?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta a chiedere al governo libico delucidazioni su questo caso e sulla sua posizione in merito ai diritti di gruppi appartenenti a minoranze religiose di operare all'interno del paese?

3. Nei precedenti colloqui con il governo libico, quali passi ha eventualmente effettuato la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per convincere il governo libico a prediligere un approccio moderato nei suoi rapporti con le minoranze religiose?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2013)

L'AR/VP segue con preoccupazione le recenti segnalazioni di attacchi ai danni dell'esigua minoranza cristiana in Libia, poiché la libertà di religione e di credo è un diritto umano universale che va protetto. In Libia il proselitismo è considerato un reato, ma non è punibile con la morte.

Il 13 marzo la delegazione dell'UE ha rilasciato una dichiarazione nella quale esprime, a nome di tutti i capi missione dell'UE, la sua profonda apprensione per la detenzione e il trattamento delle persone arrestate per presunte attività di proselitismo in Libia. Inoltre, l'UE ha chiesto alle autorità libiche di garantire a tutti i detenuti condizioni e un trattamento adeguati, in conformità con le norme internazionali e con gli obblighi internazionali assunti dalla Libia. La delegazione dell'UE ha sottolineato che la libertà di religione o di credo è un diritto umano universale che va protetto ovunque e per chiunque.

Il governo centrale ha esortato in maniera esplicita la popolazione a rispettare i diritti umani e lo Stato di diritto. L'UE segue la vicenda da vicino.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002186/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Foreigners arrested in Libya for spreading Christianity

On 16 February 2013, a number of news agencies reported that four foreigners had been arrested in the Libyan city of Benghazi. The four individuals were accused of missionary activity and of printing books with a Christian message. According to a security official, Hussein Bin Hmeid, 'proselytising is forbidden in Libya. We are a 100% Muslim country and this kind of action affects our national security'.

Hmeid is spokesperson for a government-affiliated security group called the Preventive Security Apparatus, set up in 2011 to impose the government's authority. The four individuals are citizens of Egypt, South Africa, South Korea and Sweden respectively. Aside from the fact that they are to be interrogated by the intelligence authorities, no details of their arrest have been announced. They are believed to have distributed biblical pamphlets and other religious texts.

In Libya, proselytising is considered an offence punishable by death. There is no Christian minority in the country, and there are fears that the country's Islamists may try to introduce other punitive laws targeting the country's minorities.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the arrest of four foreigners in Libya, and what is her position with regard to the penalties for proselytisation set out in Libyan law?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask the Libyan Government about this case and its position on the rights of minority religious groups to operate inside the country?

3. In previous discussions with the Libyan Government, what steps, if any, has the Vice- President / High Representative taken to persuade the Libyan Government to take a moderate approach in its dealings with minority religious groups?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

The HR/VP is worried about recent reports of attacks against the small Christian minority in Libya as freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right which needs to be protected. In Libya, proselytising is considered an offence, but it's not punishable by death.

The EU Delegation issued a statement on March 13 expressing on behalf of all EU Heads of Missions its deep concerns about the continued detention and the treatment of persons held on alleged charges of proselytism in Libya. Furthermore, the EU requested the Libyan authorities to ensure adequate conditions and treatment of all detainees in accordance with international standards and Libya's international obligations. The EU Delegation underlined that freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right which needs to be protected everywhere and for everyone.

The central government has made explicit calls to the population to respect human rights and the rule of law. The EU follows this matter closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002187/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Lezioni di ebraico per gli scolari di Gaza

Il 21 febbraio 2013 la BBC News ha riferito che, per la prima volta in due decenni, l'ebraico verrà insegnato nelle scuole della Striscia di Gaza. Il governo di Hamas è al lavoro per formare più insegnanti così che tutti gli allievi delle scuole di Gaza saranno in grado di studiare la lingua. Tuttavia, il notiziario ha anche riferito che molti degli studenti esprimono l'opinione che «l'ebraico è la lingua del nemico».

Un funzionario del Ministero dell'Istruzione di Gaza ha affermato che «è importante imparare le lingue dei nostri nemici», aggiungendo: «Vogliamo capirli per impedire loro di ingannarci e per sapere come pensano».

1. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta ad effettuare passi per incoraggiare gli sforzi di riconciliazione tra i civili di Gaza e gli israeliani attraverso l'uso della lingua ebraica?

2. L'Unione europea ha in precedenza tentato con i partner nella Striscia di Gaza di promuovere l'uso di materiale didattico che incoraggi la riconciliazione e il dialogo con Israele?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(3 maggio 2013)

Attraverso il suo programma «Partenariato UE per la pace», l'UE finanzia progetti per promuovere la pace e il clima di fiducia e allargare la base di sostegno per una soluzione negoziata al conflitto arabo-palestinese. Due dei progetti finanziati in Israele mirano ad esempio a creare opportunità di cooperazione e partenariato in campo sanitario, contribuendo in tal modo indirettamente ad accrescere i contatti tra israeliani e palestinesi della Striscia di Gaza. A Gaza l'UE finanzia altri due progetti, che puntano in maniera più specifica a incoraggiare la riconciliazione interna e a promuovere la cultura della non-violenza e della tolleranza.

L'UE non ha contatti con le autorità de facto nella Striscia di Gaza e non può pertanto offrire un sostegno diretto per il materiale didattico utilizzato dalle autorità locali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002187/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Hebrew lessons for Gaza schoolchildren

On 21 February 2013 BBC News reported that, for the first time in two decades, Hebrew will be taught in schools in the Gaza Strip. The Hamas government is working to train more teachers so that all students in Gaza will be able to study the language. However, the news service also reported that many of the students are expressing the view that Hebrew is the 'language of the enemy'.

An official from Gaza's Education Ministry said that 'it is important to learn the languages of our enemies', adding: 'We want to understand them, to prevent them from deceiving us and know how they think'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take steps to encourage reconciliation efforts between Gaza civilians and Israelis through the use of Hebrew?

2. Has the EU made any earlier attempts with partners in the Gaza Strip to promote the use of academic materials which encourage reconciliation and dialogue with Israel?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

Through its Partnership for Peace Programme, the EU finances projects aimed at promoting peace and confidence building in order to broaden the base of support to a negotiated solution of the Israeli-Arab conflict. For instance, two of the projects being financed in Israel aim at creating opportunities for cooperation and partnership in the health sector thus indirectly contributing to increased contact between Israelis and Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. In Gaza, the EU finances another two projects, which though more specifically geared towards internal reconciliation, help to promote a culture of non-violence and tolerance.

The EU maintains no contact with the de facto authorities in the Gaza Strip and can therefore not offer any direct support for academic materials in use by the authorities there.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002188/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Si riferisce che gli islamisti vietano la vendita di alcolici in Egitto

Il 20 febbraio 2013, varie fonti di informazione hanno riferito che il governo egiziano non rilascerà più licenze di vendita di alcolici in alcune zone del Cairo, di Alessandria e di altre grandi città.

Il Vicepresidente della Nuova Autorità dei Comuni urbani (NUCA), Nabil Abbas, ha annunciato che «la NUCA ha smesso di rinnovare le licenze di vendita di alcolici, ma quelle esistenti saranno valide fino a scadenza».

La NUCA sostiene che ridurre l'accesso agli alcolici aumenterà la sicurezza nelle periferie egiziane. Secondo l'agenzia di notizie Al Arabiya, Abbas ha affermato che il consumo di alcolici ha portato a comportamenti devianti nel paese, come «attaccare le donne e suonare a caso i campanelli delle abitazioni».

Tuttavia, tra i residenti si dice che questa mossa del governo egiziano è solo un modo di «imporre il suo punto di vista». In un'intervista con Al Arabiya, un residente ha dichiarato che solo un assai limitato numero di egiziani beve molto e che questi «non possono essere la causa di un problema così grande da meritare tanta attenzione da parte del governo».

Ora ci sono timori che anche il turismo ne soffrirà perché i visitatori saranno restii a venire nel paese se il governo impone nuove restrizioni sociali come il divieto del consumo di alcolici.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto al piano del governo egiziano di vietare la vendita di alcolici nelle città di tutto il paese?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è del parere che ciò sia parte di una più ampia strategia dei Fratelli Musulmani per islamizzare la società egiziana?

3. Qual è la valutazione della delegazione dell'Unione europea al Cairo d'Egitto su questo punto?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

L'UE non è a conoscenza di nessuna misura che prevede di vietare la vendita di alcolici nelle città egiziane. L'UE ha preso atto della dichiarazione del rappresentante della Nuova autorità dei comuni urbani (NUCA).

Tuttavia, il governo egiziano ha recentemente annunciato un aumento del 100 % dell'imposta sulla vendita di birra e del 50 % di quella sul vino. Tali provvedimenti sarebbero stati adottati dallo governo egiziano nell'ambito del pacchetto di riforme economiche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002188/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Islamists reportedly banning the sale of alcohol in Egypt

On 20 February 2013, various news sources reported that the Egyptian government will no longer issue licenses to sell alcohol in certain areas of Cairo, Alexandria and other major cities.

The Vice-President of the New Urban Communities Authorities (NUCA), Nabil Abbas, has announced that 'NUCA has stopped renewing licenses to sell alcohol but the current ones will continue until they expire'.

NUCA claims that reducing access to alcohol will increase safety in Egypt's suburbs. According to the *Al Arabiya* news agency, Abbas said that the consumption of alcohol has led to deviant behaviour in the country such as 'attacking women and randomly ringing doorbells of people's homes'.

However, there are reports among residents that this latest move by Egypt's government is just a means of 'imposing their views'. In an interview with *Al Arabiya*, a resident said that only a small number of Egyptians drink heavily and that 'they cannot be causing such a large problem that deserves this much attention from the government'.

There are now fears that tourism will also suffer because visitors will be reluctant to come to the country if the government imposes new social restrictions such as preventing alcohol consumption.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the Egyptian government's plan to prohibit the sale of alcohol in cities across the country?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that this is part of a larger strategy of the Muslim Brotherhood to Islamise Egyptian society?

3. What is the assessment of the EU delegation in Cairo, Egypt?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The EU is not aware of any plans to prohibit the sale of alcohol in cities across the country. The EU has taken note of the statement of the representative of the NUCA.

However, the government has recently announced the doubling of the sales taxes on beer and a 50% increase of the sales tax on wine. Reportedly these measures are taken as part of Egypt's economic reform package.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002190/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Einrichtung einer Enforcementstelle für Rechnungslegung

Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge soll in Österreich eine Enforcementstelle für die Rechnungslegung kapitalmarktorientierter Unternehmen eingerichtet werden. In allen 26 weiteren EU-Mitgliedstaaten wurde bereits eine solche Stelle eingerichtet.

1. Welche finanzielle Unterstützung hat Österreich von der EU für die Einrichtung der Enforcementstelle erhalten oder wird Österreich dafür noch erhalten?

2. Wenn es einen Betrag geben sollte, aus welchem EU-Budget wurde dieser entnommen?

3. Verfügt die Kommission über eine vollständige Liste aller Mitgliedstaaten, in der die Kosten für die Einrichtung und Verwaltung der Enforcementstellen einzusehen sind? Wenn ja, wo ist diese Liste einzusehen bzw. worauf belaufen sich die Gesamtkosten für die Enforcementstellen aller 27 Mitgliedstaaten? Wenn nein, warum gibt es so ein Übersicht nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

1.-2. Gemäß Artikel 24 der Richtlinie 2004/109/EG ([1]) benennt jeder Mitgliedstaat eine zentrale zuständige Verwaltungsbehörde, die für die Wahrnehmung der Verpflichtungen aus dieser Richtlinie zuständig ist. Diese Behörde sollte zumindest befugt sein, zu prüfen, ob die Informationen im Sinne dieser Richtlinie den einschlägigen Anforderungen an die Berichterstattung entsprechen, und im Falle aufgedeckter Verstöße die entsprechenden Maßnahmen zu ergreifen. Den Mitgliedstaaten steht es somit frei, eine zentrale zuständige Behörde zu benennen, sie müssen zu diesem Zweck keine spezifische Stelle einrichten.

Die EU finanziert keine nationalen Durchsetzungsstellen. Ob eine spezifische Stelle eingerichtet werden soll, entscheiden allein die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten.

3. Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen über die Kosten für die Einrichtung und Verwaltung von Durchsetzungsstellen vor. Jeder Mitgliedstaat ist selbst für die Einrichtung und Finanzierung derartiger Stellen verantwortlich. Die Aktivitäten der nationalen Durchsetzungsstellen werden auf europäischer Ebene von der ESMA ([2]) koordiniert.

Darüber hinaus haben die Durchsetzungsstellen, wie die ESMA selbst, oft breit gefächerte Aufgabenbereiche, einschließlich aber nicht ausschließlich der Durchsetzung der Rechnungslegungsvorschriften bei kapitalmarktorientierten Unternehmen. Die Ermittlung der Kosten einzelner Aktivitäten könnte sich daher als schwierig erweisen und müsste möglicherweise auf künstlichen Annahmen basieren.

Schließlich ist die Durchsetzung von Rechnungslegungsvorschriften bei kapitalorientierten Unternehmen eine Tätigkeit, die unabhängig davon durchgeführt werden muss, welche allgemein anerkannten Rechnungslegungsgrundsätze angewandt werden. Eine solche Durchsetzung ist für die Stabilität und Transparenz der Finanzmärkte sowie für den Anlegerschutz erforderlich. Einrichtung und Kosten der Durchsetzungsstellen sind somit nicht direkt auf die Anwendung internationaler Rechnungslegungsstandards in Europa zurückzuführen.

([1]) ABl. L 390 vom 31.12.2004, S. 38.
([2]) Europäische Wertpapier- und Marktaufsichtsbehörde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002190/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Establishment of an enforcement agency for financial reporting

According to various media reports, an enforcement agency for the financial reporting of publicly traded companies is to be set up in Austria. An agency of this kind has already been established in all of the other 26 EU Member States.

1. What financial support has Austria received, or will it receive, from the EU for the establishment of the enforcement agency?

2. If an amount exists, from which EU budget was it taken?

3. Does the Commission have a complete list of all the Member States showing the costs involved in the establishment and management of the enforcement agencies? If so, where can this list be found, or what are the total costs for the enforcement agencies of all 27 Member States? If not, why does such an overview not exist?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

1-2. According to Article 24 Directive 2004/109/EC ([1]) each Member State shall designate a central competent administrative authority responsible for carrying out the obligations provided in the directive. This authority should at least be empowered to examine that information referred to in this directive is drawn up in accordance with the relevant reporting framework and take appropriate measures in case of discovered infringements. Member States are thus free to designate a central competent authority and do not have to set up a specific agency.

The EU does not finance national enforcement agencies. Individual Member States take the decision about whether to create such an agency.

3. The Commission does not have information about the establishment and management costs of these agencies. Each Member State has responsibility for the creation and funding of such agencies. At a European level, ESMA ([2]) coordinates the activities of national enforcers.

Moreover, the enforcement agencies, like ESMA itself, often have broad remits including but not restricted to the enforcement of financial reporting for publicly traded entities. Isolating the costs for one set of activities could be difficult and possibly involve the use of artificial assumptions.

Finally, enforcement of financial reporting by publicly traded companies is an activity that has to be performed no matter what generally accepted accounting principles are applied. Such enforcement is necessary for the stability and transparency of financial markets as well as for investor protection. Hence, the related set-up and costs of enforcement agencies are not a direct consequence of the application of international financial reporting standards in Europe.

([1]) OJ L 390, 31.12.2004, p. 38.
([2]) European Securities and Markets Authority.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002191/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Einhaltung der Bestimmungen der legislativen Entschließung über die Stückelungen und technischen Merkmale der für den Umlauf bestimmten Euro-Münzen

Am 22. Mai 2012 nahm das Parlament in erster (und einziger) Lesung eine legislative Entschließung zu dem Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Rates zur Änderung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 975/98 über die Stückelungen und technischen Merkmale der für den Umlauf bestimmten Euro-Münzen (2011/0128 (NLE)) an, die von Hans-Peter Martin ausgearbeitet wurde. In der geänderten Fassung des Kommissionsvorschlags ist festgelegt, dass die Kommission die Einhaltung der Bestimmungen dieser Verordnung unverzüglich überprüft und die anderen Mitgliedstaaten und die EZB binnen zehn Arbeitstagen über das Ergebnis einer derartigen Überprüfung unterrichtet.

1. Hat die Kommission die Einhaltung der Bestimmungen der Verordnung überprüft?

2. Wenn ja, zu welchem Ergebnis ist sie dabei gekommen und hat sie die anderen Mitgliedstaaten und die EZB darüber unterrichtet?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(27. März 2013)

Die Kommission prüft die Übereinstimmung der Gestaltungsentwürfe für die nationale Seite der Euro-Umlaufmünzen mit den einschlägigen technischen Anforderungen nach Artikel 1i Absatz 5 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 975/98 des Rates in ihrer geänderten Fassung. Seit dem Inkrafttreten dieses Artikels hat die Kommission 15 solcher Entwürfe geprüft.

Die Kommission unterrichtet den Ausgabemitgliedstaat und den Rat, nachdem sie die Einhaltung der Bestimmungen der Verordnung überprüft hat, unverzüglich über das Ergebnis ihrer Untersuchung. Die Verordnung sieht keine Beteiligung der EZB an der Überprüfung der Entwürfe für die nationalen Seiten der Euro-Münzen vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002191/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Compliance with provisions of legislative resolution on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins intended for circulation

On 22 May 2012 Parliament adopted, at its first (and only) reading, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 975/98 on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins intended for circulation (2011/0128 (NLE)), drafted by Hans-Peter Martin. The Commission proposal as amended stipulates that 'the Commission shall verify compliance with the provisions of this regulation without delay […] and […] shall inform the other Member States and the European Central Bank (ECB) of its findings within 10 working days of such verification'.

1. Has the Commission verified compliance with the provisions of the regulation?

2. If so, what were its findings, and has it informed the 'other Member States' and the ECB?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission verifies the compliance of the draft designs of the national side of euro circulation coins with the relevant technical requirements, pursuant to Article 1i(5) of Council Regulation (EC) No 975/98 as amended. Since the entering into force of this Article, the Commission has verified 15 designs.

The Commission informs the issuing Member State and the Council about its findings immediately after it has verified the compliance. The regulation does not provide for the involvement of the ECB in the review of national designs of euro coins.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002192/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Folgenabschätzung zur fortgesetzten Ausgabe von 1- und 2-Cent-Münzen

Am 22. Mai 2012 nahm das Europäische Parlament in erster/einziger Lesung den Legislativvorschlag über die Ausgabe von Euro-Münzen (2011/0131(COD)) an, der von Hans-Peter Martin ausgearbeitet wurde. In der geänderten Fassung des Kommissionsvorschlags ist festgelegt, dass die „Kommission […] eine Folgenabschätzung zu einer fortgesetzten Ausgabe von 1- und 2-Cent-Münzen vor[nimmt]. Diese Folgenabschätzung beinhaltet eine Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse, bei der die tatsächlichen Herstellungskosten dieser Münzen im Verhältnis zu ihrem Wert und Nutzen berücksichtigt werden".

1. Wurde diese Folgenabschätzung vorgenommen und beinhaltete sie eine Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse?

2. Wenn ja, wann wurde sie vorgenommen und wo ist sie erhältlich?

3. Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(22. April 2013)

Eine Folgenabschätzung einschließlich einer Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse wurde vorgenommen; die Ergebnisse werden demnächst im Wege einer Mitteilung der Kommission an das Parlament und den Rat veröffentlicht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002192/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Impact assessment on the continued issuance of 1 and 2 cent coins

On 22 May 2012 the European Parliament adopted in its first/single reading the legislative proposal on the issuance of euro coins (2011/0131(COD)) drafted by Hans-Peter Martin. The amended Commission proposal states that 'the Commission shall conduct an impact assessment on the continued issuance of 1 and 2 cent coins. That impact assessment shall include a cost-benefit analysis which takes into account the real production costs of those coins set against their value and benefits'.

1. Has this impact assessment been completed and did it include the cost-benefit analysis?

2. If so, when was it completed and where can it be obtained?

3. If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

An assessment including a cost-benefit analysis has been drafted, the results of which shall be published soon by means of a communication from the Commission to the Parliament and the Council.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002193/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Beziehungen zwischen Geschäfts- und Investmentbanken und der Kommission

Berichten des Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) vom 18. September 2012 zufolge ist Kommissionsmitglied Olli Rehn nicht nur in Schriftverkehr mit Interessenvertretern aus dem Finanzsektor getreten, sondern hat auch an mehreren Treffen teilgenommen, darunter Treffen mit Vertretern von Goldman Sachs, der KBV, der BBVA, Moody's, Mason Capital Management und der Europäischen Bankenvereinigung (EBF). Dies wirft einige Fragen über den Einfluss des Finanzsektors und vor allem von Geschäfts- und Investmentbanken auf die Tätigkeit der Kommission auf, die ja als EU-Organ dafür zuständig ist, Vorschläge für Rechtsvorschriften vorzulegen und Durchführungsbeschlüsse zu erlassen.

1. Welche Art von Treffen und wie viele Treffen haben zwischen Vertretern des Finanzsektors und Bediensteten der Kommission seit Beginn der Amtszeit der Kommission unter Präsident Barroso im Februar 2010 stattgefunden?

2. Welche Personen oder Institutionen aus dem Finanzsektor haben sich mit welchen Mitarbeitern der Kommission (genaue Angaben zu der Veranstaltung, genaues Datum und Namen der Personen) getroffen, falls solche Treffen stattgefunden haben?

3. An welchen Beschlüssen der Kommission betreffend Rechtsvorschriften zu Banken, Finanzkonglomeraten oder anderen Finanzdienstleistungsbereichen waren seit Beginn der Amtszeit der Kommission unter Präsident Barroso im Februar 2010 Vertreter des Finanzsektors oder damit verbundener Unternehmen im Vorfeld beteiligt und in welchem Ausmaß?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002194/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Einfluss des Finanzsektors auf die Tätigkeiten der Kommission

Berichten des Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) vom 18. September 2012 zufolge ist Kommissionsmitglied Olli Rehn nicht nur in Schriftverkehr mit Interessenvertretern aus dem Finanzsektor getreten, sondern hat auch an mehreren Treffen teilgenommen, darunter Treffen mit Vertretern von Goldman Sachs, der KBV, der BBVA, Moody's, Mason Capital Management und der Europäischen Bankenvereinigung (EBF). Dies wirft einige Fragen über den Einfluss des Finanzsektors und vor allem von Geschäfts- und Investmentbanken auf die Tätigkeit der Kommission auf, die ja als EU-Organ dafür zuständig ist, Vorschläge für Rechtsvorschriften vorzulegen und Durchführungsbeschlüsse zu erlassen.

1. Wie viele Begegnungen haben zwischen Vertretern der Kommission und Personen oder Institutionen aus dem Finanzsektor zu dem Zweck stattgefunden, Vorträge zu halten, Hintergrundinformationen zur Verfügung zu stellen, Reden oder Berichte vorzutragen, Sitzungen abzuhalten oder sonstigen, auf die Gestaltung von Politik bezogenen Tätigkeiten nachzugehen?

2. Kann die Kommission, falls solche Treffen stattgefunden haben, die Kosten jedes einzelnen Treffens und den bereitgestellten Betrag beziffern, unter Angabe der Institutionen oder Vertreter aus dem Finanzsektor, an die die Zahlung erfolgte, und der Generaldirektionen, die sie veranlasst haben?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(23. Mai 2013)

Die Dienststellen der Europäischen Kommission stehen bei der Wahrnehmung ihrer Aufgaben in regelmäßigem Kontakt mit den Interessenvertretern. Dies ermöglicht es ihnen, bei komplexen fachlichen Vorgängen auf Expertenwissen zurückzugreifen und die verschiedenen Marktteilnehmer und Entscheidungsträger dazu zu befragen, wie sich die unterschiedlichen politischen Optionen gegebenenfalls auswirken und wie der Markt darauf reagieren könnte. Dies gilt auch für die Kontakte, die die Europäische Kommission mit Vertretern des Finanzsektors unterhält. Hier findet der Dialog mit den Marktteilnehmern nicht nur im Zusammenhang mit Legislativvorschlägen statt. Es geht auch darum, die spezifischen Probleme der Finanzmärkte zu bewerten und zu verstehen, wie der Markt derzeit wahrgenommen wird — ein wichtiger Aspekt im Rahmen der besseren Rechtsetzung.

Die Dienststellen der Kommission erfassen die Sitzungen mit Interessenvertretern nur soweit dies für die dabei erörterten Themen erforderlich ist. Eine Übersicht über die Zusammenkünfte können wir Ihnen daher leider nicht zur Verfügung stellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002193/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Relationship of commercial banks and investment banks with the Commission

The Corporate European Observatory (CEO) reported on 18 September 2012 that Commissioner Olli Rehn had engaged not only in correspondence with lobbyists from the financial sector, but also in several encounters, including meetings with representatives from Goldman Sachs, KBV, BBVA, Moody's, Mason Capital Management and the European Banking Federation. A few questions therefore arise about the influence of the financial sector, specifically commercial and investment banks, with the EU institution responsible for proposing legislation and implementing decisions.

1. Which, and how many, meetings have taken place between representatives of the financial sector and staff employees of the Commission since the start of the Barroso Commission in February 2010?

2. If such meetings took place, which individuals or institutions from the financial sector met with which individuals from the Commission (with details of the event, the exact date and the names of the individuals)?

3. In which decisions taken by the Commission since the start of the Barroso Commission in February 2010 regarding any legislation dealing with banks, financial conglomerates or any other area of financial services were representatives of the financial sector or any of its affiliates involved in the preliminary stages, and to what extent?

Question for written answer E-002194/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Influence of the financial sector on the work of the Commission

The Corporate European Observatory (CEO) reported on 18 September 2012 that Commissioner Olli Rehn had engaged not only in correspondence with lobbyists from the financial sector, but also in several encounters, including meetings with representatives from Goldman Sachs, KBV, BBVA, Moody's, Mason Capital Management and the European Banking Federation. A few questions therefore arise about the influence of the financial sector, specifically commercial and investment banks, with the EU institution responsible for proposing legislation and implementing decisions.

1. How many encounters, for the purpose of giving presentations, delivering background information, giving speeches or lectures, holding meetings or engaging in any other kind of policy-shaping work, have taken place between Commission representatives and individuals or institutions from the financial sector?

2. If such encounters have occurred, will the Commission state the costs relating to each of them and the amount that was allocated, specifying to which institution or representative of the financial sector it was it paid, and by which Directorates General?

Joint answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The services of the European Commission in the performance of their duties have regular contacts with stakeholders to make use of expert knowledge of highly technical dossiers and to collect views of market participants and decision-makers on impacts and possible market reactions to various policy options. This also holds for the European Commission's interaction with the financial sector stakeholders. In this sector the dialogue with market participants is not only taking place in the context of legislative proposals, but also in view of understanding current market perceptions and assessing specific financial market problems, an important aspect in the context of better regulation.

The services of the Commission take record of meetings with stakeholders only to the extent required by the issues under discussion at the respective meetings. They are thus not in a position to offer a list of meetings.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002195/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Novo ensaio nuclear — Coreia do Norte

Em resposta à decisão do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas, que aprovou o alargamento de sanções à agência espacial norte-coreana, na sequência do lançamento de um míssil no dia 12 de dezembro, a Coreia do Norte anunciou, na semana passada, a intenção de fazer um novo ensaio nuclear.

Este novo ensaio nuclear visa, segundo declarações da agência oficial coreana, «iniciar uma confrontação total para salvaguardar a soberania da nação e do povo».

Como interpreta a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante a intenção da Coreia do Norte de realizar um novo ensaio nuclear?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(7 de maio de 2013)

A RPDC efetuou em 12 de fevereiro um terceiro ensaio nuclear, desafiando os apelos da comunidade internacional para que não desse seguimento ao ensaio. Esta atitude representa mais um passo num longo programa de desenvolvimento de armas nucleares. Este ensaio nuclear constitui um novo desafio para o regime mundial de não-proliferação e uma violação evidente das obrigações internacionais da RPDC de não produzir ou testar armas nucleares, em especial no âmbito das resoluções 1718, 1874, 2087 e 2094 do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas. A desnuclearização da Península Coreana continua a ser um objetivo fundamental de todos os membros permanentes do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas. Por conseguinte, a UE insta a RPDC a abster-se de novos atos de provocação e, em vez disso, a iniciar um diálogo com a comunidade internacional, nomeadamente no âmbito das Conversações a Seis, o que contribuiria para a estabilidade regional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002195/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Further North Korean nuclear test

In response to the UN Security Council's decision to impose more sweeping sanctions, which, in view of the rocket launch on 12 December 2012, were also to extend to the North Korean space agency, North Korea announced last week that it would carry out a further nuclear test.

According to the official North Korean news agency, the object of the latest test was to unleash total confrontation aimed at protecting the sovereignty of the nation and the people.

How does the Vice-President/High Representative interpret North Korea's intention to carry out another nuclear test?

Answer given by High-Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

On 12 February the DPRK carried out a third nuclear test, defying the unified calls by the International Community not to proceed with it. This represents one more step in a long-running programme to develop a nuclear weapon capability. This nuclear test is a further blatant challenge to the global non-proliferation regime and an outright violation of the DPRK's international obligations not to produce or test nuclear weapons in particular under UN Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1874, 2087 and 2094. A nuclear-free Korean peninsula remains a key objective of all the permanent members of the UN Security Council. Therefore, the EU strongly urges the DPRK to refrain from further provocative acts and, instead, to engage in a dialogue with the international community, including in the framework of the Six-Party Talks which would be conducive to regional stability.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002196/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Finanzhilfevereinbarungen des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-010740/2011 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission, dass bis zum 17. November 2011 im Zuge des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (7. RP, 2007-2013) insgesamt 13 252 Finanzhilfevereinbarungen unterzeichnet und 985 Finanzhilfevereinbarungen erfolgreich abgeschlossen wurden. Nach Angaben der Kommissarin wurden 54 unterzeichnete Finanzhilfevereinbarungen vor Projektabschluss abgebrochen.

1. Wie viele Finanzhilfevereinbarungen des 7. RP wurden seit dem 17. November 2011 unterzeichnet?

2. Wie viele Finanzhilfevereinbarungen wurden seit dem 17. November 2011 erfolgreich abgeschlossen?

3. Wie viele unterzeichnete Finanzhilfevereinbarungen wurden seit dem 17. November 2011 vor Projektabschluss abgebrochen und aus welchen Gründen?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(22. April 2013)

1. In der Zeit vom 18. November 2011 bis zum 26. Februar 2013 wurden im Zuge des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (7. RP, 2007-2013) insgesamt 5 255 Finanzhilfevereinbarungen unterzeichnet. Die Gesamtzahl der Finanzhilfevereinbarungen, die zwischen 2007 und dem 26. Februar 2013 unterzeichnet wurden, beträgt 18 507.

2. Im selben Zeitraum wurden 3 067 Finanzhilfevereinbarungen des 7. RP erfolgreich abgeschlossen.

3. Im selben Zeitraum wurden 214 Finanzhilfevereinbarungen des 7. RP vor Projektabschluss abgebrochen. Bei der überwiegenden Mehrheit der abgebrochenen Finanzhilfevereinbarungen handelte es sich um Stipendien (206 von 214) im Rahmen der Marie-Curie-Maßnahmen des spezifischen Programms „Menschen“. Sieben weitere Finanzhilfevereinbarungen wurden vom Europäischen Forschungsrat im Rahmen des spezifischen Programms „Ideen“ und eine im Rahmen des spezifischen Programms „Kapazitäten“ finanziert. In den meisten Fällen wurden die Projekte auf Ersuchen der Finanzhilfeempfänger (Stipendiaten, Hauptforscher) abgebrochen, die Änderungen ihrer Laufbahnpläne geltend machten oder andere persönliche Gründe anführten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002196/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Grant agreements under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development

In her answer to Question E-010740/2011 by Hans-Peter Martin, Ms Geoghegan-Quinn stated on behalf of the Commission that as of 17 November 2011, under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), a total of 13 252 grant agreements had been signed and 985 of these agreements had been successfully concluded. According to the Commissioner, 54 signed grant agreements were terminated before completion of the project.

1. How many grant agreements have been signed under FP7 since 17 November 2011?

2. How many grant agreements have been successfully concluded since 17 November 2011?

3. How many signed grant agreements have been terminated before completion of the project since 17 November 2011, and on what grounds?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

1. During the period from 18 November 2011 to 26 February 2013, a total of 5 255 grant agreements have been signed under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). The total number of grant agreements signed between 2007 and 26 February 2013 is 18 507.

2. During the same period, 3 067 FP7 grant agreements have been successfully concluded.

3. During the same period, 214 FP7 grant agreements have been terminated before the completion of the project. The vast majority of the terminated grant agreements were fellowships (206 out of 214) funded under the Marie Curie Actions scheme of the People Specific Programme. Seven grant agreements were funded under the European Research Council's scheme of the Ideas Specific Programme and one under the Capacities Specific Programme. In most of the cases, the projects have been terminated at the request of the beneficiaries (fellows, principle investigators) citing changes in their career plans or other personal reasons.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002197/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Anzahl der Berater der Kommissare und Kosten für diese Berater

In der deutschsprachigen Presse erregte der Beratervertrag, den Kommissarin Neelie Kroes mit dem ehemaligen deutschen Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg abgeschlossen hat, wiederholt negative Aufmerksamkeit. Insbesondere hinsichtlich dieser Kritik wird deutlich, dass eine größere Transparenz bezüglich der Berater von Kommissionsmitgliedern notwendig ist.

1. Wie viele Beraterverträge hat jeder der Kommissare jeweils mit Einzelpersonen und wie viele mit Organisationen abgeschlossen?

2. Wie viele dieser Beraterverträge sind bezahlt, wie viele sind unbezahlt?

3. Auf welche Summe belief sich jeweils in den Jahren 2009 bis 2012 die Vergütung für Beraterverträge, aufgeschlüsselt nach den jeweiligen Kommissionsmitgliedern, die diese Beratungsleistungen anforderten oder erhielten?

4. Auf welche Summe beliefen sich jeweils in den Jahren 2009 bis 2012 die Kosten für Aufwandsentschädigungen, Reisekosten oder sonstige Kosten für Berater, aufgeschlüsselt nach den jeweiligen Kommissionsmitgliedern, die diese Beratungsleistungen anforderten oder erhielten?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2013)

Die Kommissionsmitglieder und die Kabinette verfügen über keine Mittel, um Beraterverträge mit Einzelpersonen oder Organisationen abzuschließen.

Mitglieder des Kollegiums haben daher weder unbezahlte noch bezahlte Beraterverträge abgeschlossen.

Folglich haben Kommissionsmitglieder zwischen 2009 und 2012 weder für Beraterverträge noch für Aufwandsentschädigungen, Reisekosten oder sonstige Kosten für Berater Mittel ausgegeben.

Herr zu Guttenberg wurde von der GD CNECT als Sachverständiger ohne Vergütung einberufen, dessen Reisekosten für die entsprechenden Sitzungen von der GD auf der Grundlage der Kommissionsentscheidung vom 5. Dezember 2007 „Regelung für die Erstattung der Kosten von nicht der Kommission angehörenden Personen, die als Sachverständige einberufen werden“ erstattet werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002197/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Number of consultants employed by Commissioners and the cost of these consultants

The consultancy contract concluded by Commissioner Neelie Kroes with the former German minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg has repeatedly attracted adverse publicity in the German-speaking press. This criticism has made it particularly clear that the use of consultants by members of the Commission needs to be more transparent.

1. How many consultancy contracts has each of the Commissioners concluded with individuals, and how many with organisations?

2. How many of these consultancy contracts are paid and how many are unpaid?

3. How much was spent on consultancy contracts in each year between 2009 and 2012, broken down by the members of the Commission who requested or received the consultancy services?

4. How much was spent on expenses, travelling costs or other costs for consultants in each year between 2009 and 2012, broken down by the members of the Commission who requested or received the consultancy services?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commissioners and the Cabinets do not have any budget to conclude consultancy contracts with individuals or with organisations.

Therefore College members have not concluded such contracts, neither paid nor unpaid.

As a consequence, between 2009 and 2012, no budget was spent by the members of the Commission neither on consultancy contracts nor on expenses, travelling costs or other costs for consultants.

As regards Mr zu Guttenberg, he has been invited by DG CNECT as an unpaid expert whose travelling costs to relevant meetings are reimbursed by the DG based on the Commission decision of 5 December 2007 'Rules on the reimbursement of expenses incurred by people from outside the Commission invited to attend meetings in an expert capacity'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002198/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten der Herrichtung des Gebäudes „Europa“

In seiner Antwort auf die Anfrage E-010622/2011 von Hans-Peter Martin schätzte der Rat die Kosten für die Herrichtung des Gebäudes „Europa“ mit Berechnungen vom Juli 2011 auf 291,7 Mio. EUR. Ursprünglich wurde im Januar 2004 eine Kostenhöhe von 220 Mio. EUR geschätzt, und der Rat hatte eine Höchstgrenze von 240 Mio. EUR festgelegt.

1. Wie hoch sind nach den aktuellsten Schätzungen die Gesamtkosten für die Herrichtung des Gebäudes „Europa“?

2. Welcher Betrag davon wurde bereits an den belgischen Staat als Bauherrn überwiesen?

3. Welcher Betrag wurde jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 an den belgischen Staat überwiesen und welcher Betrag ist für die Jahre von 2013 bis zur vollständigen Abzahlung der Kosten vorgesehen?

4. Verlaufen die Herrichtungsmaßnahmen nach Plan oder gibt es Verzögerungen? Wenn ja, wie ist der neue Zeitplan und wird dies die Kosten beeinflussen?

5. Macht der belgische Staat als Bauträger durch das Projekt einen Gewinn?

Antwort
(15. Mai 2013)

Die derzeitige gerundete Kostenschätzung (in Preisen von Januar 2004) beträgt 219 Mio. EUR bzw. (in Preisen von Januar 2013) 303 Mio. EUR. Die Höchstgrenze für die Projektgesamtkosten (in Preisen von Januar 2004) beläuft sich auf 240 Mio. EUR. In Preisen von Januar 2013 beläuft sie sich auf 332 Mio. EUR.

Ein Betrag in Höhe von 275 164 147,59 EUR ist bereits an den belgischen Staat überwiesen worden.

Folgende Beträge wurden an den belgischen Staat überwiesen:

2009: 102 879 000 EUR

2010: 55 000 000 EUR

2011: 25 000 000 EUR

2012: 15 000 000 EUR.

Im Haushaltsplan 2013 des Rates ist eine Zahlung von 5 000 000 EUR an den belgischen Staat vorgesehen. Bevor das Gebäude übergeben wird, könnten weitere Zahlungen erfolgen.

Das mit dem belgischen Staat vereinbarte Übergabedatum ist der 15. April 2014. Die belgische Gebäudeverwaltung, die vom belgischen Staat mit der Beaufsichtigung der Bauarbeiten beauftragt wurde, prüft derzeit ein Ersuchen des Bauunternehmens, die Übergabe auf Herbst 2014 zu verschieben. Derzeit liegt kein Finanzierungsantrag in Verbindung mit dieser Verschiebung vor.

Der belgische Staat wird mit dem Bauvorhaben keinen Gewinn erzielen. Das Grundstück und das vorhandene Gebäude sollen dem Rat für 1,00 EUR überlassen werden. Für das Bauvorhaben wird die belgische Gebäudeverwaltung vom Rat keine Gebühren verlangen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002198/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Construction costs for the Europa building

In its answer to Question E-010622/2011 by Hans-Peter Martin, the Council estimated the construction costs for the Europa building at EUR 291.7 million at July 2011 prices. The costs were originally estimated at EUR 220 million in January 2004, with a ceiling of EUR 240 million set by the Council.

1. What are the latest estimates of the total construction costs for the Europa building?

2. How much of this sum has already been transferred to the Belgian state as the main contractor?

3. What sums were transferred to the Belgian state in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, and what sums does the EU plan to transfer in the years from 2013 until all costs have been settled?

4. Are the construction measures going according to plan or have there been any delays? If so, what is the new schedule, and will this affect the costs?

5. Will the Belgian state, as the property developer, make a profit from the project?

Reply
(15 May 2013)

The current rounded cost estimate, at January 2004 prices, is EUR 219 million or, at January 2013 prices, EUR 303 million. The ceiling for the total project costs, at January 2004 prices, is EUR 240 million. This represents at January 2013 prices EUR 332 million.

The amount already transferred to the Belgian state is EUR 275 164 147.59.

The amounts transferred to the Belgian state were:

— in 2009 EUR 102 879 000

— in 2010 EUR 55 000 000

— in 2011 EUR 25 000 000

— in 2012 EUR 15 000 000

The Council's budget for 2013 establishes a EUR 5 000 000 payment to the Belgian state. Additional payments could take place before the handover of the building.

The handover date agreed with the Belgian state is 15 April 2014. The Belgian Buildings Agency, charged by the Belgian state with the construction of the building, is examining a request from the construction company to delay the handover until Autumn 2014. For the time being, there is no financial request linked to this delay.

The Belgian state will not make a profit from the project. The land and the existing building will be sold to the Council for EUR 1.00. The Belgian Buildings Agency will claim no fee from the Council for the project.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002199/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Einklang des Einsatzes von Drohnen (RPAS) mit der geltenden Rechtsetzung

In seiner Antwort auf die Anfrage E-010590/2012 von Hans-Peter Martin zu internationalen Regeln für den Einsatz von Drohnen schreibt Kommissar Tajani, dass die Kommission Maßnahmen plant, „die dazu beitragen sollen, dass der Einsatz von RPAS im Einklang mit der geltenden Rechtsetzung steht".

Kann der Kommissar klarstellen, was er mit dieser Formulierung meint:

1. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen plant die Kommission?

2. Mit welchem Rechtsrahmen soll oder muss der Einsatz von Drohnen in Einklang gebracht werden?

3. Betreffen diese Maßnahmen nur die Anwendung von Drohnen in der Union oder auch die Anwendung von Drohnen außerhalb der Union, insbesondere im Konfliktfall?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(2. Mai 2013)

Zivile Drohnen werden den Regeln für die Sicherheit der Zivilluftfahrt entsprechen müssen, die derzeit auf nationaler und EU-Ebene erarbeitet werden, um für den routinemäßigen Einsatz zugelassen werden zu können. Betreiber von Drohnen werden außerdem spezifische nationale und EU-Vorschriften berücksichtigen müssen, etwa zum Schutz der Privatsphäre und personenbezogener Daten (Artikel 16 des Vertrags über die Funktionsweise der Europäischen Union, Richtlinie 95/46/EG ([1]) zum allgemeinen Datenschutz, nationale Gesetze zu Datenschutz, Videoüberwachung usw.) Diese Vorschriften sind vor dem Hintergrund der Charta der Grundrechte der EU ([2]) zu verstehen. Für die Einhaltung dieser Vorschriften sind in erster Linie die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig.

Die Kommission unterstützt den Einsatz ziviler Drohnen im europäischen Luftraum und damit die Entwicklung ihrer zivilen Anwendungen, plant aber, Bedenken zur Sprache zu bringen, die sich aufgrund solcher Anwendungen ergeben könnten. Sie wird die Umsetzung angemessener Schutzmaßnahmen für die Privatsphäre und personenbezogene Daten auf allen Ebenen, auch in den Mitgliedstaaten, sicherstellen. Sie wird diese Frage im Rahmen der gemäß der Richtlinie 95/46/EG eingesetzten Artikel-29-Datenschutzgruppe zur Sprache bringen. Sie wird ferner eine Studie in die Wege leiten, um festzustellen, welche weiteren Maßnahmen möglicherweise noch erforderlich sind, damit sichergestellt werden kann, dass die Entwicklung ziviler und gewerblicher Anwendungen für Drohnen nicht gegen die Grundrechte verstößt.

Das Ausmaß der Tätigkeit der Kommission auf diesem Gebiet ist jedoch auf Anwendungen beschränkt, die gemäß den Vorschriften über die Zivilluftfahrt im EU-Luftraum durchgeführt werden. Folglich sind damit militärische Operationen und andere staatliche Anwendungen, die nicht gemäß den Vorschriften für Zivilluftfahrt im EU-Luftraum oder außerhalb dessen stattfinden, ausgeschlossen.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31995L0046:de:HTML

([2]) Zum Beispiel Artikel 7 über die Achtung des Privat- und Familienlebens, der Wohnung und der Kommunikation und Artikel 8 über den Schutz personenbezogener Daten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002199/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Compliance of the use of drones (RPAS) with the existing law

In his answer to Question E-010590/2012 by Hans-Peter Martin on international rules on the use of drones, Commissioner Tajani stated that the Commission was planning to undertake actions 'to promote compliance of RPAS surveillance applications with the existing law'.

Can the Commissioner clarify what he means by this:

1. What specific actions is the Commission planning?

2. What legal framework should or must be complied with in respect of the use of drones?

3. Will these actions apply only to the use of drones within the EU, or also to the use of drones outside the EU, in particular in conflict zones?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

To be allowed to fly routinely, civil drones will have to comply with the civil aviation safety regulations currently under development at EU and national levels. Drone operators will also have to take account of specific EU and national rules relating *inter alia* to the protection of privacy and personal data (Article 16 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, general data protection Directive 95/46/EC ([1]), national laws on data protection, video surveillance, etc). These rules must be understood against the background of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU ([2]). Ensuring compliance with these rules is primarily the responsibility of the Member States.

While supporting the integration of civil drones into the European airspace, and hence the development of their civil applications, the Commission intends to address concerns that might rise from such applications. It will stimulate the implementation of appropriate privacy and data protection measures at all levels, including the Member States. It will address the issue with National Data Protection Authorities through the Article 29 Working Party set up under the Directive 95/46/EC. It will also launch a study to identify any additional measures that may be necessary to ensure that the development of civil and commercial applications of drones will not infringe fundamental rights.

The scope of the Commission actions in this area is, however, limited to applications operated under civil aviation law in the EU airspace. It excludes in consequence military operations and other governmental applications not operated under civil aviation law or outside the EU airspace.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31995L0046:en:HTML
([2]) e.g. Article 7 on the respect for private and family life, home and communications and Article 8 on the protection of personal data.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002200/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Bemühungen der Kommission um Zusammenarbeit mit Frontex im Bereich der Asylpolitik

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-011242/2011 von Hans-Peter Martin schrieb Frau Malmström im Januar 2012 im Namen der Kommission, dass (1) „Das Europäische Unterstützungsbüro im Bereich der Asylpolitik […] sich im Rahmen seines Arbeitsprogramms 2012 weiterhin um den Abschluss einer Arbeitsvereinbarung mit Frontex bemühen [wird]" und (2) „Die Kommission […] sich dafür einsetzen [wird], dass darin auch gemeinsame Schulungen vorgesehen werden, um das Bewusstsein der Grenzschützer für Asylaspekte zu schärfen".

Welche Ergebnisse hatten die Bemühungen der Kommission in Bezug auf die oben genannten Ziffern 1 und 2?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2013)

Das Europäische Unterstützungsbüro für Asylfragen und Frontex haben am 26. September 2012 eine Arbeitsvereinbarung geschlossen. In Artikel 7 der Vereinbarung wird ausdrücklich darauf hingewiesen, dass beide Agenturen im Bereich Schulungen zusammenarbeiten werden, um Möglichkeiten der gegenseitigen Teilnahme an diesbezüglichen Programmen und Tätigkeiten zu erkunden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002200/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Efforts undertaken by the Commission with a view to cooperation on asylum policy with Frontex

In her answer to Question E-011242/2011 by Hans-Peter Martin, Ms Malmström stated in January 2012 on behalf of the Commission that (1) 'Following its work programme for 2012, the European Asylum Support Office will work further to conclude a working arrangement with Frontex' and (2) 'The Commission will support the inclusion of shared trainings in the arrangement in order to increase awareness of border guards on asylum-related issues'.

What has been the outcome of the efforts undertaken by the Commission in respect of the above points 1 and 2?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The European Asylum Support Office and Frontex concluded Working Arrangements on 26 September 2012. Article 7 of the Working Arrangements specifically mentions training as a field for cooperation between the two agencies with the goal of exploring possibilities of mutual participation in training programmes and actvities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002201/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Wettbewerbsrecht bei Smartphone-Betriebssystemen

Der Markt für Smartphone-Betriebssysteme wird derzeit durch einige wenige Systeme kommerzieller Anbieter beherrscht. Vor allem sind die Betriebssysteme Android (Google), iOS (Apple) und RIM Blackberry (RIM) bedeutend. Bei jedem dieser Systeme wird Zusatzsoftware („Apps") vor allem durch fest mit dem System verbundene und von den jeweiligen Herstellern kontrollierte „App-Stores" angeboten. Teilweise unterbinden die Hersteller die Installation von Zusatzsoftware aus anderen Quellen durch Schutzmaßnahmen. Insbesondere Apple wurde wiederholt vorgeworfen, Apps nach Belieben entweder abzulehnen oder aus dem App-Store zu entfernen. Im Jahr 2010 untersuchte die Kommission die Politik des Apple-Konzerns, da Apple für das bekannte „Flash" der Firma Adobe den Zugang zum App-Store verwehrte.

1. Sieht die Kommission durch die App-Stores im Allgemeinen oder das Verhalten einzelner Hersteller Prinzipien des EU-Wettbewerbsrechts verletzt?

2. Wenn ja, in welcher Form wird die Kommission dagegen vorgehen?

3. Steht die Kommission mit Herstellern von Smartphone-Betriebssystemen im Dialog über die Zugangsbedingungen zu App-Stores und die teilweise restriktiven Nutzungsbedingungen für Entwickler?

4. Plant die Kommission, eine Regulierung für den Bereich der Smartphone-Betriebssysteme vorzuschlagen?

5. Plant die Kommission, eine Regulierung spezifisch für digitale Vertriebssysteme wie App-Stores vorzuschlagen?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(17. April 2013)

Ein dynamisches, wettbewerbsfähiges und innovatives Umfeld für Applikationen und Dienste ist für die wirtschaftliche Belebung der gesamten Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologiebranche (IKT-Branche), die zum Wachstum und zur Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen in Europa beiträgt, von grundlegender Bedeutung. Die Kommission weiß um die von Ihnen beschriebenen Geschäftspraktiken der Entwickler von Smartphone-Betriebssystemen und beobachtet die Entwicklungen in diesem Bereich aufmerksam.

Ob das EU-Wettbewerbsrecht anwendbar ist, hängt jedoch von einer Reihe sachlicher, rechtlicher und wirtschaftlicher Faktoren ab, die von Fall zu Fall neu geprüft werden müssen. Eine allgemeine Beurteilung dieser Geschäftspraktiken kann deshalb nicht vorgenommen werden.

Ich kann Ihnen versichern, dass die Kommission sich bemüht, die EU-Wettbewerbsvorschriften so durchzusetzen, dass Wettbewerb, Innovation und gleiche Wettbewerbsbedingungen für alle Marktteilnehmer gewährleistet sind. Die Kommission hat derzeit allerdings nicht die Absicht, diesen Bereich zu regulieren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002201/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU competition law and smartphone operating systems

The market for smartphone operating systems is currently dominated by a small number of systems offered by commercial providers, the most significant of which are the Android (Google), iOS (Apple) and RIM Blackberry (RIM) operating systems. Applications ('apps') for each of these systems are available mainly through 'app stores' which are closely integrated with the system and controlled by the relevant manufacturer. In some cases, manufacturers take precautions to prevent the installation of applications from other sources. Apple in particular has been repeatedly accused of either rejecting apps or removing them from its app store arbitrarily. Apple's refusal to allow access to its app store for the well-known Adobe Flash led to its policies being investigated by the Commission in 2010.

1. Does the Commission believe that app stores in general or the behaviour of individual manufacturers violates the principles of EU competition law?

2. If so, how does the Commission intend to stop this?

3. Is the Commission in talks with manufacturers of smartphone operating systems on the conditions of access to app stores and the sometimes restrictive terms and conditions of use for developers?

4. Is the Commission planning to propose a regulation on smartphone operating systems?

5. Is the Commission planning to propose a regulation specifically on digital distribution systems such as app stores?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission considers that a vibrant, competitive and innovative environment for applications and services is essential for boosting the entire information and communications technology (ICT) sector, which contributes to growth and job creation in Europe. The Commission is aware of the business practices of smartphone operating system developers you describe and closely follows developments in this area.

The application of EU competition rules depends however on a range of factual, legal and economic elements which need to be considered on a case by case basis so that no general assessment with regard to these business practices can be made.

I can assure you that the Commission is committed to enforcing EU competition rules in a way which ensures that competition, innovation and a level playing field are preserved amongst all market players. The Commission does currently not envisage regulation being introduced in this area.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002202/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Wettbewerb bei Smartphone-Betriebssystemen

Der Markt für Smartphone-Betriebssysteme wird derzeit durch einige wenige Systeme kommerzieller Anbieter beherrscht. Vor allem sind die Betriebssysteme Android (Google), iOS (Apple) und RIM Blackberry (RIM) bedeutend. Bei jedem dieser Systeme wird Zusatzsoftware („Apps") vor allem durch fest mit dem System verbundene und von den jeweiligen Herstellern kontrollierte „App Stores" angeboten.

Mehrere Unternehmen stellten kürzlich frühe Versionen neuer Smartphone-Betriebssysteme vor, welche insbesondere offene und plattformübergreifende Standards wie HTML5 unterstützen sollen. Solche Betriebssysteme (beispielsweise „Firefox OS" und „Ubuntu Phone") würden zu mehr Konkurrenz auf dem Markt der Smartphone-Betriebssysteme führen. Ebenso könnten neue Betriebssysteme auch die Dominanz bestehender „App Stores" brechen und damit unabhängigen Programmierern sowie Verbrauchern nützen. Da einigen Unternehmen vorgeworfen wurde, Apps nach Belieben oder aus Eigeninteresse abzulehnen, würde die Nutzung offener Standards möglicherweise auch der Meinungsfreiheit sowie der Dienstleistungsfreiheit zuträglich sein.

1. Unterstützt die Kommission die Verbreitung und Nutzung offener Standards im Smartphone-Bereich?

2. Unterstützt die Kommission Projekte für neue Smartphone-Betriebssysteme?

3. Unterstützt die Kommission anderweitig die Entwicklung oder Weiterentwicklung von Smartphone-Betriebssystemen?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(15. Mai 2013)

Industrienormen wirken sich positiv auf den Eintritt neuer Marktteilnehmer und die Interoperabilität aus und senken dadurch die Innovationskosten ([1]). Die Kommission wird sich daher auch weiterhin in den Fällen für Normen und Interoperabilitätsanforderungen einsetzen, in denen sonst der Marktzugang verhindert würde — mit dem Risiko einer wettbewerbswidrigen Marktabschottung. Dies ist gerade für die Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie (IKT) von Bedeutung, da Plattformen und Technologien die wesentliche Grundlage für die nächsten Generationen neuer Produkte bilden können. Um eine Beschränkung des Wettbewerbs im Sinne von Artikel 101 Absatz 1 AEUV auszuschließen, sollte — wie die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang hervorhebt — der Zugang zu Normen zu fairen, zumutbaren und diskriminierungsfreien Bedingungen gewährt werden, darf die Möglichkeit der Mitwirkung am Normungsprozess nicht eingeschränkt werden und sollten die Verfahren zur Annahme der Normen transparent sein ([2]).

Die Kommission begrüßt grundsätzlich Innovationen bei Smartphone-Betriebssystemen und die Entwicklung von Apps, da dies den Verbrauchern mehr Auswahlmöglichkeiten bietet und zu niedrigeren Preisen und besserer Qualität führen kann. Viele EU-Forschungsprojekte tragen indirekt zu neuen/besseren Smartphone-Betriebssystemen bei, darunter auch zu Systemen für den Linux-Kern, der Basis des Android-Systems. 2010 hat die Symbian Foundation erfolgreich Fördermittel der Mitgliedstaaten und aus dem ARTEMIS-Programm der gemeinsamen EU-Technologieinitiative für das Symbian-Projekt SYMBEOSE beantragt, wobei das Projekt später wegen neuer Prioritäten der Projektpartner gestrichen wurde.

Die Kommission wird die Marktentwicklungen genau verfolgen und eingreifen, wenn sie zu dem Schluss gelangt, dass gewisse Geschäftspraktiken den Wettbewerb auf dem Markt verzerren.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission — Leitlinien zur Anwendbarkeit von Artikel 101 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union auf Vereinbarungen über horizontale Zusammenarbeit, ABl. C 11 vom 14.1.2011, Randnummer 263 („horizontale Leitlinien").

([2]) Horizontale Leitlinien, Randnummern 280-286.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002202/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Competition among smartphone operating systems

The market for smartphone operating systems is currently dominated by a small number of systems offered by commercial providers, the most significant of which are the Android (Google), iOS (Apple) and RIM Blackberry (RIM) operating systems. Applications ('apps') for each of these systems are available mainly through 'app stores' which are closely integrated with the system and controlled by the relevant manufacturer.

Several companies recently unveiled early versions of new smartphone operating systems, which are particularly intended to support multi-platform standards such as HTML5. Such operating systems (for example 'Firefox OS' and 'Ubuntu Phone') would result in more competition on the market for smartphone operating systems. New operating systems might also break the dominance of existing 'app stores' and thus benefit both independent programmers and consumers. Since some companies have been accused of rejecting apps arbitrarily or on the basis of their own interests, the use of open standards could also be conducive to freedom of opinion and the freedom to provide services.

1. Does the Commission support the distribution and use of open standards for smartphones?

2. Does the Commission support projects for new smartphone operating systems?

3. Does the Commission support the development or enhancement of smartphone operating systems in any other way?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Industry standards favour market entry and interoperability, thus driving down the cost of innovation ([1]). The Commission will therefore continue to work on the promotion of standards and interoperability requirements in instances where effective access is prevented, which could risk causing anti-competitive foreclosure. This is of particular importance in the information and communications (ICT) sector where platforms and technologies can be essential building blocks for next generations of innovation. In this context, the Commission emphasises that to normally fall outside the scope of Article 101(1) TFEU, effective access to standards should be available on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms, participation in the standard-setting process should be unrestricted and the procedure for adopting the standard in question should be transparent ([2]).

The Commission generally welcomes innovation in smartphone operating systems and the emergence of web apps, as this widens the choice for consumers and has the potential to lower prices and improve quality. Many EU research projects indirectly contribute to new/better smartphone operating systems including those which contribute to the Linux kernel which in turn powers Android. In 2010, the Symbian Foundation successsfully applied for funding for the Symbian project SYMBEOSE from Member States and the EU's Joint Technology Initiative's Artemis programme, although the project was cancelled at a later stage due to changing priorities of the project partners.

Finally, the Commission is closely following market developments and is ready to take action should it come to the conclusion that certain business practices distort competition on the market.

([1]) Communication from the Commission — Guidelines on the applicability of Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to horizontal cooperation agreements, OJ C11, 14.1.2011, paragraph 263 ('Horizontal Guidelines').
([2]) Horizontal Guidelines, paragraphs 280-286.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002203/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Häufigkeit von „Cold Calling" in der EU

Die neue EU-Verbraucherrechte-Richtlinie erwirkt stärkere Regelungen im Bereich von unerbetenen Werbeanrufen, sogenannten „Cold Calls".

1. Verfügt die Kommission über Schätzungen, wie viele Fälle von „Cold Calling" täglich, monatlich oder jährlich in der EU erfolgen?

2. Verfügt die Kommission über Schätzungen, wie viele Fälle von „Cold Calling" täglich, monatlich oder jährlich in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten erfolgen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(2. Mai 2013)

Die Fernabsatzrichtlinie 97/7/EG und die Datenschutzrichtlinie 2002/58/EG für elektronische Kommunikation enthalten bereits Bestimmungen zum Verbot von unerbetenen Werbeanrufen (unerbetene Werbemitteilungen). Die Fernabsatzrichtlinie wird durch die neue Richtlinie 2011/83/EU über die Rechte der Verbraucher ersetzt werden, die am 13. Juni 2014 in Kraft treten wird. Da die Datenschutzrichtlinie 2002/58/EG für elektronische Kommunikation ein hohes Verbraucherschutzniveau gewährleistet, enthält die Richtlinie über die Rechte der Verbraucher zum Anfragegegenstand keine Bestimmungen.

Nach Artikel 13 der Datenschutzrichtlinie für elektronische Kommunikation darf die Verwendung von automatischen Anruf- und Kommunikationssystemen ohne menschlichen Eingriff (automatische Anrufmaschinen), Faxgeräten oder elektronischer Post für die Zwecke der Direktwerbung nur bei vorheriger Einwilligung der Verbraucher gestattet werden. Hinsichtlich nicht automatisierter unerbetener Werbeanrufe können Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen, dass entweder Anrufe, die ohne die Einwilligung des betreffenden Verbrauchers erfolgen oder Anrufe, die an Verbraucher gerichtet sind, die keine solchen Anrufe erhalten möchten, nicht gestattet sind. Die Entscheidung, welche dieser beiden Möglichkeiten gewählt wird, liegt beim jeweiligen Mitgliedstaat und ist nach innerstaatlichem Recht zu regeln. Beide Optionen dürfen keine Kosten für Verbraucher nach sich ziehen.

Die Kommission führt keine EU-weiten Erhebungen zu unerbetenen Werbeanrufen durch, wobei sie sich des Ausmaßes des Problems bewusst ist. Aus einer vor kurzem durchgeführten Erhebung einer britischen Verbraucherorganisation geht allerdings hervor, dass sieben von zehn Erwachsenen in Großbritannien innerhalb von drei Monaten unerbetene Anrufe erhalten haben ([1]). Die Datenschutzbehörden in den Mitgliedstaaten haben unterschiedliche Maßnahmen ergriffen, um das Problem in den Griff zu bekommen. Hierzu zählen das Verhängen von Strafen und die Veröffentlichung von Leitlinien für Unternehmen und Bürger ([2]).

([1]) Die Erhebung von „Which?" ist auf folgender Internetseite abrufbar: http://www.which.co.uk/news/2013/03/calling-time-on-nuisance-calls-and-texts-314056/?intcmp=HPcarousel1Anewswhich?launchescampaignagainstcoldcallingmarch19

([2]) Informationen zu Spanien finden sich auf: http://www.agpd.es/portalwebAGPD/revista_prensa/revista_prensa/2009/notas_prensa/common/febrero/250209_AEPD_sanciona_empr_esp.pdf und http://www.agpd.es/portalwebAGPD/canaldocumentacion/recomendaciones/common/pdfs/recomendaciones_llamadas.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002203/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Frequency of cold calling in the EU

The new EU Consumer Rights Directive will crack down on unwanted advertising calls, known as cold calls.

1. Does the Commission have any estimates of the number of cold calls made daily, monthly or annually in the EU?

2. Does the Commission have any estimates of the number of cold calls made daily, monthly or annually in the individual Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

Provisions banning unwanted advertising calls (unsolicited marketing communications) are already laid down in the existing Distance Selling Directive 97/7/EC and ePrivacy Directive 2002/58/EC. The Distance Selling Directive will be repealed by the new Consumer Rights Directive 2011/83/EU when it enters into application on 13 June 2014. Since the ePrivacy Directive 2002/58/EC provides for a high level of consumer protection, the Consumer Rights Directive does not include provisions on this issue.

The ePrivacy Directive (Article 13) stipulates that the use of automated calling and communication systems without human intervention (automatic calling machines), facsimile machines (fax) or electronic mail for the purposes of direct marketing may be allowed only in respect of consumers who have given their prior consent. As regards unsolicited marketing calls, which are not automated, Member States have the possibility to either prohibit such calls without the consent of the consumer concerned or in respect of consumers who have indicated their wish not to receive calls. The choice between these two options is the competence of the Member States and to be determined by national legislation. Both options must be free of charge for the consumer.

The Commission does not carry out EU-wide surveys on unsolicited marketing calls but is aware of the scale of the problem. For example, a recent survey by a UK consumer organisation indicates that seven in 10 UK adults had received unsolicited marketing calls within three months ([1]). Data Protection authorities in Member States have taken a number of initiatives addressing this issue, such as imposing penalties or the publication of guidelines for companies and citizens ([2]).

([1]) Survey by 'Which?': http://www.which.co.uk/news/2013/03/calling-time-on-nuisance-calls-and-texts-314056/?intcmp=HPcarousel1Anewswhich?launchescampaignagainstcoldcallingmarch19.

([2]) See, for example, information concerning Spain: http://www.agpd.es/portalwebAGPD/revista_prensa/revista_prensa/2009/notas_prensa/common/febrero/250209_AEPD_sanciona_empr_esp.pdf and http://www.agpd.es/portalwebAGPD/canaldocumentacion/recomendaciones/common/pdfs/recomendaciones_llamadas.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002204/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Schutz von innereuropäischen Arbeitsmigranten

Die andauernde Finanzkrise sowie die hohe Arbeitslosigkeit in einigen Mitgliedsländern veranlassen viele EU-Bürger, Arbeit in wirtschaftlich besser gestellten Mitgliedsländern zu suchen. In den letzten Monaten wurden wiederholt Anschuldigungen laut, dass solche Arbeitskräfte schlecht behandelt werden. Zuletzt wurde in einer Sendung des deutschen öffentlich-rechtlichen Fernsehsenders ARD der Internethändler Amazon beschuldigt, dass in dessen deutschen Versandzentren Arbeiter eingeschüchtert, diskriminiert und unangebrachten Kontrollen ausgesetzt würden. Dem Händler wurde vorgeworfen, die „Schlupflöcher des deutschen Arbeitsrechts" auszunutzen. Zudem seien die Arbeiter in Amazons Versandzentren „faktisch rechtlos".

1. Gibt es spezielle EU-Programme, um innereuropäische Arbeitsmigranten über ihre Rechte im Zielland aufzuklären?

2. Gibt es spezielle EU-Programme, um innereuropäischen Arbeitsmigranten, die oft die Sprache und die Institutionen des Ziellandes nicht kennen, Ansprechpartner sowie Beschwerde- und Hilfsmöglichkeiten zur Verfügung zu stellen?

3. Unterliegen Unternehmen, die hohe Zahlen von Arbeitsmigranten beschäftigen, besonderen Auflagen oder Aufsichtsmaßnahmen? Wenn dem so ist, welchen?

4. Wenn Unternehmen, die hohe Zahlen von Arbeitsmigranten beschäftigen, keinen besonderen Auflagen oder Aufsichtsmaßnahmen unterliegen, gibt es vonseiten der Kommission Pläne, Auflagen oder Aufsichtsmaßnahmen für solche Unternehmen einzuführen?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(2. Mai 2013)

1./2. Die Kommission erarbeitet zurzeit weitere Lösungen, mit denen das EU-Recht zur Freizügigkeit von Arbeitnehmern in vollem Umfang durchgesetzt und die Kluft zwischen den EU-Rechten in Theorie und Praxis überbrückt werden soll. Hierzu soll u. a. eine Richtlinie vorgeschlagen werden, die den EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürgern helfen soll, ihre Mobilitätsrechte in vollem Umfang wahrzunehmen, und die gewährleisten soll, dass der Gleichbehandlungsgrundsatz angewandt wird. In diesem Rahmen sollen u. a. in den Mitgliedstaaten Stellen eingerichtet werden, die EU-Wanderarbeitnehmer unterstützen und die Durchsetzung der ihnen und ihren Familien gemäß dem EU-Recht zustehenden Rechte fördern.

Zudem hat die Kommission im März 2012 einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie zur Durchsetzung der Bestimmungen für die Entsendung von Arbeitnehmern im Rahmen der Erbringung von Dienstleistungen vorgelegt.

Das Netz der europäischen öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen EURES wirkt der Aufsplitterung der Informationen über Beschäftigung, zu besetzende Stellen sowie Lebens- und Arbeitsbedingungen entgegen, wodurch faire Mobilitätsbedingungen geschaffen werden.

Im Rahmen des ESF hat die Kommission für den Förderzeitraum 2014-2020 Maßnahmen vorgeschlagen, mit denen die grenzüberschreitende Mobilität von Arbeitskräften gestärkt werden soll. Aus dem ESF könnten Maßnahmen in den Bereichen Einstellung, Abgleich von Angebot und Nachfrage sowie Vermittlung zusammen mit diesbezüglichen Informationen, Leitfäden und Beratungsangeboten, etwa zu den Arbeitnehmerrechten im Zielland, gefördert werden.

Außerdem wurde auf Ersuchen des Europäischen Parlaments ein Betrag von 500 000 EUR für Pilotmaßnahmen bereitgestellt. Diese umfassen eine Analyse der Modalitäten eines EU-weiten Netzes von Informationszentren, gefolgt von Maßnahmen zur Erprobung, inwieweit diese Zentren EU-Wanderarbeitnehmerinnen und -nehmer unterstützen können.

3./4. Es gibt keine speziellen Vorschriften oder Überwachungsmaßnahmen für Unternehmen, die eine hohe Zahl von Wanderarbeitnehmern beschäftigen. Der Gleichbehandlungsgrundsatz und das Verbot der Diskriminierung aufgrund einer bestimmten Staatsangehörigkeit gelten unterschiedslos für alle privaten und öffentlichen Unternehmen in der EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002204/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Protection of intra-EU migrant workers

The continuing financial crisis and high levels of unemployment in some Member States have prompted many EU citizens to look for work in Member States with stronger economies. Over the past few months there have once again been accusations that these workers are treated badly. It was recently claimed in a programme by the German public service television broadcaster ARD that workers at the German distribution centres of the online retailer Amazon are bullied, discriminated against and subjected to unnecessary checks. The retailer was accused of exploiting the 'loopholes of German labour legislation'. Furthermore, it was alleged that the workers at Amazon's distribution centres have 'virtually no rights'.

1. Are there any specific EU programmes aimed at informing intra-EU migrant workers of their rights in the country of destination?

2. Are there any specific EU programmes aimed at ensuring that intra-EU migrant workers, who are often unfamiliar with the language and institutions of the country of destination, are provided with contacts and opportunities to lodge complaints and obtain assistance?

3. Are companies which employ large numbers of migrant workers subject to particular requirements or supervisory measures? If so, which?

4. If companies which employ large numbers of migrant workers are not subject to any particular requirements or supervisory measures, is the Commission planning to introduce requirements or supervisory measures for such companies?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission is working on further solutions to give full effect to the application of EC law on free movement of workers and bridge the gap between EU rights and practice. This includes a proposal for a directive, aiming to help EU citizens to fully enjoy their rights to mobility and ensure that the equal treatment principle applies.This would imply, *inter alia*, the setting up of bodies at national level in support of EU migrant workers and promote the rights conferred on them and the members of their families by EC law.

Moreover, the Commission has proposed in March 2012 a directive on the enforcement of the provisions applicable to the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services.

EURES, the network of European public employment services addresses the fragmentation of information on labour, vacancies, living and working conditions, thus promoting fair mobility.

For the ESF in the period 2014-2020, the Commission proposed actions to strengthen transnational labour mobility. Recruitment, matching and placement could be funded by the ESF together with the related information, guidance and advice for example on workers' rights in the country of destination.

Moreover,on the request of the European Parliament, an amount of EUR 500.000 has been earmarked for pilot activities, consistingof an analysis of the modalities for a network of information centers across the EU, followed by measures to test their capacity to provide support to EU migrant workers.

3 and 4. There are no specific rules or supervisory measures for companies which employ a large number of migrant workers. The equal treatment principle and the non-discrimination on the basis of nationality apply to all companies, whether private or public, within the EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-002205/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Eleni Theocharous (PPE)
(26 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τουρκία: Παραβίαση του διεθνούς δικαίου της θάλασσας και των κυριαρχικών δικαιωμάτων κράτους μέλους της ΕΕ

Η Τουρκική κυβέρνηση, σε συνεργασία με την Τουρκική Εταιρία Πετρελαίων και άλλη ξένη εταιρεία, προγραμματίζει παράνομες έρευνες στα δυτικά της Κύπρου, εντός της κυπριακής ΑΟΖ, κατά παράβαση του διεθνούς δικαίου της θάλασσας το οποίο αποτελεί αναπόσπαστο τμήμα του κοινοτικού κεκτημένου. Εάν η Τουρκία επιθυμεί να καταστεί πλήρες κράτος μέλος της ΕΕ, θα πρέπει να υπογράψει, να σεβαστεί και να εφαρμόσει το κοινοτικό κεκτημένο.

Υπό αυτές τις συνθήκες πώς είναι δυνατό να ζητείται η άρση του βέτο στο άνοιγμα του κεφαλαίου 15 για την ενέργεια από την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, όταν υποψήφιο για ένταξη κράτος, δηλαδή η Τουρκία, παραβιάζει το διεθνές δίκαιο της θάλασσας και τα κυριαρχικά δικαιώματα κράτους μέλους;

Προτίθεται ή όχι η Επιτροπή να λάβει θέση και να καταδικάσει τις τουρκικές προκλήσεις που είναι αντίθετες με το κοινοτικό κεκτημένο και το διεθνές δίκαιο της θάλασσας;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η Τουρκία είναι επαρκώς προετοιμασμένη για την έναρξη διαπραγματεύσεων στον τομέα της ενέργειας. Αυτό το κεφάλαιο αφορά το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ στον τομέα της ενέργειας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της εσωτερικής αγοράς ενέργειας, της προώθησης των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας και της ενεργειακής απόδοσης, της πυρηνικής ενέργειας και πυρηνικής ασφάλειας και της προστασίας από τις ακτινοβολίες.

Όσον αφορά το θέμα των ερευνών για υδρογονάνθρακα στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου του περασμένου Δεκεμβρίου σύμφωνα με τα οποία η Τουρκία πρέπει να δεσμευθεί κατηγορηματικά για την ανάπτυξη σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας και την ειρηνική διευθέτηση των διαφορών σύμφωνα με το Χάρτη των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, προσφεύγοντας, εφόσον κριθεί αναγκαίο, στο Διεθνές Δικαστήριο. Στα εν λόγω συμπεράσματα, το Συμβούλιο κάλεσε ακόμη την Τουρκία να αποφύγει κάθε είδους απειλή ή ενέργεια κατά κράτους μέλους, ή κάθε πηγή προστριβών ή ενεργειών που θα μπορούσαν να βλάψουν της σχέσεις καλής γειτονίας και την ειρηνική διευθέτηση των διαφορών.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002205/13
to the Commission
Eleni Theocharous (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Violation by Turkey of international law of the sea and the sovereign rights of an EU Member State

The Turkish government, in cooperation with the Turkish Petroleum Company and another foreign company, is planning to carry out illegal exploration work to the west of Cyprus in Cyprus's EEZ, in violation of international law of the sea which forms an integral part of the Community *acquis*. If Turkey wishes to become a full EU Member State, it is obliged to sign, respect and implement the Community *acquis*.

Under these circumstances — a candidate for European Union accession, i.e. Turkey is violating international law of the sea and the sovereign rights of a Member State — how is it possible to call upon the Republic of Cyprus to lift its veto on the opening of Chapter 15 (Energy)?

Will the Commission adopt a position on this matter and condemn these provocative actions by Turkey that are contrary to the Community *acquis* and international law of the sea?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The Commission considers that Turkey is sufficiently prepared to start negotiations on the energy chapter. This chapter deals with the EU *acquis* in the area of energy, including the internal energy market, the promotion of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, nuclear energy and nuclear safety and radiation protection.

As regards the issue of hydrocarbon explorations in the East Mediterranean, the Commission refers to last December's Council Conclusions according to which Turkey needs to commit itself unequivocally to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice. In these Conclusions the Council also urged Turkey to avoid any kind of threat or action directed against a Member State, or source of friction or actions, which could damage good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002206/13
an die Kommission
Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE) und Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Photovoltaik-Ausbau in Österreich

Österreich hat der Kommission im vergangenen Jahr seinen „Fortschrittsbericht 2011 zum Nationalen Aktionsplan 2010 für erneuerbare Energie“ zur Verwirklichung der 20-20-20 Ziele übermittelt. Darin geht es auch um den Ausbau der Photovoltaik.

Der Bundesverband Photovoltaic Austria hat die dabei von österreichischer Seite angegebenen Zahlen mit den tatsächlich investierten Beträgen verglichen und ist zu dem Ergebnis gekommen, dass allein in den Jahren 2008 bis 2011 mindestens 30 Mio. EUR mehr an Photovoltaik-Förderung von österreichischer Seite angegeben als tatsächlich ausgezahlt wurden. Daraus ergibt sich ein völlig falsches Bild des Photovoltaik-Ausbaus in Österreich.

1. Wird die Kommission diese Zahlen trotz des nachgewiesenen Fehlbetrags akzeptieren?

2. Wird die Kommission von der österreichischen Bundesregierung verlangen, dass korrekte Zahlen zum Fortschritt beim Ausbau der erneuerbaren Energien vorgelegt werden?

3. Werden vonseiten der Kommission generell Schritte ergriffen, um unrichtige Zahlen zur Förderung zu korrigieren?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(22. April 2013)

Gemäß der Richtlinie über erneuerbare Energien (Richtlinie 2009/28/EG) sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, der Kommission Berichte über die Fortschritte bei der Förderung der erneuerbaren Energien vorzulegen. Die Richtlinie enthält keinen Mechanismus zur Validierung dieser Berichte. Im Allgemeinen überprüft die Kommission im Rahmen des Möglichen die Daten anhand anderer Datenquellen. Es ist ihr jedoch nicht möglich, dies systematisch zu tun, da die Informationen der Mitgliedstaaten in vielen Fällen die einzige verfügbare Informationsquelle sind. In dem von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannten spezifischen Fall werden die Kommissionsdienststellen die österreichischen Behörden um Klarstellung bitten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002206/13
to the Commission
Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE) and Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Expansion of photovoltaics in Austria

Last year Austria submitted to the Commission its '2011 Progress Report on the 2010 National Renewable Energy Action Plan' as part of its efforts to achieve the 20-20-20 objectives. One of the subjects covered in the report is the expansion of photovoltaics.

The federal association Photovoltaic Austria has compared the figures provided by the Austrian state with the sums actually invested and has come to the conclusion that between 2008 and 2011 alone the amount actually spent on the promotion of photovoltaics has been over-reported by the Austrian state by at least EUR 30 million. This gives a completely misleading impression of the expansion of photovoltaics in Austria.

1. Will the Commission accept these figures in spite of the proven error?

2. Will the Commission ask the Austrian Government to submit correct figures regarding its progress in expanding renewable energies?

3. Is the Commission taking any steps in general to ensure that inaccurately reported funding figures are corrected?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

According to the Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC) Member States are obliged to provide the Commission with reports on the progress in the promotion of renewables. The directive does not include a mechanism to validate these reports. Generally and to the extent possible the Commission cross checks the data with other data-sources, but is unable to do this systematically as in many cases Member State information is the only information source available. In the specific case referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission services will ask the Austrian national authorities to clarify the information submitted.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002207/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Eleni Theocharous (PPE)
(26 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η βιωσιμότητα του χρέους της Κύπρου

Έχει ενημερωθεί το Συμβούλιο — και η ευρωζώνη ειδικότερα — κατά πόσον το χρέος της Κύπρου είναι βιώσιμο; Κατά πόσον θεωρεί ότι το πρόβλημα αυτό είναι ή όχι συστημικό γεγονός που μπορεί να προκαλέσει αλυσιδωτές αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στην ΕΕ και διεθνώς;

Απάντηση
(2 Μαΐου 2013)

Στη δήλωσή της της 16ης Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα ανέφερε την πεποίθησή της ότι οι πρωτοβουλίες των κυπριακών αρχών σχετικά με την κινητοποίηση εσωτερικών πόρων καθώς και την αυστηρή εφαρμογή των όρων της συμπεφωνημένης πολιτικής θα επιτρέψουν στο δημόσιο χρέος της Κύπρου, το οποίο προβλέπεται να ανέλθει στο 100% του ΑΕΠ το 2020, να διατηρήσει βιώσιμη πορεία και να ενισχύσει το αναπτυξιακό δυναμικό της οικονομίας.

Στις 25 Ιουνίου 2012, η κυβέρνηση της Κύπρου ζήτησε εξωτερική οικονομική βοήθεια από τα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ. Στις 27 Ιουνίου 2012, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση γι' αυτό το αίτημα δεδομένων των προκλήσεων που αντιμετωπίζει η Κύπρος, κυρίως λόγω των δυσχερειών στον τραπεζικό τομέα και την ύπαρξη μακροοικονομικών ανισορροπιών. Το άρθρο 13 της συνθήκης ΕΜΣ αναθέτει στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (ΕΚΤ), να εκτιμήσει την ύπαρξη κινδύνου για τη χρηματοοικονομική σταθερότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ στο σύνολό της ή των κρατών μελών της.

Στις 21 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα επανέλαβε τη δέσμευσή της να είναι σε ετοιμότητα για να βοηθήσει τον κυπριακό λαό στις μεταρρυθμιστικές προσπάθειές του και να εξασφαλίσει τη σταθερότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ στο σύνολό της.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002207/13
to the Council
Eleni Theocharous (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Viability of Cyprus' debt

Have the Council and in particular the eurozone been informed about whether Cyprus' debt is viable? Does the Council believe that this problem is systemic and may set off adverse chain reactions in the EU and further afield?

Reply
(2 May 2013)

In its statement of 16 March 2013, the Eurogroup indicated its confidence that the initiatives of Cyprus authorities regarding mobilising internal resources as well as a strict implementation of the agreed policy conditionality would allow Cyprus' public debt, which is projected to reach 100% of GDP in 2020, to remain on a sustainable path and enhance the economy's growth potential.

On 25 June 2012, the Government of Cyprus requested external financial assistance from euro-area Member States. On 27 June 2012, the Eurogroup welcomed that request in view of the challenges that Cyprus was facing, in particular due to distress in the banking sector and the presence of macroeconomic imbalances. Article 13 of the ESM Treaty entrusts the European Commission, in liaison with the European Central Bank (ECB), with the task to assess the existence of risk to the financial stability of the euro area as a whole or of its Member States.

On 21 March 2013, the Eurogroup reiterated its commitment to stand ready to assist the Cypriot people in their reform efforts and to ensure the stability of the euro area as a whole.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002208/13
to the Council
Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: EU- Israel trade relations and the EU's approach to illegal settlement products

The European Union is Israel's biggest trading partner. Products entering the EU from Israel are labelled as 'Made in Israel'. However, about 2% of the overall products traded with the EU and labelled as 'Made in Israel' are reported to have their origin in the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which are considered illegal under international law. The EU is said to currently import 15 times more from illegal Israeli settlements than from Palestinians.

The Danish Presidency initiated a debate on the possible introduction of EU-level guidelines for consumer labels on settlement goods. This initiative followed the Foreign Affairs Council meeting of 14 May 2012 in which 'the EU and its Member States [reaffirmed] their commitment to fully and effectively implement existing EU legislation and the bilateral arrangements applicable to settlement products'.

Can the European Council and the Irish Presidency in particular provide answers to the following questions:

1. Will the European Council come forward with concrete proposals before the end of the Irish Presidency (Ireland is reported to have supported the Danish initiative at the time) in order to follow up on the initiative for EU-level guidelines for consumer labels on settlement goods?

2. Does the European Council agree that those guidelines — if they come into being — should be legally binding in order to live up to the conclusions of the May 2012 Foreign Affairs Council?

3. In light of the ongoing expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, does the European Council intend to implement an import ban on products from those settlements?

4. Will the European Council consider suspending the EU-Israel Agreement and the Additional Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the EC and Israel on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA/CAA), in light of the recent UN report on Israel's overall settlement policy, which describes the settlement policy as a 'creeping annexation' of territory that clearly violates the human rights of Palestinians, and which calls on Israel to immediately put an end to all further expansion?

Reply
(2 May 2013)

As a follow-up to the 14 May 2012 Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on the Middle East peace process, the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) have undertaken the mapping of all EU legislation relevant for labelling the origin of Israeli settlement products. EU Member States have been informed about the results of this work. Insofar as the enforcement of this legislation is primarily the responsibility of Member States and of their competent authorities, the attention of Member States has been drawn to the significance of the full and effective enforcement of this legislation and to the need for enhanced efforts on the part of their competent authorities to that end. The EEAS and the Commission stand ready to offer their full cooperation with national authorities for achieving this objective.

Some EU Member States have issued voluntary guidelines at national level which clarify the correct way to implement EU legislation relevant for labelling the origin of Israeli settlement products. These national guidelines are compatible with EU legislation. The Commission and the EEAS are discussing the possibility of presenting EU-wide voluntary guidelines on the same issue, so as to strengthen a consistent approach in the implementation of relevant EU legislation and its consistency with EU foreign policy objectives.

Neither an import ban on products from Israeli settlements nor a suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement are under consideration in the Council.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002209/13
adresată Comisiei
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(26 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Efectele secundare negative ale crizei economice asupra sănătății

Crizele economice anterioare au arătat că adâncirea șomajului și a sărăciei conduce la creșterea cazurilor de depresie și de sinucidere. Aceasta este situația în prezent: criza economică a avut un impact negativ asupra sănătății, în special în statele membre care nu au un sistem de sănătate cu mijloacele necesare pentru a contribui la prevenirea problemelor legate de sănătatea mentală. De la începutul recesiunii, rata sinuciderilor a crescut în 9 din 10 țări UE, cu echivalentul a aproape 3 400 de sinucideri.

Grecia se confruntă cu o creștere a cazurilor noi de HIV, în special în rândul utilizatorilor de droguri, în rândul cărora numărul de cazuri a crescut de 10 ori. În Spania, cazurile de sinucideri au crescut o dată cu rata șomajului.

În lumina celor de mai sus, Comisia analizează impactul total al crizei economice asupra sănătății? Dacă da, care sunt principalele rezultate ale acestor studii? Ce măsuri pot fi luate (protecție socială, îngrijire medicală, indemnizații de șomaj, programe active pe piața muncii, sprijin pentru persoanele cu dizabilități, programe de sprijinirea familiei etc.) pentru a preveni sau a diminua efectele recesiunii asupra sănătății? Ce măsuri a luat Comisia pentru a ajuta statele membre să protejeze sănătatea publică în cursul actualei crize economice?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(12 aprilie 2013)

Comisia monitorizează datele privind sănătatea colectate de Eurostat și a comandat o analiză a rapoartelor publicate cu privire la impactul crizei asupra sănătății, care se preconizează a fi finalizată în cursul anului 2014. În plus, Comisia a efectuat o serie de misiuni de informare în statele membre.

Comisia și-a prezentat punctul de vedere privind necesitatea îmbunătățirii supravegherii politice din sectoarele sociale, care contribuie la gestionarea crizelor, precum și privind importanța investiției sociale, inclusiv în domeniul sănătății, pentru a consolida capitalul uman și a asigura caracterul adecvat și sustenabilitatea sistemelor sociale și de sănătate ([1]).

Comisia este dedicată asigurării unui nivel ridicat de protecție a sănătății în definirea și punerea în aplicare a tuturor politicilor și activităților Uniunii. De exemplu, Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor (ECDC) oferă Greciei expertiză tehnică cu privire la controlul bolilor transmisibile.

Fondurile UE, în special Fondul social european și Fondul european de dezvoltare regională oferă oportunități pentru a contribui la protejarea sănătății publice, atât prin abordarea factorilor sociali și economici care au un impact asupra sănătății, precum și prin investiții în sistemele de sănătate. Statele membre sunt puternic încurajate să utilizeze aceste oportunități.

([1]) COM(2013)83.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002209/13
to the Commission
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Adverse health side-effects of the economic crisis

Previous economic crises have shown that increases in unemployment and poverty lead to increases in depression and suicide rates. This is the case today: the economic crisis has had an adverse impact on health, especially in Member States that do not have a health system with the means to help and prevent mental health problems. Since the start of the recession, suicide rates have risen in 9 out of 10 EU countries, which equates to about 3 400 additional suicides.

Greece is having to contend with an increase in new HIV cases, mainly in the category of injecting drug users, among whom cases have risen tenfold. In Spain, cases of suicide have risen with the rate of unemployment.

In the light of the above, is the Commission analysing the full impact on health of the economic crisis? If so, what are the main results of such studies? What measures can be taken (social protection, healthcare, unemployment benefits, active labour market programmes, support for people with disabilities, family support programmes, etc.) to prevent or diminish the effects of recession on health? What measures has the Commission taken to help the Member States safeguard public health during the current economic crisis?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission monitors health data collected by Eurostat and has commissioned a review of published reports on the health impact of the crisis which is expected to be completed during 2014. In addition it has carried out a number of fact finding missions to Member States.

The Commission has set out its views on the need for improved policy surveillance in social areas, which contributes to crisis management, and on the importance of social investment, including in health, to build human capital and ensure the adequacy and sustainability of social and health systems ([1]).

The Commission is committed to ensuring a high level of health protection in the definition and implementation of all Union policies and activities. Technical expertise is being offered for example on communicable disease control by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to Greece.

EU funds and in particular the European Social Fund and European Regional Development Fund provide opportunities for contributing to safeguarding public health both by addressing social and economic factors which impact on health as well as through investments in health systems. Member States are strongly encouraged to use these opportunities.

([1]) COM(2013)83.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002210/13
adresată Comisiei
Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D)
(26 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Universitățile europene

În ultimii ani, în multe clasificări internaționale ale universităților, cum ar fi „Times World Reputation Rankings", universitățile europene, cu excepția unora din RU, de-abia s-au clasificat printre primele 50. În ciuda unor progrese înregistrate recent și a multor inițiative bune cum ar fi acțiunile Marie Curie și programul Erasmus, puține dintre universitățile europene sunt printre cele mai bune din lume.

Cunoaște Comisia aceste clasificări?

A dezvoltat Comisia planuri pentru dinamizarea și modernizarea universităților, pentru a le ajuta să se poziționeze mai bine în clasificările internaționale?

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(11 aprilie 2013)

Comisia are cunoștință de un număr de clasamente internaționale pentru universități, precum cel menționat de distinsul membru.

În scopul de a sprijini îmbunătățirea performanțelor instituțiilor de învățământ superior din UE, Comisia a elaborat o agendă de modernizare a sistemelor de învățământ superior din Europa. Această agendă subliniază importanța sporirii numărului de absolvenți în Europa, a îmbunătățirii calității și relevanței programelor educaționale, a promovării mobilității și legăturilor internaționale, a consolidării contribuției învățământului superior la dezvoltarea regională, inovare și creativitate, precum și importanța garantării faptului că modelele de guvernanță și de finanțare mai degrabă încurajează decât să împiedice astfel de evoluții.

Pentru a atinge acest obiectiv, Europa are nevoie de instituții care excelează în diferite domenii. Acesta este motivul pentru care Comisia implementează un nou sistem de clasificare a instituțiilor de învățământ superior, axat pe utilizator și multidimensional, U-multirank ([1]). U-multirank va măsura multe dintre aspectele legate de performanță și nu va ține cont doar de cercetare, care este elementul la care se limitează adesea cele mai multe dintre clasamentele internaționale. Primele rezultate ale acestui clasament sunt așteptate în 2014.

([1]) A se vedea http://www.umultirank.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002210/13
to the Commission
Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: European universities

In recent years, in many world university rankings, such as the Times World Reputation Rankings, European universities, with the exception of UK establishments, have barely reached the top 50. Despite some recent progress, and many good initiatives such as the Marie Curie actions and the Erasmus programme, not many European universities are among the best in the world.

Is the Commission aware of such rankings?

Has the Commission developed plans to energise and modernise universities, in order to help them to advance in world rankings?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of a number of international university rankings such as the one mentioned by the Honourable Member.

In order to support the improved performance of higher education institutions in the EU, the Commission has set out an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems. This agenda underlines the importance of increasing the number of graduates in Europe, improving the quality and relevance of educational programmes, promoting mobility and international links, strengthening the contribution of higher education to regional development, innovation and creativity and ensuring that governance and funding models foster rather than hinder such developments.

To achieve this, Europe needs institutions that excel in many different dimensions. This is why the Commission is implementing a new user-driven, multidimensional ranking of higher education institutions, U-Multirank ([1]). U-Multirank will measure many aspects of performance, rather than just taking into account research which is what most international rankings are limited to. The first results of this ranking are expected in 2014.

([1]) See http://www.umultirank.org/.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002211/13
do Komisji
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(26 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Nowa delimitacja obszarów o niekorzystnych warunkach gospodarowania (ONW)

Komisja Europejska w swoim projekcie legislacyjnym dotyczącym wsparcia rozwoju obszarów wiejskich przez Europejski Fundusz Rolny na rzecz Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich po 2013 r. (EFRROW), proponuje zmianę sposobu wyznaczenia obszarów z ograniczeniami naturalnymi (chodzi o obszary obecnie klasyfikowane jako ONW typ nizinny). Komisja zaproponowała nowe, wyłącznie biofizyczne kryteria wyznaczania obszarów z ograniczeniami naturalnymi [tj. dotyczące klimatu (długość okresu wegetacji, temperatura w okresie wegetacyjnym, brak wody), gleby (słaba przepuszczalność gleby, uziarnienie gleby i kamienistość, głębokość strefy korzeniowej, słabe właściwości chemiczne), gleby i klimatu (nadmierna wilgotność gleby), ukształtowanie terenu (spadki terenu)] oraz wskaźniki ekonomiczno-produkcyjne (tzw. fine tuning). Zabrakło m.in. kryteriów społeczno-gospodarczych.

W dotychczasowej debacie Komisja nie odniosła się do kwestii porównywalności wyników testowania zaproponowanych przez Komisję kryteriów biofizycznych. W związku z tym uprzejmie prosimy o szczegółową odpowiedź na każde z poniższych pytań:

1. Czy wyniki przekazane przez PCz do Komisji jako rezultat testowania są porównywalne we wszystkich krajach UE?

2. Czy porównywalność ta była weryfikowana przez Komisję i daje wiarygodny obraz naturalnych utrudnień na poziomie UE?

3. Jakie badania w tym zakresie były robione przez Komisję?

4. Jaki zakres skali map był akceptowalny przez Komisję w ramach przesyłanych przez PCz wyników testowania nowych kryteriów?

5. Czy naturalne utrudnienia są zbieżne ze sobą na granicach poszczególnych państw oraz są zgodne z naturalną produktywnością gleb?

6. Czy właściwym podejściem jest stosowanie w ramach fine tuning średnich w stosunku, do których będą porównywane obszary?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002213/13
do Komisji
Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE)
(26 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Nowa delimitacja obszarów ONW

Komisja Europejska w swoim projekcie legislacyjnym, dotyczącym wsparcia rozwoju obszarów wiejskich przez Europejski Fundusz Rolny na rzecz Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich po 2013 r. (EFRROW), proponuje zmianę sposobu wyznaczenia obszarów z ograniczeniami naturalnymi (chodzi o obszary obecnie klasyfikowane jako ONW typ nizinny). Komisja zaproponowała nowe, wyłącznie biofizyczne kryteria wyznaczania obszarów z ograniczeniami naturalnymi [tj. dotyczące klimatu (długość okresu wegetacji, temperatura w okresie wegetacyjnym, brak wody), gleby (słaba przepuszczalność gleby, uziarnienie gleby i kamienistość, głębokość strefy korzeniowej, słabe właściwości chemiczne), gleby i klimatu (nadmierna wilgotność gleby), ukształtowanie terenu (spadki terenu)] oraz wskaźniki ekonomiczno-produkcyjne (tzw. fine tuning). Zabrakło m.in. kryteriów społeczno-gospodarczych.

W dotychczasowej debacie Komisja nie odniosła się do kwestii porównywalności wyników testowania zaproponowanych przez Komisję kryteriów biofizycznych.

1. Czy wyniki przekazane przez PCz do Komisja jako rezultat testowania są porównywalne we wszystkich krajach UE?

2. Czy porównywalność ta była weryfikowana przez Komisję i daje wiarygodny obraz naturalnych utrudnień na poziomie UE?

3. Jakie badania w tym zakresie były robione przez Komisję?

4. Jaki zakres skali map był akceptowalny przez Komisję w ramach przesyłanych przez PCz wyników testowania nowych kryteriów?

5. Czy naturalne utrudnienia są zbieżne ze sobą na granicach poszczególnych państw oraz są zgodne z naturalną produktywnością gleb?

6. Czy właściwym podejściem jest stosowanie w ramach fine tuning średnich, w stosunku do których będą porównywane obszary?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(15 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Komisja zaproponowała wspólną metodę wyznaczania w przyszłości obszarów innych niż obszary górskie z ograniczeniami naturalnymi. Nowa metoda wyznaczania opiera się na ośmiu wskaźnikach biofizycznych, z których każdy ma określony próg. Progi te określają „poważny wpływ na rolnictwo". System ten zapewnia zatem porównywalność w całej UE, ponieważ na wszystkich obszarach z ograniczeniami będą stosowane te same progi.

1. Prace w państwach członkowskich są w toku. Komisja opublikowała wytyczne w celu zapewnienia, że wszystkie państwa członkowskie dokonują pomiaru kryteriów biofizycznych w jednolity sposób. Komisja systematycznie ocenia wdrażanie kryteriów przez państwa członkowskie i sygnalizuje im wszelkie odstępstwa.

2. System został zaprojektowany tak, by umożliwiać porównywanie. Testowanie kryteriów opiera się na danych pochodzących od państw członkowskich. Ogólnie państwa członkowskie potwierdzają Komisji, że wiarygodne dane gwarantują solidne wyniki.

3. W fazie przygotowawczej kryteria biofizyczne zostały opracowane przez zespół niezależnych ekspertów. Wyniki testowania kryteriów przez państwa członkowskie są stale analizowane przez Wspólne Centrum Badawcze.

4. Komisja wskazała, że mapy o skali większej niż 1:300 000 nie gwarantują wiarygodnych wyników.

5. Jak już wspomniano, prace nadal trwają. Spójność na granicach poszczególnych państw to jeden z elementów sprawdzanych w każdym sprawozdaniu otrzymanym od państw członkowskich.

6. Zawężanie wyboru (tzw. *fine tuning*) jest mechanizmem mającym na celu wykluczenie obszarów, na których ograniczenia naturalne zostały przezwyciężone. Zgodnie z wnioskiem Komisji państwa członkowskie muszą opracować odpowiedni mechanizm zawężania wyboru. Komisja zaakceptuje mechanizmy, które będą uzasadnione i dzięki którym otrzymywane wyniki będą wiarygodne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002211/13
to the Commission
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: New demarcation of Less Favoured Areas (LFAs)

In its draft legislation on support for rural development through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) after 2013, the Commission is proposing changing the way in which areas facing natural constraints are designated (areas currently classified as lowland LFAs). The Commission has proposed new, exclusively biophysical criteria for designating areas facing natural constraints (i.e. concerning climate (length of growing season, temperature during growing season, lack of water), soil (poor soil permeability, grain size and stoniness of soil, rooting depth, poor chemical properties), soil and climate (excessive soil moisture), terrain (slope)) and economic-production indicators (so-called fine tuning). Socioeconomic criteria, among other things, are missing.

In the debate so far, the Commission has not addressed the issue of the comparability of the results of the testing of the biophysical criteria proposed by the Commission. In this regard, could the Commission please provide detailed answers to each of the following questions:

1. Are the results provided by the Member States to the Commission as a result of the testing comparable in all EU countries?

2. Has that comparability been verified by the Commission and does it give a genuine picture of natural handicaps at EU level?

3. What research has the Commission carried out in this regard?

4. As regards the results of the testing under the new criteria sent by the Member States, what map scale was acceptable to the Commission?

5. Are the natural handicaps consistent at the borders of individual countries, and are they consistent with the natural productivity of the soil?

6. Is it the right approach to base the fine tuning on averages with which the areas will be compared?

Question for written answer E-002213/13
to the Commission
Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: New criteria for designating less favoured areas (LFAs)

In its legislative proposal on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) after 2013, the Commission proposes changing the method used to designate areas with natural constraints (specifically areas currently classified as lowland LFAs). The Commission's proposal lays down new criteria to designate areas with natural constraints that are purely biophysical in nature, namely criteria that relate to climate (length of growing period, temperature during the growing period, absence of water), soil (poor soil drainage, soil texture and stoniness, rooting depth, poor chemical properties), climate and soil (excessive soil moisture), terrain (steep slopes), as well as economic and production indicators ('fine tuning'). Absent, however, are socio-economic criteria.

So far in this debate the Commission has not addressed the issue of comparability of test results of the Commission's proposed biophysical criteria.

1. Are the test results submitted to the Commission by the Member States comparable across all EU Member States?

2. Has this comparability been verified by the Commission, and does it give a faithful representation of natural constraints across the EU?

3. What studies has the Commission carried out in this area?

4. What map scale did the Commission accept when Member States were submitting the results of tests on the new criteria?

5. Were natural constraints consistent on borders between individual Member States, and were they in line with the natural productivity of the soil?

6. Would it be appropriate to use the averages against which regions will be compared during the fine-tuning process?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The Commission has proposed a common method for the future delimitation of non-mountainous areas with natural constraints. The new delimitation should be based on eight biophysical indicators where each of them has a defined threshold. These thresholds define a 'severe impact on agriculture'. This system therefore ensures comparability across the EU as all constrained areas will be using the same thresholds.

1. The works with the Member States are ongoing. The Commission published guidelines with the aim to ensure that all Member States measure the biophysical criteria in a consistent manner. The Commission systematically assesses Member States' implementation of the criteria and indicates to them any deviation.

2. The system is designed by default for comparability. The tests of the criteria are based on Member States' data. In general, Member States confirm to the Commission that good data return solid results.

3. In the preparatory phase, the biophysical criteria were developed by an independent expert panel. Reports on testing of the criteria by Member States are continuously analysed by the Joint Research Centre.

4. The Commission has indicated that maps with a scale larger than 1:300,000 do not return credible results.

5. As said, works are still ongoing. Consistency along borders is one of the elements which is scrutinised in every report received from Member States.

6. Fine tuning is a mechanism to exclude areas where natural constraints have been overcome. According to the Commission's proposal, Member States must develop an appropriate fine tuning mechanism. The Commission will accept mechanisms which will be justified and which will return credible results.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-002212/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Desigualdades salariais e desemprego

«Salário igual para trabalho igual» é um dos princípios fundadores da União Europeia, já consagrado no Tratado de Roma de 1957.

Segundo o Instituto Nacional de Estatística, os níveis salariais das mulheres em Portugal são 10,1 % inferiores aos dos homens no setor público e 24,1 % no setor privado.

A mesma fonte indica que o Índice de Custo do Trabalho registou um decréscimo de 28,5 % nos setores da administração pública e da segurança social e de 25 % na educação, setores onde predomina a mão-de-obra feminina. Por outro lado, a taxa de desemprego em dezembro de 2012 era de 15,9 % para as mulheres.

A evolução do Índice de Custo do Trabalho, das desigualdades salariais e da taxa de desemprego em Portugal está intimamente ligada à aplicação das medidas impostas a Portugal pelo FMI, pelo BCE e pela CE e aplicadas pelo Governo nacional, no quadro do memorando de entendimento que assinaram.

Tendo em conta que, no dia 22 de fevereiro, se comemorou pelo terceiro ano o «Dia Europeu da Igualdade Salarial», instituído pela UE com o objetivo de chamar a atenção para a disparidade remuneratória, pergunto à Comissão:

— Considera compatível com o princípio que diz defender — salário igual para trabalho igual — a aplicação das medidas impostas a Portugal?

— Considera que a igualdade entre homens e mulheres em todas as esferas da vida pode ser atingida com a aplicação das medidas em causa?

— Que balanço faz da aplicação das medidas constantes do chamado «Programa de Assistência Económica e Financeira» no que respeita à luta contra as desigualdades entre homens e mulheres em Portugal?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(27 de março de 2013)

A Comissão está firmemente empenhada em que o princípio da igualdade de remuneração por trabalho igual seja aplicado de forma abrangente.

As medidas no quadro do programa de assistência económica e financeira a Portugal dizem respeito a políticas financeiras e económicas que são consideradas necessárias para restabelecer um crescimento sustentável e equilibrado da produção e do emprego; não condicionam a igualdade de remuneração entre homens e mulheres, que é uma obrigação direta e juridicamente vinculativa para as entidades patronais.

Ao conceber e implementar estas medidas, a Comissão visa garantir que estas estão em conformidade com os objetivos de promover a participação crescente das mulheres no mercado de trabalho.

O aumento da participação das mulheres no mercado de trabalho é uma das prioridades da «Estratégia para a Igualdade entre Homens e Mulheres — 2010-2015» e é também parte integrante da Estratégia «Europa 2020».

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002212/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Unequal pay and unemployment

'Equal pay for equal work' is one of the EU's founding principles and is enshrined as such in the 1957 Treaty of Rome.

According to Portugal's National Statistics Institute, women in Portugal earn 10.1% less than men in the public sector and 24.1% less in the private sector.

The same source indicates that, according to the Portuguese Labour Cost Index, the public administration and social security sectors have shrunk by 28.5% and the education sector by 25%. These sectors predominantly employ women. On the other hand, the unemployment rate for women was 15.9% in December 2012.

The evolution of the Labour Cost Index and of wage inequalities and the unemployment rate in Portugal is closely linked to the measures imposed on Portugal by the International Monetary Fund, the European Central bank and the Commission and implemented by the national government under the terms of the memorandum of understanding signed by Portugal.

In view of the fact that European Equal Pay Day was celebrated for the third time on 22 February 2013, as a EU initiative to draw attention to wage inequalities, can the Commission answer the following:

— Does it consider the application of the measures imposed on Portugal to be compatible with the principle of equal pay for equal work which it claims to support?

— Does it consider that equality between men and women in all areas of life can be achieved through the application of these measures?

— How does it assess the application of the measures contained in the Economic and Financial Assistance Programme when it comes to combating gender inequalities in Portugal?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission is firmly committed to ensuring that the the principle of equal pay for equal work is comprehensively applied.

The measures under the Economic and Financial Assistance Programme for Portugal concern the general financial and economic policies that are considered necessary to restore sustainable and balanced growth of output and employment and do not have a bearing on equal pay between men and women which is a directly enforceable obligation for each employer.

In the design and implementation of these measures the Commission aims to ensure that they are in line with the objectives of increasing femal participation in the labour market.

Getting more women on the labour market is one of the priorities of the 'Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015' and also an integral part of the strategy Europe 2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002215/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Cost of the European Union

Could the Commission please outline the cost of the European Union per EU citizen per year?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

More than 94% of the European Budget is either returned to Member States (Cohesion Policy, Common Agricultural Policy), paid out to various recipients in the Member States (research institutions, Erasmus students…) or replacing expenditure which otherwise would have to be done at national level (for example to fulfil the Official Development Assistance — ODA requirements).

The remaining part is spent on administration, including salaries paid to staff managing valuable EU policies or negotiating complicated international trade agreements. One can argue that these administrative costs represent the cost of the European Union.

From a budgetary point of view, the cost of the European Union is therefore best defined as the cost of running the European institutions. For the year 2011 this cost amounted to EUR 7 918 million which corresponds to EUR 15.7 per inhabitant.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002216/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Derechos de cobro por generación de externalidades positivas en el medio natural

Para fomentar la biodiversidad, los propietarios de superficies agrarias tienen que conservar los márgenes de los campos, de los caminos, de los barrancos y otros márgenes o lindes, entre otras acciones. Esta es una política que la CE quiere fomentar de manera creciente, especialmente, en el horizonte de la nueva PAC 2020.

Dado que un objetivo fundamental de la PAC, entre otros, es el pago por las externalidades positivas y bienes públicos del medio natural,

1. ¿No cree la Comisión que todo agricultor debería cobrar por sus trabajos de conservación de los citados márgenes, aunque sea por debajo de 100 €?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que un umbral de pago por encima de los 100 € favorecería solo el pago a los grandes terratenientes?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de abril de 2013)

Las reformas de la PAC tienen como fin fomentar la adopción y el mantenimiento de prácticas favorables a los objetivos medioambientales y climáticos. La propuesta de la Comisión relativa a la reforma de los pagos directos de la PAC ([1]) establece un pago específico para los agricultores activos, supeditado a la aplicación de prácticas agrícolas beneficiosas para el clima y el medio ambiente. Uno de los elementos de este componente ecológico consiste en contar con una superficie de interés ecológico (SIE), dentro de la superficie agrícola, como, por ejemplo, elementos del paisaje tales como las lindes, los límites naturales, etc. Los gestores de tierras que deseen beneficiarse de los pagos directos, incluidos los pagos ecológicos, deberán cumplir los requisitos de admisibilidad, y, concretamente, el denominado «requisito relativo al agricultor activo» y el umbral mínimo.

El límite de 100 euros es una disposición general aplicable a todos los pagos directos en virtud del Reglamento (CE) n° 73/2009, que pretende simplificar la gestión por parte de los Estados miembros. La Comisión ha propuesto, por este mismo motivo, el umbral mínimo aplicable bien a los pagos directos, bien al tamaño de la explotación, en el contexto de la reforma de los pagos directos de la PAC. Los Estados miembros podrán, dentro de determinados límites, ajustar el umbral de 100 euros o de una hectárea, para tener en cuenta la estructura de su economía agrícola.

La política de desarrollo rural también prevé ayudas para quienes asuman compromisos voluntarios relativos al medio ambiente o al clima. Según la propuesta de la Comisión sobre la ayuda al desarrollo rural ([2]), los beneficiarios que pueden optar a las ayudas agroambientales y climáticas son no solo los agricultores y las agrupaciones de agricultores, sino también otros gestores de tierras o agrupaciones de gestores de tierras, si se justifica.

([1]) COM(2011) 625 final/2.
([2]) COM(2011) 627/3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002216/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Remuneration for landowners who contribute to environmental conservation

In order to boost biodiversity owners of agricultural land are required, amongst other things, to look after areas at the edges of fields, tracks and gullies, and areas which form natural boundaries. The EU wants to encourage a gradual shift towards this approach, particularly in the context of CAP reform.

One of the main objectives of the CAP is to reward the effective stewardship of the environment.

1. Does the Commission not agree that all farmers should be remunerated for such conservation work, even if the amount they receive is less than EUR 100?

2. Does it think that only large landowners would stand to benefit if a payment threshold of EUR 100 were to be set?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The reforms of the CAP aim to enhance the adoption and maintenance of practices that are favourable to environmental and climate objectives. The Commission's proposal on the reform of CAP direct payments ([1]) introduces a specific payment to active farmers conditional to respecting agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment. One element of this 'greening component' is to have an ecological focus area (EFA) on the agricultural area. This EFA can comprise landscape elements such as field margins, natural boundaries etc. A land manager wishing to benefit from direct payments, including the greening payment, will have to comply with the eligibility conditions, amongst others with the so-called active farmer requirement and the minimum threshold.

The EUR 100 limit is a general provision covering all direct payments under Regulation No (EC) 73/2009, which has been introduced to provide simplification for Member States' administrations. For the same reason, the Commission has proposed the minimum threshold, either as the amount of direct payments or the size of a holding, also in the context of the CAP reform of direct payments. Member States will have a possibility to adjust, within certain limits, the EUR 100 or 1 ha threshold in order to take account of the structure of their agricultural economies.

Support for undertaking voluntary environmentally or climate related commitments is also available under rural development policy. The Commission's proposal on support for rural development ([2]) foresees as beneficiaries eligible for the agri-environment-climate payments not only individual farmers and their groups but also individual other land managers and their groups, where it is justified.

([1]) COM(2011) 625 final/2.
([2]) COM(2011) 627/3.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002217/13
an die Kommission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(26. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Lebensmittelkontrollen in der Union

Angesichts der aktuellen Lebensmittelskandale um falsch deklariertes, teilweise mit Arzneimitteln belastetes Pferdefleisch in Europa und um falsch deklarierte Bio-Eier in Deutschland stellen sich die folgenden Fragen:

1. Auf welcher Ebene (sprich auf landesweiter, regionaler oder kommunaler Ebene) fanden zwischen 2009 und 2012 wie viele Kontrollen in jedem einzelnen Mitgliedstaat der EU statt?

2. Welche Art von Lebensmittelkontrolle wird in welchem Mitgliedstaat der EU durchgeführt?

3. Wie sind die Strafmaße in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten der EU für die falsche Deklarierung von Lebensmitteln festgelegt?

4. Wie viele Kontrollstellen gibt es in jedem einzelnen Mitgliedstaat der EU?

5. Wie überprüft die Kommission die Kontrollstellen und die Kontrollen in den Mitgliedstaaten der EU?

6. Wie viele Kontrollen wurden zwischen 2009 und 2012 als Prüfung der Unterlagen und wie viele als Vorortprüfung in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten der EU durchgeführt?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

1. Der jüngste Bericht ([1]) ist auf der Website des LVA (Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt der Generaldirektion Gesundheit und Verbraucher der Europäischen Kommission ([2])) abrufbar.

2./4. In jedem Mitgliedstaat existieren zuständige Behörden, die für Kontrollen in den verschiedenen Bereichen verantwortlich sind. Die Kommission erstellt Länderprofile mit einem Überblick über die Organisation der Kontrollsysteme für Lebensmittel- und Futtermittelsicherheit, Tiergesundheit, Tierschutz und Pflanzengesundheit in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten. Diese Profile enthalten auch Links zu Websites von zuständigen nationalen Behörden mit weiteren Informationen zu der Organisation und Durchführung von Kontrollen in den Mitgliedstaaten. Die Länderprofile werden auf der Website des LVA veröffentlicht.

3. Die Mitgliedstaaten sind für die Durchsetzung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften für die Nahrungskette verantwortlich ([3]). Sie müssen ein System amtlicher Kontrollen einrichten, um die Einhaltung der Rechtsvorschriften durch Unternehmer zu prüfen und Verstöße zu sanktionieren. Nach den Rechtsvorschriften über die Nahrungskette müssen Sanktionen wirksam, verhältnismäßig und abschreckend sein, wobei Art und Höhe der Sanktionen im Ermessen der Mitgliedstaaten stehen.

5. Die Kommission führt im Rahmen von Jahresprogrammen Audits in den Mitgliedstaaten durch und veröffentlicht auf ihrer Website Berichte über die Ergebnisse dieser Audits.

Die Informationen werden direkt an den Herrn Abgeordneten und an das Sekretariat des Europäischen Parlaments übermittelt.

([1]) Bericht der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und an den Rat über die Durchführung der amtlichenKontrollen in den Mitgliedstaaten in den Bereichen Lebensmittelsicherheit, Tiergesundheit, Tierschutz undPflanzengesundheit, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0122:FIN:DE:PDF

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

([3]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 882/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 29. April 2004 über amtliche Kontrollen zur Überprüfung der Einhaltung des Lebensmittel- und Futtermittelrechts sowie der Bestimmungen über Tiergesundheit und Tierschutz, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:191:0001:0052:DE:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002217/13
to the Commission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(26 February 2013)

Subject: Food safety inspections in the EU

In view of the current food safety scandal in Europe arising from the fraudulent labelling of food containing horsemeat — some of it contaminated with medicinal substances — and the organic egg labelling fraud in Germany:

1. Can the Commission say how many inspections were carried out in each EU Member State and at what level (national, regional or municipal) between 2009 and 2012?

2. What food safety inspections are being carried out in which EU Member States?

3. How are penalties for fraudulent food labelling established in the individual Member States?

4. How many inspection centres are there in each of the EU Member States?

5. How does the Commission monitor inspection centres and procedures in the EU Member States?

6. Between 2009 and 2012, how many documentary and in situ inspections respectively were carried out in the individual EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

1. The latest report ([1]) is available at the website of the FVO (The Food and veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General ([2]).

2 and 4. Within each Member State there are a number of competent authorities responsible for inspections in the different sectors. The Commission establishes country profiles with overviews of how control systems for food and feed safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health are organised in each Member State. These profiles also contain links to websites of national competent authorities with further information on the organisation and implementation of Member State controls. Country profiles are published at the FVO's website.

3. The responsibility for enforcing EU food chain legislation lies with Member States ([3]), which are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with legal requirements and to sanction non-compliances. As regards sanctions, food chain legislation requires that they should be effective, proportionate and dissuasive but leaves Member States discretion as to their type and level.

5. The Commission, carries out audits in the Member States based on an annual programme and publishes reports on the outcome of these audits on its website.

The information will be sent directly to the Honourable Member and the Parliament Secretariat.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council on the overall operation of official controls in the Member States on food safety, animal health and animal welfare, and plant health, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0122:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:191:0001:0052:EN:PDF

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-002218/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Wirksamkeit der in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 vorgesehenen Sanktionen

In ihrer Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-006833/2012 vom 9. Juli 2012 brachte die Kommission die Überzeugung zum Ausdruck, dass Artikel 25 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 keine einheitliche Sanktionsregelung im Falle von Verstößen gegen den Schutz von Tieren bei Transporten verlange. Zugleich unterstrich sie, dass die Verordnung von den Mitgliedstaaten die Festlegung wirksamer, verhältnismäßiger und abschreckender Sanktionen verlange.

Im Hinblick auf die Erfüllung dieser Kriterien führte die Kommission aus: „Ob die von einem Mitgliedstaat festgelegten Sanktionen wirksam, verhältnismäßig und abschreckend sind, lässt sich nur im konkreten Fall eines Verstoßes oder eines Vergehens und angesichts dessen Schwere bewerten".

Kann die Kommission vor diesem Hintergrund und aufgrund einer Vielzahl von Belegen für die Nichteinhaltung der oben genannten Anforderungen folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Welche Maßnahmen kann die Kommission ergreifen, um sicherzustellen, dass die Mitgliedstaaten Sanktionen vorsehen, die zugleich wirksam, verhältnismäßig und abschreckend sind?

2. Von welchen dieser Maßnahmen wird die Kommission in Zukunft Gebrauch machen, um die Anforderungen an die oben genannten Sanktionen in allen Mitgliedstaaten durchzusetzen?

3. Hält die Kommission angesichts der Schwierigkeiten bei der Durchsetzung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 eine Überarbeitung der rechtlichen Vorgaben für sinnvoll? Wenn ja, in welcher Form? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(5. April 2013)

1. Die Entscheidung über Sanktionen für Privatpersonen obliegt den Mitgliedstaaten. Wie die Kommission dem Herrn Abgeordneten in ihrer vorherigen Antwort zum selben Thema ([1]) erläuterte, sehen die betreffenden Rechtsvorschriften der EU bei den Sanktionen gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 ([2]) keine Befugnisse für die Kommission vor.

2. Da die Höhe der Sanktionen zu den bestimmenden Faktoren dafür gehört, in welchem Ausmaß bestimmte Vorschriften in einem Mitgliedstaat durchgesetzt werden, wird die Kommission diese Frage weiter im Rahmen von Prüfungen durch das Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt der Generaldirektion Gesundheit und Verbraucher untersuchen und gegebenenfalls Maßnahmen zur Behebung festgestellter Mängel empfehlen.

3. Die Kommission ist nicht der Ansicht, dass Vollzugsdefizite bei Rechtsvorschriften automatisch durch neue Rechtsakte behoben werden. Deshalb legt die Kommission den Schwerpunkt vorrangig auf Verbesserungen bei der Durchsetzung der bestehenden Rechtsvorschriften, wie im Bericht über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport ([3]) erläutert wird.

([1]) E-006833/2012.
([2]) ABl. L 3 vom 5.1.2005, S. 1.
([3]) Bericht der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat über die Auswirkungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport, KOM(2011)700 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002218/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Effectiveness of penalties provided for in Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

In its answer to Written Question E-006833/2012 of 9 July 2012 the Commission states that Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport does not require the rules on penalties for infringements of this regulation to be uniform. The Commission does however emphasise that the regulation requires Member States to lay down penalties that are effective, proportionate and dissuasive.

The Commission then goes on to say, in regard to meeting these criteria: 'Whether a Member State's penalty is effective, proportionate and dissuasive can only be evaluated if linked to a precise infringement or offence and contrasted against the gravity of the specific infringement or offence.'

In view of the above and the numerous instances of the aforementioned requirements not being adhered to ([1]):

1. What measures can the Commission take to ensure that Member States provide for penalties that are both effective, proportionate and dissuasive?

2. Which of these measures will the Commission use in the future to enforce the requirements for the aforesaid penalties in all Member States?

3. Does the Commission think that revising the legal provisions would be a wise idea, in view of the problems with enforcing Regulation (EC) No 1/2005? If so, how? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

1. The competence to decide on penalties for private individuals rests with the Member States'. As the Commission explained in its previous reply on the same issue to the Honourable Member ([2]), the applicable EU legislation has not provided the Commission with any empowerment in relation to penalties under Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 ([3]).

2. As the level of penalties is one of the factors that determine the level of enforcement in a Member State, the Commission will continue to evaluate this issue during audits carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) and to recommend corrective action in case of identified shortcomings.

3. The Commission is not of the view that difficulties in enforcing legislation is automatically solved through introducing new legislation. This is why the Commission is first putting its emphasis on improving enforcement of existing legislation, as is further explained in the Commission Report on animal welfare during transport ([4]).

([1]) See, as just one example among many, the report of an audit carried out in Bulgaria from 5 to 13 June 2012, in which the Commission concluded: 'As already recommended in report DG(SANCO)2009-8263 (Recommendation 2), the CCA should ensure that penalties are amended to meet the requirements of Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to be effective, dissuasive and proportionate.'

([2]) E-006833/2012.

([3]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.

([4]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport. COM(2011) 700 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002219/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(27 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Elecciones legislativas en Egipto

Según anunció hace unos días el Presidente egipcio, Mohammed Morsi, las elecciones legislativas egipcias se adelantan del 27 al 22 de abril. Estos comicios tendrán lugar bajo una gran tensión en el país, después del referéndum constitucional que se celebró en diciembre del año pasado y que dejó dividida a la población.

La convocatoria de estas elecciones se produce como consecuencia de la decisión de la Corte Constitucional de Egipto de 14 de junio de 2012 que declaró inconstitucional la composición del Parlamento egipcio surgido de las urnas en enero de 2012.

En este contexto y ante la nueva convocatoria electoral:

1. ¿Ofrecerá la UE algún tipo de apoyo a las autoridades egipcias para la celebración de estos comicios?

2. ¿Se desplazará a Egipto una misión de observación electoral europea para supervisar el buen funcionamiento de los comicios?

3. ¿Cree la Alta Representante que después de las elecciones legislativas será posible retomar con más fuerza las negociaciones con vistas a la aprobación de un nuevo plan de acción de la política europea de vecindad entre la UE y Egipto?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de mayo de 2013)

Inicialmente estaba previsto que las elecciones parlamentarias en Egipto comenzaran el 22 de abril de 2013. No obstante, el 6 de marzo de 2013 se aplazaron por una decisión del Tribunal Administrativo que disponía que la Ley Constitucional debía ser devuelta al Tribunal Constitucional para su revisión. El 24 de marzo de 2013 el Tribunal Administrativo pospuso el fallo sobre los recursos contra el aplazamiento de las elecciones hasta el 7 de abril de 2013. Así, es probable que estos procedimientos judiciales supongan un aplazamiento de las elecciones parlamentarias de varios meses.

En los últimos años la UE ha venido apoyando la preparación de las elecciones en Egipto con medidas de asistencia técnica y formación de observadores locales. A lo largo de todo este periodo, la UE ha ofrecido una misión de observación electoral propiamente dicha, por lo que ha acogido favorablemente la invitación de las autoridades egipcias para actuar como observadora en las próximas elecciones parlamentarias. Se ha enviado ya una misión preliminar para evaluar la situación sobre el terreno antes de movilizar al equipo de observación electoral.

A petición de Egipto, desde el levantamiento de enero de 2011 se suspendieron todos los diálogos formales con arreglo al Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Egipto. No obstante, durante la visita del Presidente Morsi a Bruselas en septiembre de 2012 se decidió reanudar dichos diálogos, y el 28 de febrero de 2013 tuvo lugar en El Cairo una reunión del Comité de Asociación a nivel de altos funcionarios en la que se decidió prorrogar el Plan de Acción vigente hasta marzo de 2014, mientras se inician las conversaciones para la negociación de un nuevo Plan de Acción.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002219/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Parliamentary elections in Egypt

A few days ago, Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi announced that parliamentary elections in the country will be brought forward from 27 to 22 April 2013. Voting will take place in an atmosphere charged with tension, which has prevailed since the referendum on the constitution was held in December 2012, leaving Egypt divided.

The elections were called after Egypt's Constitutional Court ruled on 14 June 2012 that the composition of the Egyptian Parliament resulting from the January 2012 polls was unconstitutional.

In the light of the above and the forthcoming elections,

1. Will the EU offer any assistance to the Egyptian authorities in holding these elections?

2. Will a European election observation team be sent to Egypt to monitor the elections?

3. Does the High Representative think that it will be possible to resume negotiations with anincreased focus on adopting a new action plan as part of the neighbourhood policybetween the EU and Egypt?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Egyptian parliamentary elections were expected to start on 22 April 2013. However, on 6 March 2013, they were postponed by the ruling of the Administrative Court, in which it declared that the electoral law should be sent back to the High Constitutional Court for revision. On 24 March 2013, the Administrative Court postponed the verdict on appeals against the suspension of the elections until 7 April 2013. Thus, these court proceedings are likely to postpone the parliamentary elections for several months.

In recent years, the EU has been supporting the preparation of Egyptian elections through technical assistance measures as well as training of local observers. All along, the EU has been offering a fully-fledged Election Observation Mission and has therefore welcomed the invitation from the Egyptian authorities to observe the upcoming parliamentary elections. An EU Exploratory Mission has already taken place in order to assess the situation on the ground ahead of the Election Observation team being mobilised.

Since the uprising in January 2011, all formal EU-Egypt dialogues under the EU-Egypt Association Agreement were suspended at the request of Egypt. However, during President Morsi's visit to Brussels in September 2012, it was decided to relaunch the formal dialogues and an Association Committee at senior officials' level was held in Cairo on 28 February 2013. At that meeting, it was decided to extend the current Action Plan until March 2014, while starting talks for the negotiations of a new Action Plan.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002220/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Inversores extranjeros en Sareb

La Sareb ha rechazado la oferta de tres fondos de inversión extranjeros para entrar en su capital ([1]). Al parecer, estaban dispuestos a inyectar 150 millones de euros en la Sareb. Ftalphaville publicó la carta que la presidenta de la Sareb mandó a estos tres fondos ([2]). Los fondos estaban dispuestos a entrar en el capital de la Sareb a cambio de que se les diese acceso preferente a los activos que van a pasar por el banco malo (derecho de tanteo). Es decir, que los activos de la Sareb serían inspeccionados por estos tres fondos, que tendrían derecho a hacer una primera oferta sobre ellos; si no estuvieran interesados en el activo en cuestión, lo dejarían pasar y éste pasaría al «pool» de activos que retiene la Sareb para su posterior liquidación. Además, los tres fondos de inversión ofrecían también servicios de gestión de activos.

Hasta ahora, sólo la banca doméstica ha invertido en la Sareb, con las consecuencias negativas que puede tener este hecho para la rápida valoración de los activos a precio de mercado ([3]).

A la luz de todo lo anterior,

¿Comparte la Comisión el rechazo de la Sareb a la entrada de inversores extranjeros?

¿Cree la Comisión que la inversión privada extranjera puede ayudar a la Sareb a ganar credibilidad?

¿Cree la Comisión que la entrada de inversores sin intereses previos en el sector inmobiliario español puede ayudar a la Sareb a fijar sus activos a precios de mercado?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de mayo de 2013)

SAREB es una empresa con estructuras de gobernanza y de gestión propias por lo que no incumbe a la Comisión juzgar si procede que SAREB acepte o rechace ofertas de inversores extranjeros.

La credibilidad de SAREB dependerá de su comportamiento en el mercado. Además, labrarse una reputación es un proceso que requiere tiempo. La nacionalidad de un inversor no constituye por sí solo un criterio especial para adquirir credibilidad.

Por definición, cualquier venta de propiedades por SAREB se realizará a precios de mercado. No es competencia de la Comisión evaluar cuál será el impacto en los precios de la entrada de inversores extranjeros.

([1]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=28675
([2]) http://ftalphaville.ft.com/2013/02/08/1378762/dear-ben-david-and-doug-thanks-but-no-thanks-love-sareb/
([3]) 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-002220/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Foreign investors in Sareb

Sareb (the management company for assets arising from Spanish bank restructuring) has rejected an offer from three foreign investment firms to acquire holdings ([1]). The investors were apparently prepared to inject EUR 150 million into Sareb. The Ftalphaville blog published the letter which the President of Sareb sent to the three investment firms ([2]). They were willing to buy into Sareb in exchange for the right of first refusal to purchase assets coming into the so-called bad bank (also known as the right of pre-emption). According to their proposal, these three investment firms would be the first to inspect any Sareb assets and would have the right to make an offer on them before any other investors; if a particular asset were not of interest to them, it would go into Sareb's asset pool for sale at a later date. In addition, the three investment companies offered Sareb asset management services.

Until now, only Spanish banks have invested in Sareb, which has potential negative consequences in terms of the speedy valuation of assets at market value ([3]).

In the light of the above:

Does the Commission agree with Sareb's rejection of offers from foreign investors?

Does the Commission consider that private foreign investment could help Sareb to gain credibility?

Does the Commission think that the entry of investors which did not previously have any interest in the Spanish property sector could help Sareb to set the value of its assets at market prices?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

SAREB is a company with its own governance and management structure and it is not up to the Commission to pass judgment on whether SAREB accepts or rejects offers from foreign investors.

The credibility of SAREB will be gained through its behaviour in the market, and reputation-building is itself a process that requires time. The nationality of an investor itself is not a particular criteria for gaining credibility.

By definition, any sale of property by SAREB will be done at market prices. It is not up to the Commission to judge the impact on prices deriving from the entry of foreign investors.

([1]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=28675.
([2]) http://ftalphaville.ft.com/2013/02/08/1378762/dear-ben-david-and-doug-thanks-but-no-thanks-love-sareb/.
([3]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/empresas/14395-la-gran-banca-rescata-a-guindos-ante-la-falta-de-inversores-para-el-banco-malo.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002221/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Nueva auditoría al sector bancario español

El pasado mes de septiembre una conocida auditora presentó su auditoría sobre el sector bancario español. El cálculo del volumen del rescate del sector se ha basado en los resultados de esta auditoría.

En fechas recientes se han planteado interrogantes sobre algunos aspectos de dicha auditoría. En particular, sobre la posibilidad de que el peor caso contemplado por la auditora sea superado por la realidad ([1]), que la recesión sea más grave de lo esperado y que el desempleo y la morosidad puedan aumentar más de lo previsto.

Esta recesión puede, además, tener otras consecuencias negativas para el balance de los bancos, ya que sus empresas participadas tendrán menos dividendos de lo anticipado. Parece ser que en la auditoría tampoco se tuvieron en cuenta las millonarias indemnizaciones que tendrán que pagar las antiguas cajas por romper los contratos de seguros. Finalmente, parece que el FROB cree que la realidad de los créditos fiscales apuntados en función de beneficios futuros es peor que la esperada ([2]).

A la luz de todo lo anterior, ¿tiene conocimiento la Comisión de estos posibles errores de cálculo?

¿Va a revisar la Comisión si la cantidad prevista para el rescate bancario español es correcta con relación a los últimos datos actualizados?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de abril de 2013)

Las sucesivas series de pruebas de resistencia llevadas a cabo en España en julio y septiembre de 2012 se basaron en dos conjuntos de escenarios macroeconómicos, a saber: un escenario de base y un escenario adverso, basado en una simulación de conmoción económica extrema e inesperada. Los resultados del escenario adverso determinaron las necesidades de capital de los bancos españoles y la magnitud de su recapitalización.

A pesar de la reciente corrección de las previsiones macroeconómicas, la validez del escenario adverso no se ha visto afectada en absoluto. Una comparación entre las estimaciones derivadas de las pruebas de resistencia y los datos reales lleva a concluir que, actualmente, tanto la economía española como el sector bancario distan de la situación contemplada como hipótesis más pesimista. Dicha situación extrema supera, con mucho, la corrección de las previsiones macroeconómicas A título de ejemplo, el ejercicio desagregado (*bottom-up*) realizado en España por expertos independientes se basó en el supuesto de una reducción del PIB del 7,1 % desde 2012 hasta 2014. Así pues, los resultados de las pruebas de resistencia siguen constituyendo una referencia válida para evaluar la solvencia de los bancos españoles.

Por otra parte, pese al ligero deterioro de los escenarios macroeconómicos frente al escenario de base del ejercicio, la mayor parte de los bancos españoles ha generado mayores beneficios de lo esperado, lo que significa que, en la mayor parte de los casos, la capacidad de absorción de pérdidas y la solvencia de los bancos españoles está aumentando.

Por último, a partir de enero de 2013, todos los bancos que operan en España deben satisfacer, en lo que respecta al capital básico, un requisito del 9 %, coeficiente que se sitúa entre los más elevados de la Unión Europea ([3]). Por tanto, el programa responde globalmente a lo previsto por lo que se refiere a las hipótesis generales sobre las que reposa la prueba de resistencia y la subsiguiente recapitalización de los bancos.

([1]) http://vozpopuli.com/economia/21357-el-pib-caera-un-1-1-en-2013-y-crecera-al-fin-otro-1-1-en-2014-segun-bbva
([2]) http://vozpopuli.com/empresas/21932-el-frob-reconoce-que-el-test-de-oliver-wyman-se-quedo-corto-detecta-ya-tres-nuevos-peligros
([3]) Solo Irlanda aplica un requisito global de capital básico de nivel 1 más elevado, a saber, el 10,5 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002221/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: A recent audit of the Spanish banking sector

In September 2012, a well-known auditing firm presented the findings from its audit of the Spanish banking sector. The results were used to calculate how much would be needed to recapitalise the sector.

Questions have been raised recently about some aspects of the audit: whether the worst-case scenario considered by the auditors could actually be even more extreme ([1]), whether the recession would be deeper than expected and whether unemployment and debt might exceed estimates.

The recession could also have further negative impacts on banks' balance sheets, since companies in which they have a stake will have lower dividends than forecast. It seems that the audit did not take account of the millions of euros that the former savings banks will have to pay in compensation for terminating insurance contracts. Finally, it seems that the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) believes that the tax allowances granted to banks, which are estimated according to future profits, will be lower than expected ([2]).

In the light of the above:

Is the Commission aware of these possible errors in the calculations?

Will the Commission check to establish whether the amount estimated as necessary for the Spanish banking sector bail-out is consistent with the latest updated data?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The successive rounds of stress tests carried out in Spain in July and September 2012 were based on two sets of macroeconomic scenarios: a baseline scenario and an adverse scenario based on a simulation of an extreme and unexpected economic shock. The results of the latter determined the capital needs and the recapitalisation of Spanish banks.

Despite the recent correction to macroeconomic forecasts, the validity of the adverse scenario has by no means been affected. Comparing estimates from the stress test and actual figures, it seems that, at present, both the Spanish economy and the banking sector are far from reaching the projected worst scenario. This shock exceeds, by far, the correction in macroeconomic forecasts. For example, the bottom-up exercise carried out by independent experts in Spain, assumed a 7.1% decline in GDP from 2012 to 2014. Hence, the results of the stress test are still a valid reference for assessing the solvency of Spanish banks.

Furthermore, despite a slight deterioration of macroeconomic scenarios in relation to the baseline scenario of the exercise, a majority of Spanish banks have exceeded expectations in terms of profitability. This implies that most Spanish banks are in fact increasing their loss absorption capacity and solvency.

Finally, as of January 2013 all banks in Spain are subject to a 9% of core capital requirement, which is amongst the highest capital ratios required within the European Union ([3]). Consequently, the programme seems broadly on track as regards the broad assumptions underlying the stress test and the subsequent recapitalisation of banks.

([1]) http://vozpopuli.com/economia/21357-el-pib-caera-un-1-1-en-2013-y-crecera-al-fin-otro-1-1-en-2014-segun-bbva.
([2]) http://vozpopuli.com/empresas/21932-el-frob-reconoce-que-el-test-de-oliver-wyman-se-quedo-corto-detecta-ya-tres-nuevos-peligros.
([3]) Only Ireland applies a higher overall level of core tier 1 capital which is 10.5%.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002222/13
til Kommissionen
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(27. februar 2013)

Om: Unfair konkurrence i luftfartssektoren — opfølgende spørgsmål

Kommissionens svar på forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-010773/2012 er yderst vagt og besvarer ikke de fremsatte spørgsmål.

Når Kommissionen ikke svarer på spørgsmålet om, hvad man vil gøre for at bringe unfair konkurrence i den europæiske luftfartssektor til ophør, er det så et tegn på, at kommissæren ikke er enig i, at der er unfair konkurrence på markedet?

Dernæst spurgte jeg ind til muligheden for at indføre en model, der betyder, at transporttilladelser kan inddrages, hvis flyselskabet foretager sig noget, der kan være til hinder for den frie konkurrence. I stedet for at svare på dette spørgsmål opremser kommissæren den eksisterende lovgivning. Er grunden til, at kommissæren ikke svarer på dette forslag, at det vil være for kompliceret at tilpasse den eksisterende lovgivning til førnævnte forslag?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(26. april 2013)

Kommissionen er fast besluttet på at sikre lige konkurrencevilkår i luftfartssektoren. Dette er netop hensigten med de nye EU-regler om den socialsikringslovgivning, der gælder for flyvebesætninger. Alle flyvebesætningsmedlemmer, som påbegynder og afslutter deres tjenesteperioder fra samme hjemmebase, vil uanset deres arbejdsgivers hjemsted eller besætningens bopælsland være forsikret efter samme socialsikringslovgivning.

På kort sigt har Kommissionen ingen planer om at revidere sin forordning (EF) nr. 1008/2008, for så vidt angår betingelserne for at tildele eller inddrage licenser. Dette begrundes med, at praksis med hensyn til ansættelse af arbejdstagere i luftfartssektoren er meget uensartet og ændrer sig i tidens løb. Kommissionen må først skaffe sig et udtømmende overblik over denne praksis og eventuelle spørgsmål i den forbindelse, inden den fremsætter forslag til initiativer, for derigennem at undgå risikoen for utilsigtede og ugunstige virkninger for luftfartsselskaber og de ansatte.

I mellemtiden opfordres personer eller berørte interessenter til at forelægge de nationale kompetente institutioner sager om illoyal konkurrence eller ulovlig behandling af arbejdstagere.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002222/13
to the Commission
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Unfair competition in the air transport sector — follow-up question

The Commission's answer to Question for written answer E-010773/2012 is extremely vague and fails to answer the question tabled.

Does the failure by the Commission to say what it will do to end unfair competition in the European air transport sector indicate that the Commissioner does not agree that there is unfair competition on the market?

I furthermore asked about the possibility of introducing a model whereby transport licences can be withdrawn if an airline takes action constituting a potential obstacle to free competition. Instead of answering that question, the Commissioner recited the existing legislation. Is the reason for the Commission's failure to respond to the proposal that it would be too complicated to bring the existing legislation into line with it?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission is committed to ensure a level-playing field in the air transport sector. For example, this is precisely the intention of the new EU rules on the social security legislation applicable for flight crew. All flight crew members starting and ending their duty periods from the same home base will be insured under the same social security legislation regardless the location of their employer's registered office or crew's State of residence.

The Commission does not plan to review its Regulation 1008/2008 regarding the conditions for granting or withdrawing operating licenses in the short term. The reason is that practices as to recruitment of workers in the air transport sector are very diverse and change over time. The Commission must first get an exhaustive view of these practices and any potential issues that they raise before proposing any initiative to avoid the risk of unintended and adverse effects on airlines and indeed employees.

In the meantime any person or stakeholder concerned is invited to refer cases of unfair competition or unlawful treatment of workers to the national competent institutions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002223/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: EJC

Das „European Journalism Centre" bekommt von der EU-Kommission regelmäßig finanzielle Unterstützungen, um Journalisten für europäische Themen zu sensibilisieren.

1. Wie viele Journalisten aus Österreich haben in den letzten fünf Jahren, aufgeschlüsselt nach Jahren, an Veranstaltungen des EJC teilgenommen, die von der Kommission finanziert wurden?

2. Welche Kosten müssen von den Journalisten, die an den entsprechenden Veranstaltungen teilnehmen, selbst getragen werden und welche Kosten werden in welcher Form erstattet?

3. Welche Kosten sind dabei für die Kommission pro Journalist entstanden?

4. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Erfolg der Unterstützung für das EJC?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(10. April 2013)

In den vergangenen fünf Jahren nahmen 66 österreichische Journalistinnen und Journalisten an den Informationsveranstaltungen teil, die über den Rahmenvertrag mit dem European Journalism Centre (EJC) organisiert werden; einige Journalistinnen und Journalisten besuchten mehrere EJC-Veranstaltungen. Nach Jahr aufgeschlüsselt: 19 im Jahr 2008; 20 im Jahr 2009; 10 im Jahr 2010; 9 im Jahr 2011 und 20 im Jahr 2012.

Die Kosten für den Transfer Flughafen-Hotel-Flughafen tragen die eingeladenen Journalistinnen und Journalisten. Die Kommission übernahm über das EJC die übrigen Reise- und Aufenthaltskosten der Journalistinnen und Journalisten sowie die logistischen und organisatorischen Kosten.

Für ein zweitägiges Seminar in Brüssel betragen die Gesamtkosten pro Journalist/in durchschnittlich 1 500 EUR.

Aufgrund des positiven Feedbacks — sowohl von den Teilnehmenden als auch den Dienststellen, die betonen, dass der Nutzen der Veranstaltungen darin liegt, Journalistinnen und Journalisten erstklassige Informationen und direkten Zugang zu EU-Politikverantwortlichen zu bieten — ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass diese Journalistenseminare Teil der Bemühungen der Kommission sind, die Transparenz zu erhöhen und die öffentliche Diskussion über europäische Angelegenheiten und politische Entscheidungsprozesse zu fördern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002223/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: EJC

The European Journalism Centre receives regular financial support from the European Commission to raise awareness of European issues among journalists.

1. Over the last five years, how many Austrian journalists have taken part in EJC events financed by the Commission? Please provide the figures for each year.

2. What costs are borne by the journalists who participate in these events, what costs are reimbursed, and in what form?

3. What costs did the Commission incur for each journalist as a result?

4. How successful does the Commission consider its support for the EJC?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

Over the last five years 66 Austrian journalists attended the information events organised through the European Journalism Centre (EJC) framework contract, some of them participating in different EJC events. Breakdown by year: 19 in 2008; 20 in 2009; 10 in 2010; 9 in 2011 and 20 in 2012.

Invited journalists bear the costs of transport airport-hotel-airport. The Commission covered through EJC the other travel costs and accommodation of journalists and logistical organisational costs.

The total cost for each journalist participating in a seminar in Brussels is on average EUR 1 500 for a two-day seminar.

Based on the positive feedback received both from the attending journalists and the services, who underline the utility of the events in providing journalists with premium information and direct access to EU policy-makers, the Commission considers that these journalist seminars are part of the efforts by the Commission to increase transparency and a public debate about European affairs and policy making.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002224/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Finanzierung von Medieninhalten

Im Jahr 2011 hat die EU-Kommission unter dem Titel „TV-Sendungen mit europäischen Inhalten" (Verpflichtungsermächtigung SI2.595156.1) 118 000 EUR für die Finanzierung einer Fernsehsendung ausgegeben.

Welcher Betrag aus dem EU-Haushalt wurde in den letzten fünf Jahren direkt oder indirekt für welches Medium ausgezahlt, aufgeschlüsselt nach Name des Mediums, Art des Mediums, Sitz des Mediums (Land) und Zweck der Förderung?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

Das angesprochene Projekt (Verpflichtungsermächtigung SI2.595156.1) bildete einen Teil der 2011 durchgeführten Tätigkeiten im Rahmen der Europapartnerschaft mit Österreich, die vom Pressedienst des österreichischen Bundeskanzleramts koordiniert wird. TV-Sender wurden aufgefordert, Vorschläge für ein Diskussionsformat zu europäischen Themen zu unterbreiten. ATV wurde ausgewählt. Der TV-Sender verfügt über volle redaktionelle Unabhängigkeit im Hinblick auf die Inhalte und sorgte für Ausgewogenheit, indem er sowohl Befürworter als auch Kritiker der jeweiligen Themen einlud. Zunächst wurden einige Debatten durch die Europapartnerschaft unterstützt; danach lief „Am Punkt Europa" ohne Unterstützung weiter.

Im Hinblick auf den zweiten Teil der Anfrage verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-2226/13 hinsichtlich der Unterstützung der Kommission für europaweite audiovisuelle Medien — Euranet und Euronews.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002224/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Financing of media content

In 2011, the European Commission spent EUR 118 000 on funding a television programme, under the heading 'television programmes with European content' (commitment appropriation SI2.595156.1).

Over the past five years, how much of the EU budget has been spent, directly or indirectly, on which media, broken down according to the name, type and location (country) of the medium and the purpose of the subsidy?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The project cited (commitment appropriation SI2.595156.1) was one of the actions in 2011 under our Management Partnership in Austria, which is coordinated by the Austrian Federal Chancellery's Press Service. TV stations were invited to submit proposals for a discussion format on European themes. ATV won the selection. This TV station has complete editorial independence on content and achieved balance by inviting speakers for and against the topic concerned. Initially, a handful of debates were supported by the Management Partnership; since then 'Europa am Punkt' has continued without support.

As to the second part of the question, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the response given to Written Question E-2226/13 concerning support by the Commission to pan European audiovisual media — Euranet and Euronews.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002225/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: PNR-Verhandlungen mit Kanada

Im Dezember 2010 hat die Kommission das Mandat für Verhandlungen mit Kanada über ein langfristiges Abkommen zur Übermittlung von Fluggastdaten erhalten.

1. Wie viele Verhandlungsrunden hat es seither zwischen Kanada und der EU gegeben?

2. Wer war an diesen Verhandlungsrunden beteiligt?

3. Wie viele Verhandlungsrunden sind noch angesetzt?

4. Warum konnte die Kommission bisher keinen Verhandlungserfolg erzielen?

5. Wann werden die Verhandlungen mit Kanada nach Ansicht der Kommission abgeschlossen sein?

6. Bei welchen Punkten konnte bisher keine Einigung erzielt werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(30. April 2013)

Die Verhandlungen mit Kanada über ein neues Abkommen über Fluggastdatensätze (PNR) wurden im Januar 2011 aufgenommen. Seither haben zehn Verhandlungsrunden stattgefunden. Das Verhandlungsteam der EU wird unter enger Mitwirkung anderer Dienststellen der Kommission von einem Vertreter der Generaldirektion Inneres geführt.

Bei der Verhandlungsrunde vom 26. Februar 2013 wurde eine vorläufige Einigung über den konsolidierten Wortlaut eines Abkommensentwurfs erzielt. Dieser Entwurf wurde dem Europäischen Parlament (Koordinatoren des Ausschusses für bürgerliche Freiheiten, Justiz und Inneres (LIBE), Berichterstatter und Schatten-Berichterstattern) und den Mitgliedstaaten auf Ebene der Ratsarbeitsgruppe im März 2013 vorgelegt.

Die Kommission beabsichtigt, die Verhandlungen so bald wie möglich abzuschließen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002225/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: PNR negotiations with Canada

In December 2010, the Commission was authorised to open negotiations with Canada on a long-term agreement on the transmission of passenger data.

1. How many rounds of negotiations have there been between Canada and the EU since then?

2. Who was involved in these negotiations?

3. How many more rounds are scheduled?

4. Why has the Commission not yet been able to conclude negotiations successfully?

5. When does the Commission expect the negotiations with Canada to be concluded?

6. On which issues has agreement not yet been reached?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The negotiations with Canada on a new Passenger Name Record (PNR) Agreement started in January 2011. Since then, ten negotiation rounds have taken place. The EU negotiation team is led by a representative of the Commission Directorate-General for Home Affairs, with the close involvement of other Commission services.

At the negotiation round on 26 February 2013, tentative agreement was reached on a consolidated text of a draft Agreement. The draft Agreement was presented to the European Parliament (Coordinators of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), the Rapporteur and the Shadow-Rapporteurs) and to Member States at Council working group level in March 2013.

The Commission intends to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002226/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Medien und Informationsdienste

In der Mitteilung KOM(2007)0569 erklärte die Kommission, dass sie „zu einer umfassenderen und nachhaltigeren Berichterstattung über EU-Themen über die bestehenden audiovisuellen Kanäle beitragen“ will.

Welche bestehenden audiovisuellen Kanäle wurden seither in welchem Umfang (Betrag) von der Kommission, aufgeschlüsselt nach Kanal und Jahr, kofinanziert?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(12. April 2013)

Im Hinblick auf eine umfassendere und nachhaltigere Berichterstattung über EU-Themen in den audiovisuellen Medien hat die Kommission einen dualen Ansatz entwickelt, der (i) kostenloses Audiomaterial und Bilder sowie (ii) die finanzielle Unterstützung der europäischen Medien umfasst, die ihre Nachrichten aus europäischem Blickwinkel präsentieren.

Die finanzielle Unterstützung gilt seit 2007 vornehmlich (i) Euranet, dem europäischen Radionetz (mit 25 angeschlossen Sendeanstalten Ende 2012) und (ii) Euronews. Ende 2012 wurde nach einer öffentlichen Ausschreibung ein neuer Vertrag für ein europäisches Radionetz mit Euranet Plus unterzeichnet.

Die Unterstützung für Euronews erfolgt in Form von Zuschüssen für Sendungen und Sprachdienstleistungen. Grundlage hierfür sind mehrere Entschließungen des Europäischen Parlaments ([1]) sowie die Rolle und Aufgabe, die Euronews im Rahmen des allgemeinen öffentlichen Interesses innehat und die von unabhängigen Sachverständigen und durch einen Kommissionsbeschluss ([2]) bestätigt wurden.

Sämtliche Zuschüsse unterliegen Vertragsbestimmungen über die redaktionelle Unabhängigkeit, mit denen gewährleistet wird, dass sich die Medien keinerlei Weisungen, Drohungen oder Forderungen seitens der EU-Institutionen oder Mitgliedstaaten der EU und anderweitigen Institutionen oder Staaten unterwerfen.

Die Haushaltsbehörde hat die Aufteilung der Verpflichtungsermächtigungen auf die einzelnen Medien angenommen.

Jahr	Euranet ([1])	Euranet ([1])	Euronews	Gesamt EUR
2007	5 800 000,00		10 171 295,00	15 971 295,00
2008	5 950 236,00		10 902 866,00	16 853 102,00
2009	5 950 236,00		16 255 847,00	22 206 083,00
2010	6 036 320,67		18 081 144,36	24 117 465,03
2011	6 036 320,67		26 005 383,81	32 041 704,48
2012	125 000,00	6 100 000,00	29 523 005,37	35 748 005,37

([1]) Die Zuschüsse werden auf Ebene der Radionetze vergeben und können nicht nach Sendeanstalten aufgeschlüsselt werden.

([1]) In der Entschließung P6_TA(2007)0179 wird eine erweiterte Präsenz von Euronews in der arabischen Welt durch die Ausstrahlung von Sendungen in arabischer und persischer Sprache gefordert, und gemäß der Entschließung P7_TA(2010)0307 gilt es als wichtig, dass Euronews sein Sprachenspektrum ausweitet, um „alle EU-Mitgliedstaaten (und darüber hinaus) abzudecken“.

([2]) Beschluss der Kommission vom 6.10.2010 zum geänderten Jahresarbeitsprogramm betreffend Finanzhilfen und Aufträge im Bereich Kommunikation für das Jahr 2010, K(2010)6827 endg.
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/pdf/c_2010_6827_decision_de_la_commission_de.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002226/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Media and information services

In Communication COM(2007) 568, the Commission announced it would 'contribute to greater and more sustainable coverage of EU affairs on existing audiovisual channels'.

Since then, which existing audiovisual channels have been cofunded by the Commission and what has been the extent (amount) of this funding, broken down by channel and year?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

In order to contribute to greater coverage of EU affairs by AV media, the Commission has developed a dual approach consisting in (i) offering free-of-charge sound bites and images and (ii) providing financial support to European media covering news from a European perspective.

Financial support has focused since 2007 on (i) Euranet, the European radio network (25 radio members at the end of 2012), and (ii) Euronews. A new contract for a European radio network was signed at the end of 2012 with Euranet Plus, following a public tender.

Euronews funding is provided in the form of support to programmes and language services. It is based on a number of European Parliament's Resolutions ([1]), as well as on Euronews' public service role and mission of general interest, as recognised by independent experts and a Commission Decision ([2]).

All funding is subject to contractual clauses on editorial independence ensuring that media are 'independent of any instruction, pressure or request from any EU institution, any EU member state or any other state or institution in all matters concerning the content'.

Allocation of commitment appropriations to the different media was approved by the Budget Authority.

Year	Euranet ([1])	Euranet Plus ([1])	Euronews	Total (EUR)
2007	5 800 000.00		10 171 295.00	15 971 295.00
2008	5 950 236.00		10 902 866.00	16 853 102.00
2009	5 950 236.00		16 255 847.00	22 206 083.00
2010	6 036 320.67		18 081 144.36	24 117 465.03
2011	6 036 320.67		26 005 383.81	32 041 704.48
2012	125 000.00	6 100 000.00	29 523 005.37	35 748 005.37

([1]) Funding is provided at network level and cannot be broken down into member level.

([1]) Resolution calling for an expanded presence of Euronews in the Arab world through broadcast in Arabic and Persian, P6_TA(2007)0179, and resolution recognising the importance of extending the range of languages language regime of Euronews to 'cover all EU member states (and beyond)', P7_TA(2010)0307.

([2]) Commission decision of 6.10.2010 on the amended annual work programme for grants and public contracts in the field of communication for 2010, C(2010)6827 final (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/pdf/c_2010_6827_decision_de_la_commission_en.pdf).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002227/13
an die Kommission
Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Vereinheitlichung von telemetrischen Abfrage- und Programmiergeräten für Defibrillatoren und Herzschrittmacher

In Deutschland tragen ca. 500 000 Menschen ein Herzschrittmacher, jährlich kommen ca. 60 00 Herzschrittmacher dazu. Diese Entwicklung ermöglicht vielen Menschen ein normales Alltagsleben.

Jedoch gibt es gerade in einer Notfallsituation erhebliche Probleme. Die Vielzahl der Anbieter hat es bisher nicht geschafft, die Hard- und Software der Geräte so zu gestalten, dass über eine einheitliche Schnittstelle mit dem Einsatz eines Universal-Gerätes Auslese- und Programmiervorgänge durchgeführt werden können.

Daraus ergeben sich sowohl für die Krankenhäuser als auch die Patienten erhebliche Nachteile:

— Krankenhäuser müssen für jeden Gerätehersteller einen speziellen Computer für den Auslese- und Programmiervorgang beschaffen

— Kostenintensive Schulungen müssen für mehrere Geräte vorgenommen werden

— im Notfall ist der Patient dem Zufall ausgeliefert, dass der Notarzt das Gerät auslesen kann

— Patienten sind an Orte „gebunden“ an denen die Geräte zum Auslesen bereitstehen (Urlaubsreisen sind kaum möglich)

Inwieweit können in diesem Bereich Verbesserungen oder Vereinheitlichungen vorgenommen werden? Was will die Kommission tun, damit die Patienten besser geschützt sind, bzw. damit die Patienten weiterhin in ihrem Bewegungsradius nicht eingeschränkt sind? In welchen Gesetzestext könnte man einen solchen Vorschlag integrieren?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

Nach der von dem europäischen Gesetzgeber vorgesehenen Gesetzgebungsarchitektur regeln die europäischen Rechtsnormen nur grundlegende Anforderungen an Produkte. Die Festlegung von Anforderungen bezüglich einzelner Produkttypen obliegt der Standardisierung durch die europäischen Standardisierungsorganisationen CEN und Cenelec. Deshalb ist die von dem geehrten Mitglied des Europäischen Parlaments angesprochene Problematik von den o.g. Standardisierungsorganisationen aufzugreifen, wenn sie nicht schon aufgegriffen wurde.

Sollten CEN und Cenelec — vermutlich nach Konsultation der internationalen Standardisierungsorganisationen ISO und IEC — zu dem Ergebnis kommen, dass mangels Konsenses zwischen den Herstellern keine Vereinheitlichung der Schnittstellen möglich ist, hat die Europäische Kommission nach gegenwärtiger Rechtslage keine Möglichkeit, verbindliche Maßnahmen zu erlassen.

Allerdings hat die Europäische Kommission dem europäischen Gesetzgeber im September 2012 einen Vorschlag für eine Medizinprodukteverordnung vorgelegt, welche u. a. für diese Fallgruppe die Möglichkeit bereit hält, den Herstellern eine bestimmte technische Lösung vermittels sogenannter Gemeinsamer Technischen Spezifizierungen vorzugeben. Die Europäische Kommission wird also wahrscheinlich in einigen Jahren (nach dem Inkrafttreten der Verordnung) rechtlich die Möglichkeit haben, wie von dem geehrten Mitglied des Europäischen Parlaments vorgeschlagen im Wege rechtlich verbindlicher Instrumente eine Lösung herbeizuführen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002227/13
to the Commission
Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Harmonising telemetric reading and programming devices for defibrillators and pacemakers

In Germany around 500 000 people have pacemakers, with around 60 000 being added a year. For many people, these devices make it possible for them to lead a normal life.

However, particularly in emergencies, there are still serious problems. With so many manufacturers, it has not yet been possible to develop hardware and software in these devices enabling reading and programming using a uniform interface on standardised equipment.

This causes serious problems for both hospitals and patients:

— Hospitals have to purchase a separate computer for reading and programming devices from each manufacturer

— Costly training courses have to be provided for several devices

— In emergencies patients are at the mercy of chance as to whether emergency doctors can read their devices

— Patients are 'tied' to the location where their devices can be read (holidays become very difficult)

To what extent can improvements or harmonisation be achieved in this area? How does the Commission intend to ensure that patients are better protected and are not restricted in their movements? What kind of legislative proposal could be made to this effect?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

Under the legislative architecture provided for by the European legislature, European rules cover only basic requirements for products. The establishment of requirements for individual product types is a matter for standardisation by the European standardisation organisations CEN and CENELEC. Therefore the problems to which the Honourable Member refers should be taken up by the above-mentioned standardisation organisations, if they have not been taken up already.

If CEN and CENELEC — presumably after consulting the international standardisation organisations ISO and IEC — reach the conclusion that harmonisation of the interfaces is not possible owing to a lack of consensus among manufacturers, in the present legal situation the European Commission has no way of laying down binding measures.

However, in September 2012 the European Commission presented to the European legislature a proposal for a regulation on medical products which *inter alia* for this group of products offers the possibility of providing manufacturers with a particular technical solution by means of so-called common technical specifications. In a few years (after the regulation has entered into force) the Europe Commission will therefore probably have the legal possibility of bringing about a solution by way of legally binding instruments, as suggested by the Honourable Member.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002228/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Lebensmittelsicherheit bei Importen aus China

In der letzten Dekade sind die Lebensmittelimporte vieler chinesischer Produkte in einige Mitgliedstaaten um ein vielfaches gewachsen. Ob nun Tiefkühlobst und -fisch, getrocknetes Gemüse, Zutaten für Fertigpizzen oder Apfelsaft aus Konzentraten, die Tendenz ist beinahe durchweg steigend. Ebenso offensichtlich ist die Methodik der chinesischen Hersteller: Überall dort wo Herkunftsangaben erforderlich sind, halten sich die chinesischen Lieferanten heraus und konzentrieren sich auf die Produkte, in denen keine Packungshinweise erforderlich sind.

Leider hat man hier ein sehr schlampiges Verständnis von Lebensmittelsicherheit, wie die 3 697 Aufgriffe der EU-Lebensmittelinspekteure der RASFF bei chinesischer Importware im Jahr 2012 feststellen mussten (Schimmel, Maden, Pestizide, Bakterien, usw.). Von Seiten Chinas werden gleichzeitig immer wieder Beschwerden laut, dass das europäische Verständnis von Lebensmittelsicherheit übertrieben sei, einerseits weil die Schwellenwerte von Schadstoffen „unrealistisch" tief angesetzt würden, andererseits weil diese Werte manchmal damit begründet seien, dass es bisher keine Studien zu den betreffenden Stoffen gäbe und daher entsprechend Vorsicht walten sollte. Genau diese Haltung der EU steht aber im Einklang mit dem SPS-Abkommen der WTO (Art. 2, § 2 und Art. 5, § 7). Daher werden die Bestimmungen vonseiten der Chinesen womöglich unterlaufen. Die europäische Lebensmittelindustrie weiß das und fördert dies wahrscheinlich aus Kostengründen.

Aus diesen Umständen ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu der steigenden gesundheitlichen Bedrohung durch die stark ansteigenden Lebensmittelimporte?

2. Werden hier gegebenenfalls verbesserte Maßnahmen eruiert?

3. Gibt es Überlegungen zu Maßnahmen, welche nicht lediglich eine vermehrte Kontrolle bedeuten würden?

4. Gedenkt die Kommission diese Problematik über Rechtsmittel der WTO anzugehen oder durch alleiniges Handeln der EU, bzw. bilateral mit der VR China?

5. Wo sieht die Kommission gute Möglichkeiten zur Setzung verbesserter Anreize für die europäische Lebensmittelindustrie, damit diese weniger auf solche Billigzutaten zurückgreift?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2013)

1. Die wachsende Menge chinesischer Lebensmittelimporte in die EU stellt an sich keine Bedrohung für die Gesundheit der Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher in der EU dar. Eingeführte Lebensmittel müssen die EU-Vorschriften oder von der EU zumindest als mit diesen gleichwertig anerkannte Auflagen erfüllen. Was diesen Sachverhalt betrifft, verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre detaillierten Ausführungen zur Beantwortung der schriftlichen Anrage E-001575/2013 ([1]).

2. Nein. Die Kommission verfügt bereits über alle Maßnahmen, die sie für erforderlich hält, um die Gesundheit der Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher in der EU vor Gesundheitsrisiken zu schützen, die bei eingeführten Lebensmitteln aus China möglicherweise festgestellt werden. Für die Durchführung dieser Vorschriften sind die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig.

3. Nein. Das vorhandene Kontrollsystem ist dynamisch: Die Häufigkeit der Kontrollen richtet sich nach dem Ergebnis sachgerechter Risikoanalysen.

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

4. Die Kommission erwägt derzeit nicht, auf WTO-Ebene tätig zu werden. Stattdessen besteht eine Vereinbarung (Memorandum of Understanding) zwischen der Kommission und dem Staatlichen Zentralamt für Qualitätsüberwachung, Inspektion und Quarantäne der Volksrepublik China (AQSIQ), der chinesischen Behörde, die für die Sicherheit der Lebensmitteleinfuhren in die EU zuständig ist. Darin ist festgelegt, dass einmal im Jahr eine gemeinsame Sitzung auf politischer und fachlicher Ebene stattfindet, auf der alle einschlägigen Fragen angesprochen werden können. Zudem lässt die Kommission die Kommunikation mit dem AQSIQ sowohl in direktem Kontakt als auch über die Vertretung Chinas bei der EU und die EU-Delegation in China nicht abreißen.

5. In den geltenden Vorschriften ist bereits berücksichtigt, dass die Verbindung zwischen der Verarbeitungsbranche und der Primärproduktion nicht verloren gehen darf. Generell arbeitet die Lebensmittelindustrie mit hochwertigen Rohstoffen aus EU-Erzeugung. Dem Branchenverband FoodDrink Europe zufolge werden von der europäischen Lebensmittelindustrie 70 % aller landwirtschaftlichen Erzeugnisse der EU aufgekauft und verarbeitet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002228/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Food safety in products imported from China

Over the last 10 years, some Member States have significantly increased their imports of food products from China. Whether it be frozen fruit or fish, dried vegetables, ingredients for ready-made pizzas or apple juice from concentrate, this trend looks set to continue. Furthermore, the way in which Chinese producers work is perfectly obvious: suppliers stay well away from products which require designations of origin, focusing on those which require no packaging information.

Understanding of food safety is, unfortunately, very crude here, as the 3 697 investigations made by EU food inspectors from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) in 2012 on Chinese imports testified (finding mould, maggots, pesticides, bacteria etc). Alongside this, China continues to complain that Europe exaggerates food safety both by setting the threshold values for pollutants at an 'unrealistically' low a level, and because it sometimes justifies this by citing the lack of relevant studies so far undertaken as a reason for due caution to prevail. The EU's position here, however, complies exactly with Articles 2(2) and 5(7) of the WTO's SPS Agreement (Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures). Provisions are, therefore, circumvented by the Chinese where possible. The European food industry knows this and is probably abetting this for cost reasons.

This situation gives rise to the following questions:

1. What is the Commission's position with regard to the increasing health threat posed by the sharp rise in food imports?

2. Are improved measures being identified for this issue?

3. Are any measures, other than tighter monitoring, under consideration?

4. Will the Commission tackle this problem with legal means provided by the WTO, via EU unilateral action or bilaterally with the People's Republic of China?

5. Which opportunities would the Commission identify for improving incentives for the European food industry so that it would have less frequent recourse to cheap ingredients of this nature?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

1. The increase of the volume of food imported from China into the EU does not in itself pose a health threat to EU consumers. Imported food is required to comply with the EU requirements or conditions recognised by the EU to be at least equivalent thereto. In this regard and for more details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001575/2013 ([1]).

2. No. The Commission has in place all the measures considered necessary to protect the health of EU consumers from identified health risks from Chinese imported food. Member States are responsible for implementing these rules.

3. No. The control system is dynamic: control rates are adapted on the basis of appropriate risks analysis.

4. The Commission is not considering an action in the WTO context. Instead, on a bilateral basis, the Commission has in place a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of People's Republic of China (AQSIQ), the Chinese authorities competent to ensure the safety of food imported into the EU. Under this MOU an annual meeting at political and technical level is held where any related food safety matter can be addressed. Additionally, the Commission maintains a permanent channel of communication with AQSIQ both directly and via the Chinese mission to the EU and the EU Delegation to China.

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

5. Existing rules already take into account the necessity to preserve a link between the processors and the primary production. In fact, the food industry is mainly using high quality raw materials produced in the EU: according to FoodDrink Europe it purchases and processes 70% of EU agricultural production.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002229/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Nachhaltige Maßnahmen zur Sicherstellung der Lebensmittelkennzeichnung

Eine andere Fleischart zu verwenden, als die auf dem Produkt angegebene, ist kein Kavaliersdelikt, wie die Industrie gerne beschwichtigt, sondern ein regelrechter Betrug am Konsumenten. Wenn zudem im Fleisch Medikamenten-Rückstände wie Phenylbutazon festgestellt werden, handelt es sich auch um ein Verbrechen gegen die körperliche Unversehrtheit der Verbraucher.

Die derzeitige Aktivität vieler Mitgliedstaaten und der EU-Kommission im aktuellen Pferdefleischskandal sind ein willkommenes Engagement im Verbraucherschutz, allerdings ergeben sich auch eine Reihe von Fragen:

1. Wie kann nach Meinung der Kommission sichergestellt werden, dass die aktuell verstärkten Kontrollen zur Fleischidentität aufgrund des abklingenden öffentlichen Interesses und Drucks nicht in wenigen Wochen wieder nachlassen und sich nichts grundlegend ändert? In anderen Worten: Welche zweckmäßigen Methoden zur langfristigen Sicherstellung einer korrekten Lebensmittelkennzeichnung erachtet die Kommission als sinnvoll und durchführbar?

2. Falls es Vorschläge gibt, wie sollen diese klug finanziert werden — ohne dass am Ende der Konsument wieder dafür bezahlen muss? Das heißt insbesondere, wie gedenkt die Kommission bei der Finanzierung von dauerhaften Maßnahmen dafür Sorge zu tragen, dass nicht die Bürger, sondern die Unternehmen die Wiederherstellung und Gewährleistung ihrer Glaubwürdigkeit finanzieren?

3. Wie erachtet die Kommission den Vorschlag zur Einführung eines Produktpasses, welcher lückenlose Auskunft über die gesamte Produktionskette und den Herkunftsort gibt? Wenn negativ, aus welchen Beweggründen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(12. April 2013)

1. Der jüngste Skandal betrifft den Betrug bei der Lebensmittelkennzeichnung. Irreführende Praktiken können vermieden werden, wenn die zuständigen nationalen Behörden die EU-Rechtsvorschriften ordnungsgemäß durchsetzen, indem sie insbesondere regelmäßig amtliche Kontrollen auf der Grundlage angemessener Risikoanalysen durchführen und gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 882/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 29. April 2004 über amtliche Kontrollen zur Überprüfung der Einhaltung des Lebensmittel- und Futtermittelrechts sowie der Bestimmungen über Tiergesundheit und Tierschutz ([1]) wirksame, abschreckende Strafen verhängen.

Mit ihrem in Vorbereitung befindlichen Vorschlag für amtliche Kontrollen zielt die Kommission darauf ab, das bestehende System einschließlich der Bestimmungen über Strafen weiter zu stärken.

2. Die Europäischen Kommission versieht alle von ihr vorgelegten Vorschläge für Rechtsvorschriften mit einer Folgenabschätzung, in der die möglichen wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und ökologischen Auswirkungen dieser Vorschläge dargelegt werden.

([1]) ABl. L 165 vom 30.4.2004, S. 1.

3. Die Einführung eines Produktpasses, der dem Endverbraucher lückenlose Auskunft über die gesamte Produktionskette und den Herkunftsort gibt, ist nicht geeignet, betrügerische Praktiken zu verhindern. Selbst wenn ein Produktpass Pflicht wäre, könnte es zu Betrug kommen. Auf Unionsebene besteht allerdings bereits ein umfassendes System von Vorschriften zur Lebensmittelsicherheit ([2]), das auch Bestimmungen über die Pflichten von Lebensmittelunternehmern und die Rückverfolgbarkeitsanforderungen an Lebensmittel tierischen Ursprungs ([3]) einschließt. Dank dieses Systems konnten Ursprung und Ausmaß der in Rede stehenden betrügerischen Handlungen schnell ermittelt werden.

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 178/2002 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 28. Januar 2002 zur Festlegung der allgemeinen Grundsätze und Anforderungen des Lebensmittelrechts, zur Errichtung der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit und zur Festlegung von Verfahren zur Lebensmittelsicherheit (ABl. L 31 vom 1.2.2002, S. 1).

([3]) Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 931/2011 der Kommission vom 19. September 2011 über die mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 178/2002 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates festgelegten Rückverfolgbarkeitsanforderungen an Lebensmittel tierischen Ursprungs (ABl. L 242 vom 20.9.2011, S. 2).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002229/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Sustainable measures to ensure food labelling

Using a different type of meat from that stated on the product labelling is not a minor offence, the industry would have us believe, but a rank betrayal of the consumer. Furthermore, if pharmaceutical residues such as phenylbutazone are also found to be present in the meat, this constitutes an offence against the consumer's physical integrity.

Whilst the action currently being taken by many Member States and the European Commission with regard to the present horsemeat scandal is welcome involvement in consumer protection, a number of questions nonetheless arise:

1. How, in the Commission's view, can we ensure that diminishing public interest and pressure do not allow the enhanced meat inspections now in place to slacken off in a few weeks, leaving the situation essentially unchanged? In other words: which methods appropriate to ensuring correct food labelling over the long-term does the Commission consider sensible and practical?

2. Should proposals be forthcoming, how are these to be intelligently funded, i.e. without the consumer once more having to foot the final bill? In essence, how does the Commission intend to make sure that, in funding these sustainable measures, the companies concerned, and not the public, stump up the cash for rebuilding and preserving their credibility?

3. What is the Commission's opinion of the proposal to introduce a product passport providing across-the-board information on the entire chain of production and place of origin? What are the reasons for any negative view?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

1. The current scandal constitutes a fraud in food labelling. Deceptive practices can be eliminated by appropriate enforcement of EU legislation mainly by means of regular official controls by national competent authorities based on appropriate risk analysis and the imposition of effective and dissuasive sanctions, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules ([1]).

The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

2. All legislative proposals put forward by the European Commission are accompanied by an impact assessment on the potential economic, social and environmental consequences that these proposals may have.

3. The introduction of a product passport providing across-the-board information on the entire chain of production and place of origin to the final consumer is not a tool to prevent fraud by malicious practices. Fraud could have occurred even if such passport was mandatory. In any event, a comprehensive system of food safety rules is already in place at Union level ([2]), including provisions on responsibilities of food business operators and traceability requirements for foods of animal origin ([3]). It is because of this system that the origin and the extent of the fraudulent actions in question were quickly identified.

([1]) OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1.
([3]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 of 19 September 2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin, OJ L 242, 20.9.2011, p. 2.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002230/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Verordnung bezüglich Tiertransporte in Bulgarien

Während einer Mission nach Bulgarien vom 5. bis 13.6.2012 (FVO Missionsbericht DG(SANCO 2012-6454) hat die FVO entdeckt, dass das Sanktionierungssystem bei Verstößen gegen die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 bezüglich des Schutzes von Tieren bei ihrem Transport es im Moment amtlichen Veterinären nicht ermöglicht, Bußgelder gegen ausländische Transportunternehmen zu erheben.

Im gleichen FVO Bericht wird auch dargestellt, dass 1 500 Beförderungen lebender Tiere aus verschiedenen EU-Mitgliedstaaten mit Bestimmungsziel Türkei den EU-Grenzübergang Kapitan Andreevo passiert haben, wobei diese dort von bulgarischen Veterinären in Übereinstimmung mit Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 überprüft werden sollen. Wie die Kommission weiß, gibt es zahllose Berichte von Verstößen gegen diese Verordnung, z. B. unzulängliche Deckenhöhe, so dass die Tiere nicht aufrecht stehen können, Fahrzeuge mit fehlenden oder defekten Wasser-Systemen etc.

Um die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 entsprechend durchsetzen zu können, bedarf es der Sanktionierungssysteme, welche wirksam, verhältnismäßig und abschreckend sind, wie im Artikel 25 der Verordnung vorgesehen.

Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 wurde im Januar 2005 wirksam, also vor acht Jahren, aber nach wie vor gibt es keine Möglichkeit für bulgarische Behörden Bußgelder gegen ausländische Transportunternehmen zu erheben.

Aus dieser Lage ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Warum ist die Kommission in den letzten acht Jahren nicht bei den bulgarischen Behörden eingeschritten, um dem systematischen Versagen bei der Einführung und Umsetzung des Art. 25 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 entgegenzuwirken?

2. Wird die Kommission nun einschreiten?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(10. April 2013)

1. Die Entscheidung darüber, in welchem Umfang eine Sanktion wirksam, verhältnismäßig und abschreckend ist, obliegt den Mitgliedstaaten; die Kommission besitzt gemäß den geltenden EU-Rechtsvorschriften keinerlei Befugnisse, betreffend die in der Verordnung festgelegten Sanktionen tätig zu werden.

Da jedoch die Höhe der Sanktionen dazu beitragen kann, die ordnungsgemäße Durchsetzung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport ([1]) zu gewährleisten, prüft die Kommission im Wege von Audits des Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramtes der Generaldirektion Gesundheit und Verbraucher diesen Aspekt manchmal in einem übergeordneten Rahmen.

Aus diesem Grund wurde der zuständigen zentralen Behörde in dem Bericht über das im Juni 2012 vom Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt in Bulgarien durchgeführte Audit ([2]), auf den sich der Herr Abgeordnete bezieht, empfohlen, sicherzustellen, dass die Sanktionen so angepasst werden, dass sie den Bestimmungen von Artikel 25 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 entsprechen, wonach sie wirksam, verhältnismäßig und abschreckend sein müssen. In ihrer Stellungnahme zu dieser Empfehlung haben die bulgarischen Behörden angegeben, dass das bulgarische Parlament gerade über den Entwurf eines Gesetzes über die genannten Sanktionen berät.

2. Die Kommission wird das Ergebnis der Beratungen über den genannten Gesetzesentwurf mit Interesse verfolgen.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 des Rates über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport und damit zusammenhängenden Vorgängen, ABl. L 3 vom 5.1.2005, S. 1.
([2]) Audit Nr. 2012-6454.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002230/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Regulation on animal transport in Bulgaria

During a mission to Bulgaria from 5 to 13 June 2012 (FVO (the Food and Veterinary Office) mission report DG(SANCO 2012-6454), found that the system of penalties for infringements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport does not currently allow official veterinary surgeons to levy fines on foreign transport companies.

The same FVO report also reveals that 1500 transports of live animals from various EU Member States destined for Turkey crossed the EU exit point at Kapitan Andreevo where they were to be checked by Bulgarian veterinary surgeons in compliance with the regulation. As the Commission knows, there are numerous reports of infringements of this regulation, including insufficient vehicle roof height, for example, which prevents animals from standing upright and lorries with either defective or non-existent water systems.

In order to be able to implement the regulation appropriately, effective, proportionate and dissuasive systems of penalties are needed as provided for in Article 25 of the regulation.

The regulation came into effect eight years ago in January 2005, but then as now, the Bulgarian authorities are unable to levy fines against foreign transport companies.

This situation gives rise to the following questions:

1. Why has the Commission not intervened with the Bulgarian authorities in order to tackle the regular failures in the introduction and implementation of Article 25 of the regulation?

2. Will the Commission act now?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

1. It should be noted that the competence to decide on which level a penalty is effective, proportionate and dissuasive rests with the Member States and the applicable EU legislation has not provided the Commission with any empowerment in relation to penalties under the regulation.

However, as the level of penalties is one of the factors that could contribute to ensuring proper enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]), the Commission sometimes examines the issue in an overall context during audits carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO).

Therefore, the report from the audit carried out by the FVO in Bulgaria in June 2012 ([2]), to which the question refers, recommended that the central competent authority should ensure that penalties are amended to meet the requirements of Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to be effective, dissuasive and proportionate. In its response to this recommendation the Bulgarian authorities have explained that a draft law concerning penalties is under discussion in the National Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria.

2. The Commission will follow up with interest the outcome of the discussions on the draft law in Bulgaria.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, . OJ L 3, 5.1.2005.
([2]) Audit number 2012-6454.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002231/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Emissionshandel in der Krise — Folgen für Finanzen und Umwelt?

In Deutschland zeichnet sich eine erschreckende Wende beim prestigeträchtigen und vielbeachteten Projekt des Emissionshandels ab. Die Preise für Zertifikate sinken, dem Land könnten 2013 „plötzlich" bis zu 1,4 Mrd. EUR fehlen. Berichten zufolge versucht die Kommission mittels einer Reform, die Preise zu stabilisieren, die aber auf großen Widerstand stößt.

1. War diese Entwicklung angesichts der Wirtschaftskrise wirklich so unvorhersehbar, wie es dargestellt wird?

2. Hat die Kommission vor der Einführung des Emissionshandels im Jahr 2005 Prognosen für mögliche Entwicklungen erstellt bzw. erstellen lassen?

2a. Auf welchen Kriterien beruhten diese Prognosen, von wem wurden sie genau erstellt und welche Ergebnisse wurden in den fünf bis zehn Jahren nach der Einführung erwartet?

3. Inwieweit erwartet die Kommission, dass sich dieser negative Effekt auf andere Staaten in Europa niederschlagen wird?

4. Die CO_2-Raten sind aufgrund der Krise gesunken, weshalb das Instrument „Emissionshandel" in Schwierigkeiten geraten ist. Kann die Kommission etwaige Folgen für die Umwelt bei einem wirtschaftlichen Aufschwung abschätzen? Sollte das Instrument infolge dieser Krise eingestellt werden?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(9. April 2013)

Die seit 2008 anhaltende Wirtschaftskrise hat zu einem Emissionsrückgang und einem beträchtlichen Überschuss an Zertifikaten und internationalen Gutschriften im EU-EHS sowie stark rückläufigen CO_2-Preisen geführt, was in der Tat für alle Mitgliedstaaten niedrigere Einkünfte aus der Versteigerung von Zertifikaten für Phase 3 (2013-2020) bedeutet, als zum Zeitpunkt der Annahme der überarbeiteten Richtlinie im Jahr 2009 zu erwarten stand.

Seit 2005 setzt die Kommission Modelle und Folgenabschätzungsinstrumente wie das PRIMES-Energiesystemmodell ein, um die Entwicklung emissionsgenerierender Aktivitäten als Funktion der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung zu simulieren und die resultierenden Emissionen und Zuteilungen abzuschätzen. Allerdings konnte niemand das Ausmaß der Wirtschaftskrise in Europa absehen. Schon in ihrer Mitteilung von Mai 2010 ([1]) hat die Kommission darauf hingewiesen, dass „der CO2-Preis wahrscheinlich auf seinem niedrigeren Niveau bleiben wird, denn Zertifikate, die während der Rezession nicht genutzt werden, können in spätere Zeiträume übertragen werden". Seither hat die Kommission wiederholt betont, dass das EU-EHS nach der Rezession möglicherweise ein sich rapide verschlechterndes Ungleichgewicht zwischen Angebot und Nachfrage wird in Kauf nehmen müssen.

In Einklang mit den Zielen der EU für 2020 kann das EU-EHS bisher echte Erfolge bei der Emissionsreduktion verzeichnen. Das aktuelle Ungleichgewicht zwischen Angebot und Nachfrage birgt jedoch das Risiko eines starren Festhaltens an CO_2-intensiven Infrastrukturen. Deshalb hat die Kommission im April 2012 beschlossen, den ersten Jahresbericht über das EHS ([2]) vorzuziehen, und vorgeschlagen, den Auktionszeitplan zu überprüfen; sie hat eine Debatte über weitere strukturelle Maßnahmen angestoßen, damit das System die Ziele in künftigen Phasen auf kostenwirksame Weise erreichen kann.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament, den Rat, den Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss und den Ausschuss der Regionen — Analyse der Optionen zur Verringerung der Treibhausgasemissionen um mehr als 20 % und Bewertung des Risikos der Verlagerung von CO_2-Emissionen, KOM(2010)265 endg.

([2]) Bericht der Kommission vom 14.11.2012 an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat — Die Lage des CO_2-Marktes in der EU im Jahr 2012; KOM(2012)652 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002231/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Emissions trading in crisis — impact on finances and the environment?

In Germany, a worrying reversal is taking place in the prestigious, highly-regarded emissions trading project. The prices for certificates are falling; the country could face a 'sudden' shortfall of up to EUR 1.4 billion in 2013. Reports suggest that the Commission is trying to stabilise prices by means of a reform, but that this is meeting fierce resistance.

1. In the light of the economic crisis, was this development really as unpredictable as is being suggested?

2. Did the Commission produce or commission forecasts of possible developments when emissions trading was introduced in 2005?

2a. On which criteria were these forecasts based, who exactly produced them and what results were expected in the five to 10 years after introduction?

3. To what extent does the Commission expect this negative effect to impact on other countries in Europe?

4. CO_2 emissions have fallen because of the crisis; this has caused difficulties for the emissions trading instrument. Can the Commission estimate what the environmental consequences of an economic recovery might be? Should the instrument be suspended in the light of the crisis?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

With the economic crisis unfolding since 2008, emissions have been decreasing, resulting in a considerable surplus of allowances and international credits in the EU ETS with a major impact on the carbon price. This low price will for all Member States indeed lead to lower revenues from the auctioning of allowances for phase 3 (2013-2020) than expected at the time of the adoption of the revised Directive in 2009.

Since 2005, the Commission has used models and impact assessment tools, such as the PRIMES energy system model, to simulate the evolution of emission-generating activities as a function of economic development in order to estimate the resulting emissions and allocations. Nobody, however, could predict the extent of the economic crisis that has developed in Europe. In its communication of May 2010 ([1]), the Commission already pointed out that 'the carbon price is likely to remain lower as allowances not used in the recession are carried forward into the future.' Since then, the Commission repeatedly stressed that in the aftermath of the recession the system might experience a rapidly worsening supply-demand imbalance.

The EU ETS has so far delivered real emission reductions in line with the EU targets for 2020. The current supply-demand imbalance, however, bears the risk of locking in carbon-intensive infrastructures. That is why the Commission has decided in April 2012 to bring forward the date of the first annual report on the ETS ([2]), proposed to review the auction time profile and launched a debate on further structural measures in order to maintain the system's ability to meet the targets in future phases in a cost-effective manner.

([1]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions — Analysis of options to move beyond 20% greenhouse gas emission reductions and assessing the risk of carbon leakage, COM(2010) 265 final.

([2]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council — The state of the European carbon market in 2012 of 14.11.2012; COM(2012) 652 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002232/13
an den Rat
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Das Fortschreiten der Alzheimer-Krankheit

In der am 19.1.2011 in Form des Textes (P7_TA(2011)0016) angenommenen europäischen Initiative zur Alzheimer-Krankheit und zu anderen Demenzerkrankungen heißt es unter anderem:

a) „in der Erwägung, dass die Ausarbeitung geeigneter Therapiemaßnahmen, mit denen das Fortschreiten der Krankheit und der endgültige Ausbruch einer schweren Alzheimer-Krankheit […] hinausgezögert wird, vorangebracht werden könnte, in dem der Schwerpunkt auf das Stadium der Prä-Demenz gelegt wird" und

b) „fordert den Rat auf, Demenz zu einer gesundheitspolitischen Priorität der EU zu erklären […]".

Ein aktueller Artikel der Süddeutschen Zeitung trägt den Titel „Demenz-Erkrankung Alzheimer wird zur Epidemie". Diese Entwicklung stünde nicht zuletzt im Kontext mit der demografischen Entwicklung. Die Deutsche Alzheimer Gesellschaft sagt, die Zahl der Demenzkranken wird sich bis 2050 mehr als verdoppeln. Studien belegen, dass diese Epidemie vor allem durch mehr Forschung und mehr Prävention gemindert werden muss.

1. Inwieweit ist der Rat dieser Aufforderung nachgekommen? Welche politischen Strategien wurden seit der Annahme des Berichtes gegen das Fortschreiten der Krankheit entwickelt?

2. Wurde oder wird der Aspekt der Aufklärung der Bürgerinnen und Bürger in diesen Strategien hinreichend berücksichtigt?

Antwort
(2. Mai 2013)

Die Frau Abgeordnete sei auf die Antwort des Rates auf die Anfrage E-002780/2011 ([1]) verwiesen.

Der Rat kann ergänzend hinzufügen, dass er als Folgemaßnahme zu seinen am 26. September 2008 angenommenen Schlussfolgerungen betreffend ein gemeinsames Engagement der Mitgliedstaaten für die Bekämpfung der neurodegenerativen Erkrankungen, insbesondere der Alzheimer-Krankheit ([2]), am 3. Dezember 2009 Schlussfolgerungen zur Einleitung der Pilotinitiative für die gemeinsame Planung betreffend die Bekämpfung der neurodegenerativen Erkrankungen, insbesondere der Alzheimer-Krankheit ([3]), angenommen hat. Das Ziel dieser Initiative ([4]) ist es, durch die Koordinierung und Intensivierung der Arbeit in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten die Wirkung der europäischen Forschung auf diesem Gebiet zu verstärken.

([1]) 8931/11.
([2]) 13668/08.
([3]) 17226/09.
([4]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002232/13
to the Council
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The spread of Alzheimer's disease

The European Parliament resolution of 19 January 2011 (P7_TA(2011)0016) on a European initiative on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias states *inter alia* the following:

(a) 'whereas a greater focus on the pre-dementia phase of Alzheimer's disease could contribute to supporting the development of appropriate therapeutic interventions capable of slowing down the disease's progression, and ultimately delaying patients' entry into severe Alzheimer's, …' and

(b) 'Calls on the Council to declare dementia to be an EU health priority …;'

According to the title of a recent article in the newspaper 'Süddeutsche Zeitung', Alzheimer's disease is turning into an epidemic — a development reportedly closely linked with demographic trends. According to the German Alzheimer's self-help organisation, 'Deutsche Alzheimer Gesellschaft', the number of dementia sufferers will more than double by 2050. Studies show that more research and more prevention have to be the main methods of lessening the scale of this epidemic.

1. To what extent has the Council acted on this call? Since adoption of the report, what political strategies have been developed to combat the spread of the disease?

2. In those strategies, is sufficient account taken of the aspect of educating the public?

Reply
(2 May 2013)

The Honourable Member should refer to the Council's reply to Written Question E-002780/2011 ([1]).

The Council can add that, as a follow-up to its Conclusions adopted on 26 September 2008 concerning a common commitment by the Member States to combat neurodegenerative diseases, particularly Alzheimer's ([2]), on 3 December 2009 the Council adopted Conclusions concerning the launch of the pilot joint programming initiative on combating neurodegenerative diseases, in particular Alzheimer's ([3]). The aim of this initiative ([4]) is to increase the impact of European research in this area by coordinating and strengthening efforts across EU Member States.

([1]) 8931/11.
([2]) 13668/08.
([3]) 17226/09.
([4]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002233/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Forschung gegen das Fortschreiten der „Epidemie Alzheimer"

In der am 19.1.2011 in Form des Textes P7_TA(2011)0016 angenommenen europäischen Initiative zur Alzheimer-Krankheit und zu anderen Demenzerkrankungen heißt es unter anderem:

a) „in der Erwägung, dass die Ausarbeitung geeigneter Therapiemaßnahmen, mit denen das Fortschreiten der Krankheit und der endgültige Ausbruch einer schweren Alzheimer-Krankheit […] hinausgezögert wird, vorangebracht werden könnte, in dem der Schwerpunkt auf das Stadium der Prä-Demenz gelegt wird" und

b) „fordert den Rat auf, Demenz zu einer gesundheitspolitischen Priorität der EU zu erklären […]".

Ein aktueller Artikel der Süddeutschen Zeitung trägt den Titel „Demenz-Erkrankung Alzheimer wird zur Epidemie". Diese Entwicklung stünde nicht zuletzt im Kontext mit der demografischen Entwicklung. Die Deutsche Alzheimer Gesellschaft sagt, die Zahl der Demenzkranken wird sich bis 2050 mehr als verdoppeln. Studien belegen, dass diese Epidemie vor allem durch mehr Forschung und mehr Prävention gemindert werden muss.

1. Die Kommission wird um eine Auflistung aller in Europa laufenden Forschungs- und Entwicklungsprogramme gebeten, die seit der Initiative von 2010 im Kontext eines Europäischen Ansatzes gegen Alzheimer und Demenz stehen (beispielsweise durch Förderungen).

2. Sieht die Kommission angesichts dieser Tatsache derzeit neue Mittel und Wege, die Forschung in Europa und auch in Kooperation mit Drittländern (USA oder Asien) besser zu koordinieren und die Kommunikation zu verbessern?

3. Welche Programme sind seit Beginn des Jahres 2011 konkret von der Europäischen Union gegen Alzheimer und Demenz initiiert worden?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(12. April 2013)

1. Im Zuge des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (RP7, 2007-2013) wurden der Alzheimer-Forschung in Europa Fördermittel in Höhe von 200 Mio. EUR zugewiesen. Das nächste EU-Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Innovation („Horizont 2020") wird voraussichtlich weitere Möglichkeiten zur Unterstützung der Forschung in diesem Bereich bieten. Hinsichtlich der nationalen Programme wurde zudem im Rahmen der „Gemeinsamen Programminitiative zu neurodegenerativen Krankheiten wie der Alzheimer-Krankheit" (JPND)([1]) im Jahr 2011 eine Bestandsaufnahme der wichtigsten nationalen Forschungs- und Förderprogramme in Europa([2]) auf diesem Gebiet vorgenommen.

2. Die Kommission unterstützt die Abstimmung und Koordinierung der institutionellen und wettbewerbsgestützten Fördermittel im Rahmen der nationalen Forschungsprogramme, auf die 88 % der öffentlichen Forschungsinvestitionen in Europa entfallen. Hinsichtlich der internationalen Zusammenarbeit ist zu erwähnen, dass sich Kanada im Jahr 2012 der JPND anschloss und die JPND zudem am 9. November 2012 einen Meinungsaustausch mit den USA ([3]) organisiert hat.

([1]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/
([2]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/for-researchers/about-the-mapping-exercise/
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/about/third-country-policy/usa-conference/

3. ben den unter Nummer 1 erwähnten Maßnahmen unterstützt die Kommission die JPND sowie — im Rahmen des Programms „Gesundheit“ — die gemeinsame Maßnahme ALCOVE (Alzheimer Cooperative Valuation in Europe — gemeinsame Alzheimerbewertung in Europa). Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission den Monat Mai 2013 als „European Month of the Brain“ ([4]) ausgerufen, um die Hirnforschung und die medizinische Versorgung in diesem Bereich stärker in das Blickfeld der Öffentlichkeit zu rücken. Ferner hat die Kommission die Europäische Innovationspartnerschaft „Aktives und gesundes Altern“ (EIP AHA) ([5]) mit dem Ziel ins Leben gerufen, den EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürgern bis ins Alter ein gesundes, aktives und unabhängiges Leben zu ermöglichen und die Nachhaltigkeit und Effizienz unserer Sozial- und Gesundheitssysteme zu verbessern.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002233/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Research to combat the spread of the Alzheimer's 'epidemic'

The European Parliament resolution of 19 January 2011 (P7_TA(2011)0016) on a European initiative on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias states *inter alia* the following:

(a) 'whereas a greater focus on the pre-dementia phase of Alzheimer's disease could contribute to supporting the development of appropriate therapeutic interventions capable of slowing down the disease's progression, and ultimately delaying patients' entry into severe Alzheimer's, …' and

(b) 'Calls on the Council to declare dementia to be an EU health priority …;'

According to the title of a recent article in the newspaper 'Süddeutsche Zeitung', Alzheimer's disease is turning into an epidemic — a development reportedly closely linked with demographic trends. According to the German Alzheimer's self-help organisation, 'Deutsche Alzheimer Gesellschaft', the number of dementia sufferers will more than double by 2050. Studies show that more research and more prevention have to be the main methods of lessening the scale of this epidemic.

1. Will the Commission list all research and development programmes which have been running in Europe since the 2010 initiative as part of a European approach to combat Alzheimer's and dementia (e.g. through financial support)?

2. Can the Commission currently see new ways and means of more effectively coordinating research in Europe, including in cooperation with third countries (the US or Asia), and improving communication?

3. What programmes to combat Alzheimer's and dementia have been launched by the European Union since the start of 2011?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

1. The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) has been instrumental for supporting research on Alzheimer's in Europe, with EUR 200 million dedicated to this area. Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, will likely provide further opportunities to support research on Alzheimer's. Regarding national programmes, the Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases, in particular Alzheimer's (JPND) ([1]) realised in 2011 a mapping exercise of the main national research programmes and funding support in Europe ([2]) in this area.

2. The Commission is encouraging the alignment and coordination of the institutional and competitive funding committed under national research programmes, which account for 88% of the public research investments in Europe. In terms of international cooperation, Canada joined the JPND in 2012 and the JPND organised on 9 November 2012 a meeting to exchange views with the US ([3]).

3. In addition to what is mentioned under point 1., the Commission provides support to the JPND and — under the Health programme — to the Joint Action Alzheimer cooperative Valuation in Europe (ALCOVE). The Commission is also organising a European Month of the Brain ([4]) in May 2013 that will provide a framework to raise awareness on brain research and healthcare issues. Finally, the Commission set up the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA) ([5]) to enable EU citizens to lead healthy, active and independent lives while ageing, and to improve sustainability and efficiency of social and healthcare systems.

([1]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/
([2]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/for-researchers/about-the-mapping-exercise/
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/about/third-country-policy/usa-conference/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002234/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Freisetzung von genetisch veränderten Moskitos durch ein britisches Biotechnologieunternehmen

In ihrer Antwort (E-001565/2012) vom 27. März 2012 erwähnt die Kommission Leitlinien „für die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung von genetisch veränderten Tieren einschließlich Insekten", welche Mitte 2012 vorliegen sollten.

Gibt es hierzu ein Update und allenfalls neue Erkenntnisse (mit der Bitte um detaillierte Antwort)?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(9. April 2013)

Der von der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) ausgearbeitete Entwurf für Leitlinien für die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung von genetisch veränderten Tieren wurde im Juni 2012 zur zweimonatigen öffentlichen Konsultation ([1]) vorgelegt.

Nachdem nun die eingegangenen Anmerkungen berücksichtigt worden sind, wird auf der Plenarsitzung des EFSA-Gremiums für genetisch veränderte Organismen am 17. und 18. April 2013 über den überarbeiteten Entwurf beraten. Beobachter können an dieser Sitzung teilnehmen. Der Tagesordnungsentwurf und weitere Einzelheiten (unter anderem zur Anmeldung) sind auf der EFSA-Website ([2]) zu finden. Ein zusammenfassender Sitzungsbericht wird anschließend veröffentlicht.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/de/consultationsclosed/call/120621.htm
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/de/events/event/130417.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002234/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Release of genetically modified mosquitoes by a British biotechnology company

In its answer (E-001565/2012) of 27 March 2012, the Commission mentions guidance on 'the environmental risk assessment of GM animals, including GM insects' which should be available by mid-2012.

Is there any update on this or any new findings (please reply with details)?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The draft Environmental Risk Assessment Guidance on Genetically Modified Animals prepared by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) was submitted in June 2012 for a two month public consultation ([1]).

The draft guidance document that has been revised to address comments that were received will be discussed at the plenary meeting of the EFSA Genetically Modified Organisms Panel on 17-18 April 2013. This meeting is open to observers. The draft agenda and further details including how to register can be found on EFSA's website ([2]). A summary report of the meeting will be made publicly available.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/consultationsclosed/call/120621.htm
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130417.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002235/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Wohnungsnot in Österreich und die Situation in Europa

In Österreich hat sich im Mietbereich eine Preissteigerung von bis zu 50 % in den vergangenen 10 Jahren vollzogen; weitere Preiserhöhungen für die folgenden Jahre werden schon jetzt prognostiziert. Jährlich müssten circa 50 000 neue Wohnungen gebaut werden, um den steigenden Bedarf zu decken.

1. Ist der Kommission diese Entwicklung in Österreich, einem durchaus wirtschaftlich gut „aufgestellten" Land in Mitteleuropa, bekannt? Wenn ja, wie stellt sich die Situation in den anderen Mitgliedstaaten Mitteleuropas dar?

2. Welche Strategie schlägt die Kommission vor, um die aufkommende Wohnungsnot der Mittelschicht zu bekämpfen und somit eine katastrophale Situation — ähnlich derjenigen in den südlichen Mitgliedstaaten — zu verhindern?

3. Plant die Kommission auf besonders von der Versorgungslücke betroffene Gruppen (wie AlleinerzieherInnen, Großfamilien, Studenten) im Hinblick auf eine drohende Armutsgefährdung einzugehen?

4. Welche Kosten hält die Kommission für einen grundlegenden Faktor beim Anstieg des Mietzinses? Welche Maßnahmen könnte sie den Mitgliedstaaten empfehlen, um einen Anstieg der Armut — rechtzeitig — zu unterbinden?

(Mit der Bitte um ausführliche Beantwortung).

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2013)

Die Kommission verfolgt Entwicklungen bei der Ausgrenzung aus dem Wohnungsmarkt über die EU-SILC-Datenerhebungen. Obwohl in Österreich die Mieten in den letzten zehn Jahren wesentlich stärker gestiegen sind als der Verbraucherpreisindex, stellt sich die Situation in Bezug auf vergleichbare Indikatoren besser dar als im EU-Durchschnitt: die schwere wohnungsbezogene Entbehrung beträgt 3,5 % gegenüber dem EU-Durchschnitt von 5,5 % (*) ([1]), die Überbelegungsrate liegt im Vergleich zum EU-Durchschnitt von 17,1 % (*) bei 11,6 % und die Quote der Überbelastung durch Wohnkosten erreicht im Vergleich zum EU-Durchschnitt von 11,5 % (*) einen Wert von 4,8 %. Auch geht aus Daten von Urban Audit hervor, dass Österreich zu den Ländern mit der größten durchschnittlichen Wohnfläche in städtischen Gebieten gehört (52 m^2 pro Person). Die Steigerungen der Realmieten waren unter anderem auf Qualitätsverbesserungen, die höhere Transaktionsgeschwindigkeit und größere Möglichkeiten für kurzfristige Mietverträge zurückzuführen. Auch die gute Entwicklung des Tourismus hat sich bemerkbar gemacht.

Der Wohnungsmarkt bleibt ein Zuständigkeitsbereich der Mitgliedstaaten. Die Kommission kann diese jedoch bei ihren Anstrengungen unterstützen. In ihrem Sozialinvestitionspaket und den begleitenden Arbeitsunterlagen der Kommissionsdienststellen ([2]) hat die Kommission festgestellt, dass Wohnungsmarktprobleme — z. B. ein zu geringes Angebot an bezahlbaren Mietwohnungen — ein auslösender Faktor für Obdachlosigkeit sein können. Sie schlägt den Mitgliedstaaten bewährte Praktiken vor, um von Obdachlosigkeit betroffenen (oder bedrohten) Bürgern einen besseren Zugang zum Wohnungsmarkt zu ermöglichen und Zwangsräumungen zu vermeiden. Sie unterstreicht die potenzielle Bedeutung der EU-Fonds für die Erweiterung des Wohnungsangebots, z. B. durch integrierte Interventionen am Wohnungsmarkt, die vom EFRE finanziert werden. Sie wirbt dafür, Unterstützungsdienste (einschließlich der Schaffung von Wohnraum) zu entwickeln und zugänglich zu machen, bei Mindesteinkommensregelungen spezifische Bedürfnisse wie z. B. die Wohnungskosten zu berücksichtigen, und verweist darauf, dass das neue bedarfsorientierte Sozialhilfesystem in Österreich (BMS) auch Bedürfnisse und Kosten im Wohnungsbereich einbezieht.

([1]) EU-SILC 2011, Datensätze ilc_mdho06a, ilc_lvho05a, ilc_lvho07a. (*) geschätzt.
([2]) Siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=de&catId=1044&newsId=1807&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002235/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Housing shortage in Austria and the situation in Europe

Rents in Austria have increased by as much as 50% over the last 10 years, and further rises are already tipped for the coming years. In order to meet increasing demand, 50 000 new dwellings would need to be built each year.

1. Is the Commission aware of this development in Austria, an economically stable country in central Europe? If so, how does the situation look in the other central European Member States?

2. What strategy does the Commission propose to tackle the emerging middle class housing shortage and avoid a catastrophic situation similar to that seen in Member States in southern Europe?

3. Will the Commission act to help groups worst affected by the shortage, such as single parents, large families and students, given the risk that they will fall into poverty?

4. What costs does the Commission see as a key factor underlying the rise in rents? What measures would it recommend to Member States in order to head off a rise in poverty in good time?

(Please answer in detail.)

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

The Commission monitors developments in housing exclusion through the EU SILC data surveys. In Austria, despite rents increasing at significantly higher rates than the consumer price index over the last decade, the performance concerning comparable indicators is above EU average, with severe housing deprivation at 3.5% vs. EU 5.5% (*) ([1]), the overcrowding rate at 11.6% compared to 17.1% EU average (*) and housing cost overburden rate at 4.8% compared to EU average of 11.5% (*). In addition, Urban Audit data indicate that Austria is among countries with the highest average living area (52 m^2 per person) in urban areas. Real rents increases have been driven, amongst others, by quality improvements, higher velocity of transactions and more possibilities for short-term leases. The strong performance of the tourism industry has also exerted an influence.

Housing remains a competence of Member States. The Commission, however, can support their efforts. In its Social Investment Package and its annexed Staff Working Documents ([2]), the Commisison identifies problems on the housing markets — such as a lack of affordable rental housing offer — as a trigger factor for homelessness. It proposes good practices to Member States to ensure a better access to housing for (at-risk-of) homeless people and prevent evictions. It highlights the potential role of the EU funds in boosting housing offer, e.g. through integrated housing interventions financed by the ERDF. It promotes the development and access to enabling services, including housing support and for minimum income schemes to address specific needs such as housing costs, and shows that the new means-tested social assistance scheme of Austria (BMS) also adresses housing needs and costs.

([1]) EU SILC 2011, datasets ilc_mdho06a, ilc_lvho05a, ilc_lvho07a. (*) estimated.
([2]) See at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1044&newsId=1807&furtherNews=yes.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002236/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Grüne Gentechnik

Teilweise sollen Gentech-Pflanzen mittlerweile mehr Spritzmittel als konventionelle Pflanzen brauchen und sich bereits einige Unkrautarten an die Spritzmittel angepasst haben. Demnach müssen Spritzmittel nun höher dosiert werden, was schädigend für Mensch und Umwelt ist.

Diese neue Technologie schadet zudem der Unabhängigkeit der Landwirte, da diese Pflanzen patentiert sind und jährlich neu gekauft werden müssen.

1. Was plant die Kommission, um nicht in eine vollständige Abhängigkeit von grüner Gentechnik zu gelangen und den Menschen ein gesundes Verhältnis zur Natur zu vermitteln?

2. Sollte nicht die gesunde und bewusste Ernährung europäischer Bürger/innen im Vordergrund stehen und nicht der gesteigerte Profit, den man aus dieser Gentechnik schlagen kann?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(23. April 2013)

1. Die Kommission ist der Ansicht, dass den Landwirten und Verbrauchern in der EU nicht das wirksame Recht entzogen werden sollte, nach ihren Bedürfnissen und Vorlieben zwischen verschiedenen Produkten zu wählen. Entsprechend sollte in der EU keine Bewirtschaftungsform ausgeschlossen werden, und es wurden entsprechende Maßnahmen zum Schutz dieses Rechts ergriffen. Was Patente auf Pflanzen betrifft, so sind in der Richtlinie 98/44/EG ([1]) in Bezug auf die Landwirtschaft ausdrücklich Ausnahmen vorgesehen, die es einem Landwirt ermöglichen, geerntetes Pflanzenmaterial wie etwa Saatgut aufzuheben und in der nächsten Saison in seinem eigenen Betrieb wiederzuverwenden ([2]). Zusätzlich ist im Übereinkommen über ein einheitliches Patentgericht ([3]) in Artikel 27 Buchstabe c ein eingeschränktes Züchterprivileg vorgesehen, das es den Züchtern erlaubt, patentiertes Pflanzenmaterial allein zu Züchtungszwecken frei zu verwenden. Insbesondere für GVO ist in den EU-Rechtsvorschriften festgelegt, dass die Mitgliedstaaten nationale Koexistenzmaßnahmen ergreifen können, um das unbeabsichtigte Vorkommen von GVO in anderen Produkten in Gebieten, in denen GVO angebaut werden, zu vermeiden und so zu gewährleisten, dass die Landwirte frei entscheiden können, ob sie konventionellen oder ökologischen Landbau betreiben oder gentechnisch veränderte Pflanzen erzeugen.

2. Eines der Kernziele der EU-Gesundheitspolitik ist der Schutz der EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger vor Gesundheitsgefahren und die Förderung der Gesundheit. Zwei zentrale Komponenten dieses politischen Ziels sind die Förderung einer gesunden Ernährung und die Lebensmittelsicherheit. Mit der Annahme des Weißbuchs „Ernährung, Übergewicht, Adipositas: Eine Strategie für Europa“ ([4]) hat die Kommission eine kohärente und umfassende Gemeinschaftsstrategie eingeführt, mit der die Themen Übergewicht und Adipositas angegangen werden, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf Maßnahmen liegt, mit denen die Gefahren, die mit schlechter Ernährung und unzureichender Bewegung einhergehen, verringert werden sollen. Diese Strategie wird unterstützt durch die EU-Politik im Bereich Lebensmittelsicherheit, die Regeln zur verbindlichen Nährwertkennzeichnung ([5]) enthält und strenge Sicherheitsanforderungen für die Zulassung von GVO festlegt.

([1]) Richtlinie 98/44/EG über den rechtlichen Schutz biotechnologischer Erfindungen, ABl. L 213, S. 13.
([2]) Artikel 11 Absatz 2.
([3]) Die endgültige Fassung des Übereinkommens über ein einheitliches Patentgericht wurde am 11. Januar 2013 veröffentlicht: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/stl06/stl06351.en12.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/documents/nutrition_wp_de.pdf http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/strategy_en.htm
([5]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 vom 25. Oktober 2011 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel, ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002236/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Green genetic engineering

In some cases, genetically engineered plants now need to be sprayed more than conventional plants, and some types of weeds have already become resistant to the sprays. This means that higher volumes of sprays need to be used, which is harmful for humans and the environment.

Moreover, this new technology reduces farmers' independence, because the plants are patented and need to be bought again every year.

1. What does the Commission plan to do to avoid complete dependence on green genetic engineering and to develop a healthy relationship between humanity and nature?

2. Should the focus not be on a healthy diet for people in Europe, rather than on the higher profits to be gained from genetic engineering?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

1. The Commission considers that EU farmers and consumers should not be deprived of the effective right to choose between different products depending on their needs and preferences. Consequently, no form of farming should be excluded in the EU, and adequate measures have been taken to protect this right. As regards patents applying to plants, Directive 98/44/EC ([1]) explicitly provides for agricultural derogations allowing a farmer to save and re-use harvested plant material such as seeds for the next season on his own farm. ([2]) In addition the Agreement on the Unified Patent Court ([3]) provides for a limited breeders' privilege in Article 27(c), allowing breeders to freely use patented plant material for breeding purposes only. Specifically on GMOs, the EU legislation provides that Member States can implement national coexistence measures to avoid unintended presence of GMOs in other products in areas where GMOs are cultivated, and thus ensuring the freedom of choice of farmers to grow conventional, GM or organic crop.

2. One of the core objectives of the EU health policy is to protect EU citizens from health threats and promote good health. Two key components of this policy objective are the promotion of healthy diets, and food safety. The Commission has established a coherent and comprehensive Community Strategy to address the issues of overweight and obesity by adopting the White Paper 'A Strategy on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues' ([4]) focusing on actions to reduce the risks associated with poor nutrition and limited physical exercise. This strategy is sustained by the EU food safety policy, which includes rules on mandatory nutritional labelling ([5]) and sets strict safety requirements for authorisation of GMOs in the EU.

([1]) Directive 98/44/EC on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions, OJ L 213, p. 13-21.
([2]) Article 11, paragraph (2).
([3]) The final text of the UPC Agreement was published on 11 January 2013: http://register.consiliunl.europa.eu/pdf/en/l 2/stl 6/stl 6351 .en I2.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/documents/nutrition_wp_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/strategy_en.htm
([5]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers OJ L 304/18, 22.11.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002237/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Aufkommen der Mafia in Pompeji

Jüngsten Meldungen zufolge wurde das EU-Projekt zur Restaurierung der Ausgrabungsstätte Pompeji bei Neapel gestoppt, weil eine der Firmen, die an diesem Projekt mitwirken sollte, verdächtigt wird, Verbindungen zur organisierten Kriminalität zu haben.

1. Ist der Kommission die Tatsache eines möglichen Aufkommens dieser Art (respektive der Mafia) in Pompeji bekannt?

2. Welche Schritte gedenkt die Kommission einzuleiten, um gegen solche Verbindungen einzuschreiten?

3. Wie wird nun in der Folge mit dem Restaurierungsprojekt verfahren (vor allem in finanzieller Hinsicht)?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2013)

1., 2. Der Kommission ist das Risiko einer Mitwirkung der Mafia am Großprojekt Pompeji bekannt. Die Meldung, dass das Projekt aufgrund von Verbindungen zur organisierten Kriminalität gestoppt worden sei, trifft jedoch nicht zu. Eine der drei von Kommissar Hahn am 6. Februar 2013 besichtigten Restaurierungsstätten stand vor der Eröffnung, doch wurden bei aufgrund des Antimafia-Legalitätsprotokolls unter der Verantwortung des Sonderpräfekten für Pompeji durchgeführten Kontrollen Unregelmäßigkeiten festgestellt, die zum Ausschluss des ursprünglich für den Vertrag ausgewählten Unternehmens führten. Beim zweiten ausgewählten Unternehmen gab es keine Unstimmigkeiten, und die Arbeiten werden voraussichtlich ohne Verzögerung beginnen.

3. Das Großprojekt umfasst fünf Pläne einschließlich eines Sicherheitsplans. Auf der Grundlage des am 5. April 2012 unterzeichneten Sicherheits- und Legalitätsprotokolls wurde ein Sonderpräfekt ernannt, der alle die Restaurierungsstätten in Pompeji betreffenden Angebote überwacht und prüft. Der Präfekt hat bereits im Falle des oben genannten Angebots interveniert und wird dies, wo nötig, auch weiterhin tun.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002237/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Mafia involvement in Pompeii

Recently it was reported that an EU project to restore the excavations in Pompeii near Naples was stopped because one of the companies which was supposed to be involved in the project was suspected of links to organised crime.

1. Is the Commission aware of a possible situation of this kind (involving the Mafia) in Pompeii?

2. Which steps is the Commission considering to deal with such involvement?

3. How will the restoration project now be managed (particularly in financial terms)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

1, 2. The Commission is aware of the risk of the involvement of the mafia in the Pompeii major project. However, the report that the project was stopped because of the involvement of the organised crime is not correct. One of the three work sites visited by Commissioner Hahn on 6 February 2013 was about to be opened but, during checks based on the anti-mafia legality protocol under the responsibility of the special Prefect for Pompeii, irregularities were identified which led to the disqualification of the company which was first selected for the contract. The second selected company was found to be in order and the works are expected to start without any delay.

3. The major project consists of five plans including a Security Plan. Based on a Security and Legality Protocol signed on 5 April 2012, a special Prefect was appointed with the task of monitoring and checking all tenders relating to the work sites in Pompeii. The Prefect already intervened in the case of the aforementioned tender and will continue to do so, if required.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002238/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Das Phänomen „Zombie-Firma“

In der britischen Wirtschaft wurde unlängst ein neues Phänomen, sogenannte „Zombie-Firmen“, konstatiert. Es handelt sich hierbei um Firmen, die am Rande des Bankrotts stehen, nur noch ihre Schulden bedienen können und dementsprechend nicht mehr real produktiv für die Wirtschaft sind. Als einziger großer Vorteil wird der Erhalt von Arbeitsplätzen angeführt. Effektiv sind diese Firmen ständig vom Kollaps bedroht, Investitionen sind unmöglich, eine nur geringe Steigerung des Kreditzinses könnte sich verheerend auswirken.

1. Ist der Kommission diese Entwicklung bekannt? Wenn ja, wie bewertet die Kommission dieses neue Phänomen?

2. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass diese Entwicklung womöglich auch in anderen Ländern der Europäischen Union zu erwarten ist, bzw. wo ist eine solche Entwicklung bereits zu beobachten?

3. Gedenkt die Kommission, vorausschauend Maßnahmen zu entwickeln, um diesen „Zombie-Firmen“ wieder in die Produktivität zurückzuhelfen?

4. Wie könnte sich nach Ansicht der Kommission ein Zusammenbruch der betroffenen Firmen auf den Arbeitsmarkt in Europa auswirken?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(15. Mai 2013)

Dieses im Vereinigten Königreich auftretende Phänomen und die Bezeichnung „Zombie-Firmen“ wurden kürzlich auch in der Presse aufgegriffen. Die Kommission hat die diesbezüglichen Diskussionen verfolgt, dieses Thema jedoch nicht grundlegend intern analysiert. Sie überwacht allerdings genau das Unternehmensumfeld in der EU, also den Marktzutritt und -austritt von Unternehmen, ihr Wachstum und den Zugang zu Finanzmitteln. Der Zusammenhang zwischen Insolvenzverfahren und Unternehmensdynamik wird zum Beispiel auch ausdrücklich im „Small Business Act“ hervorgehoben.

Die Kommission hat die Frage, ob diese Entwicklung womöglich auch in anderen Mitgliedstaaten zu erwarten ist, nicht systematisch untersucht; sie kontrolliert jedoch regelmäßig die Entwicklung bei den kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen.

Die Kommission zieht nicht in Erwägung, spezifische Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung von Zombie-Firmen zu ergreifen. Sie regt allerdings die Mitgliedstaaten dazu an, die Rahmenbedingungen für Unternehmen zu verbessern, die Umverteilung der Ressourcen zu erleichtern und die Unternehmensdynamik zu fördern.

Da keine verlässlichen quantitativen Daten über diese Firmen vorliegen, sind die Auswirkungen ihres etwaigen Zusammenbruchs kaum abzuschätzen. Mittel- bis langfristig können allerdings nur produktivere Unternehmen nachhaltige Arbeitsplätze und Wachstum schaffen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002238/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: 'Zombie companies'

A new phenomenon — the so-called 'zombie company' — has recently made its appearance in the British economy. These are companies which hover on the brink of bankruptcy, only able to service their debts and which are therefore no longer economically productive in any true sense. The only strong argument in their favour is that jobs are maintained. In reality, these companies are on constant brink of collapse, investment in them impossible and the smallest hike in the loan rate could have devastating consequences.

1. Is the Commission familiar with this development? If yes, what is the Commission's view of this new phenomenon?

2. Does the Commission think that this development is likely to occur in other Member States of the European Union and where can similar developments already be observed?

3. Is the Commission considering any prospective measures designed to help these 'zombie companies' become productive again ?

4. What, in the Commission's view, would be the impact of a collapse of these companies on the European labour market?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

This phenomenon in the United Kingdom and the label of 'zombie companies' has also recently been emphasised in the press. The Commission has followed the debate on this issue, but has not undertaken any substantial in-house analysis devoted to this topic. However, the Commission is closely monitoring the business environment in the EU, including entry, growth and exit of firms from the market and access to finance. The issue on the interrelationship between insolvency procedures and firm dynamics is also explicitly recognised in, for example, the Small Business Act.

Regarding the question whether this development is likely to occur in other Member States, the Commission has not carried out a systematic investigation of this issue in the EU Member States, but is monitoring Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) developments regularly.

The Commission is not considering any specific measures designed to help zombie companies. The Commission however encourages Member States to strengthen the business environment, including measures to facilitate reallocation of resources and promote firm dynamics.

In the absence of reliable quantitative information on these companies, the impact of their potential collapse on the European labour market is difficult to gauge. However in the medium- to long-run only more productive firms could generate more sustainable jobs and growth.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002239/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Entwicklungshilfe in privater Hand?

Entwicklungshilfe ist in der Europäischen Union im Rahmen von Demokratisierungsprojekten und der Verbreitung der Menschenrechte ein großes Thema. Vermehrt schalten sich die verschiedensten und wohlhabendsten privaten Akteure dieser Welt in die Entwicklungshilfe ein.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission diese Entwicklung?

2. Kann in irgendeiner Form garantiert werden, dass die wohltätigen Entwicklungshilfe-Projekte privater Träger nicht zu profitorientierten Unternehmungen oder reinen Prestigeprojekten werden? Gedenkt die Kommission, dementsprechende Projekte in umfassenderen Größenordnungen zu kontrollieren?

3. Sieht die Kommission in dieser Entwicklung Chancen zur Kooperation mit privaten Trägern? Wenn ja, wie könnten solche Kooperationen in der konkreten Umsetzung aussehen?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

1. Politische Rahmenbedingungen, die Frieden und Stabilität, die Achtung der Menschenrechte, die Grundfreiheiten, die demokratischen Grundsätze, Rechtsstaatlichkeit, verantwortungsvolles Regieren und die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter garantieren, sind unerlässlich für eine langfristige Entwicklung. Daher sollten nach Auffassung der Kommission alle einschlägigen Akteure wie der Privatsektor, Stiftungen oder gemeinnützige Organisationen, die Zivilgesellschaft, lokale und regionale Behörden und Partnerregierungen einbezogen werden, zumal deren Rolle im Entwicklungsprozess immer größer wird.

2. Von der Kommission finanzierte Projekte dürfen nicht gewinnorientiert sein, und die Empfänger müssen in der Lage sein, die EU-Mittel zu verwalten. Erfolgreiche und sinnvolle Projekte wurden bereits von privaten wohltätigen Organisationen durchgeführt. Alle von der EU finanzierten Projekte unterliegen einem regelmäßigen Monitoring und Audit.

3. In der Mitteilung „Agenda für den Wandel“ ([1]) wird auf die Bedeutung der Unterstützung des Privatsektors und der Zusammenarbeit mit diesem Sektor bei der Verwirklichung des Ziels eines breitenwirksamen und nachhaltigen Wachstums hingewiesen. Der Privatsektor kann durch die Schaffung produktiver und menschenwürdiger Arbeitsplätze sowie Investitionen in Innovationen und Geschäftsmodelle, die auf die Bedürfnisse der Armen ausgerichtet sind, eine treibende Kraft sein. Er spielt eine wichtige Rolle bei der Gewährleistung des Zugangs der Armen zur Trinkwasserversorgung und Abwasserentsorgung, zu Energie, Finanzdienstleistungen, Wohnmöglichkeiten, medizinischen Leistungen und sonstigen Innovationen zur Verbesserung ihres Lebens.

([1]) KOM(2011)637 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002239/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Private sector development aid?

In the context of projects to support democratic processes and propagate human rights, development aid is a major issue. Increasingly, diverse wealthy individuals are becoming involved in development aid.

1. What does the Commission think about this trend?

2. Is there some way of ensuring that such privately sponsored charitable development projects do not become profit-oriented business ventures or pure vanity projects? Is the Commission considering monitoring larger scale projects of this type?

3. Does the Commission see this trend as an opportunity to cooperate with private actors? If so, how could such cooperation be implemented in practice?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

1. A political environment which guarantees peace, stability, respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democratic principles, the rule of law, good governance and gender equality is fundamental to long-term development. To this end, the Commission believes it should involve all relevant stakeholders such as private sector, foundations or philanthropic organisations, civil society, local and regional authorities and partner governments particularly as their role in development grows.

2. Projects funded by the Commission have to be 'not-for profit' and beneficiaries have to possess capacities to manage EU funds. Successful and good projects have been implemented by privately sponsored charitable structures. All EU funded projects are regularly monitored and audited.

3. The communication 'Agenda for Change' ([1]) highlights the importance of working for and with the private sector towards achieving the objective of inclusive and sustainable growth. The private sector can be a driving force by generating productive and decent job opportunities and by investing in innovation and business models that are targeted at the needs of the poor. It has a major role in providing poor people with access to clean water and sanitation, energy, financial services, housing, medicines and other inclusive innovations to improve their lives.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002240/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Altersarmut als „Hindernis" des „Gesunden Alterns"

In der vergangenen Plenarsitzungswoche in Straßburg ist unter anderem darüber gesprochen worden, wie die Politik europaweit das „gesunde Altern" unterstützen kann und wie die entsprechenden Rahmenbedingungen verbessert werden könnten. Der zugrundeliegende Bericht war fundiert und hat zahlreiche Aspekte berücksichtigt.

Aktuelle Entwicklungen bezüglich der steigenden Altersarmut und eines dadurch fast unmöglich werdenden „Gesunden Alterns" geben Anlass zur Sorge. Menschen, die ihr Leben lang sehr hart — vor allem körperlich — arbeiten, werden in der Folge in der Pension nach wie vor stark benachteiligt. Es sind die Konsequenzen des Anstiegs der Altersarmut zu beobachten: Alten- und Service-Zentren verzeichnen einen rasanten Zuwachs an bedürftigen alten Menschen, die auf Kleider- und Lebensmittelspenden angewiesen sind, viele davon sind Frauen.

1. Ist der Kommission dieser Umstand, vor allem diese steigende Entwicklung bekannt? Wenn ja, sieht die Kommission Möglichkeiten für einen Ausgleich dieser Ungerechtigkeit, womöglich im Rahmen von Projekten zum Bereich „Gesundes Altern"?

2. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass trotz der Wirtschafts- und Finanzkrise ausreichende Maßnahmen ergriffen wurden und werden, um diese Ungerechtigkeit in Zukunft zu vermindern? Wenn ja, mit welchen konkreten Schritten und Vorhaben belegt sie diese Ansicht?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2013)

Die Kommission überwacht die Situation älterer Menschen anhand von Erhebungen im Rahmen der Statistiken über Einkommen und Lebensbedingungen (EU-SILC). Den jüngsten aus der EU-SILC verfügbaren Daten zufolge ist der Anteil der über 65-jährigen, die von Armut bedroht sind, von 18,9 % im Jahr 2005 auf 15,9 % im Jahr 2011 (Einkommensjahr 2010) gesunken. Die Armutsgefährdungsquote älterer Menschen liegt also unter dem Wert der Gesamtbevölkerung (16,9 %). Die Kommission wird die Situation älterer Menschen weiterhin verfolgen.

Bei der Vorlage ihrer Mitteilung „Solidarität im Gesundheitswesen: Abbau der Ungleichheiten im Gesundheitsbereich in der EU" im Jahr 2009 erkannte die Kommission an, dass nicht nur in Bezug auf Einkommen Ungleichheiten bestehen, sondern auch im Bereich Gesundheit und Lebenserwartung. In diesem Dokument wurde das soziale Gefälle in Bezug auf den Gesundheitszustand hervorgehoben und ferner auf die Kosten, die durch die Ungleichheiten im Gesundheitsbereich entstehen, sowie auf die Notwendigkeit gezielter politischer Maßnahmen zur effizienten Bekämpfung dieser Ungleichheiten hingewiesen. Die Kommission plant die Veröffentlichung eines Berichts über das Follow-up zur Mitteilung im Frühjahr 2013.

Ferner hat die Kommission eine Europäische Innovationspartnerschaft „Aktivität und Gesundheit im Alter" ([1]) auf den Weg gebracht, die dazu beitragen soll, die durchschnittliche Zahl gesunder Lebensjahre der EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger bis 2020 um zwei Jahre zu erhöhen, was zu Verbesserungen der Lebensqualität älterer Menschen, zur Nachhaltigkeit der öffentlichen Finanzen und zu Wirtschaftswachstum führen würde.

([1]) KOM(2012)83 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002240/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Poverty in old age as an obstacle to healthy ageing

At the last plenary session in Strasbourg, discussions turned, amongst other things, to how pan-European policy can support healthy ageing and how the environment for this can be improved. The report on which this discussion was based was sound and looked at numerous aspects.

Current trends that show a rise in poverty in old age, which is making healthy ageing almost impossible, are worrying. People who have worked hard all their lives — particularly where hard physical work was involved — continue to be heavily disadvantaged when they retire. The consequences of rising poverty in old age are apparent: social and elderly care services are recording a rapid rise in the number of needy old people, many of them women, who rely on donated food and clothing.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation and, in particular, of the rising trend? If so, does the Commission see any way of redressing this injustice, if possible as part of projects in the area of healthy ageing?

2. Does the Commission consider that, in spite of the economic and financial crisis, sufficient measures are being and have been taken to mitigate this injustice in future? If so, on what specific steps and projects does it base this view?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission is monitoring the situation of older people through the surveys Statistics on the Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). According to the latest available data from EU-SILC, the proportion of people aged 65+ who are at risk of poverty has decreased from 18.9% in 2005 to 15.9% in 2011 (income year 2010). Thus, the at-risk-of-poverty rate of older people is below that of the total population (16.9%). The Commission will continue to monitor the situation of older people.

The Commission acknowledged that inequalities not only exist in relation to incomes, but also in the area of health and life expectancy when it presented in 2009 the communication Solidarity in Health: Reducing health inequalities in the EU. This document underlined the social gradient in health, highlighted the cost of inequalities in health and underscored the need for targeted policies to combat them efficiently. The Commission is planning to publish a report on the follow-up to the communication in spring 2013.

The Commission has also launched a European Innovation Partnership on Healthy and Active Ageing ([1]) with a target to increase the average number of healthy life years of EU citizens by two years by 2020 resulting in improvements to the quality of life of older citizens, the sustainability of public finances and opportunities for economic growth.

([1]) COM(2012)83 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002241/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Wasserknappheit in Pakistan

Wie bereits in der Anfrage vom 3.4.2012 (E-003559/2012) angeführt, führt die Wasserknappheit, die die pakistanische Bevölkerung erleidet (verursacht durch den Bau von hohen Staudämmen durch die indische Regierung), zu einem fortlaufenden Konflikt zwischen den zwei angrenzenden Nationen.

In der Antwort vom 13. Juli 2012 wurde geschrieben, dass Pakistan Indien „voraussichtlich spätestens Ende dieses Jahres die Meistbegünstigung einräumen" wird.

1. Ist der Kommission bezüglich o. g. Meistbegünstigung etwas bekannt? Wie funktioniert die Handelsbeziehung zwischen Pakistan und Indien mittlerweile und vor allem „im Detail"?

2. Wie sieht der weitere Plan in den Beziehungen EU-Pakistan aus?

3. Wie steht es um die Sektordialoge? Was sind deren Inhalte und Ergebnisse bis dato?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2013)

Konsultationen mit Vertretern der pakistanischen Wirtschaft und Industrie finden statt. Allerdings hat Pakistan Indien noch nicht die Meistbegünstigung eingeräumt. Die Amtszeit der Regierung von Pakistan endete am 16. März, so dass weitere Entwicklungen wohl erst nach der Wahl einer neuen Regierung eintreten werden.

Pakistan und Indien haben in Handels- und Visafragen Fortschritte erzielt. Trotz der jüngsten Spannungen im Zusammenhang mit der Demarkationslinie einigte man sich auf die Einführung eines zu mehreren Einreisen berechtigenden Geschäftsvisums und — nach dem Besuch einer pakistanischen Wirtschafts- und Handelsdelegation — in New Delhi vor kurzem auf die Einsetzung eines Gemeinsamen Wirtschaftsrates Pakistan-Indien. Der Verband der indischen Industrie hat seinerseits angekündigt, bis Ende 2013 eine hochrangige Delegation nach Pakistan zu entsenden. Das Indus-Wasser-Abkommen bildet eine solide Grundlage für Beratungen zwischen Pakistan und Indien über die Wasserressourcen.

Die EU bereitet die Entsendung einer Beobachtungsmission zu den bevorstehenden Wahlen in Pakistan zur Unterstützung der Demokratisierung vor. Damit wird die laufende Unterstützung der EU für die Wahlreform in Pakistan ergänzt. In den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates Auswärtige Angelegenheiten vom 11. März wird darauf hingewiesen, dass die EU beabsichtigt, mit der nächsten pakistanischen Regierung umgehend Gespräche über die Ziele des fünfjährigen Maßnahmenplans EU-Pakistan aufzunehmen.

Eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit bei der integrierten Wasserbewirtschaftung ist in dem fünfjährigen Maßnahmenplan vorgesehen. In den Gesprächen, die die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Juni 2012 mit der pakistanischen Außenministerin Hina Rabbani Khar führte, ging es auch um die Unterstützung der EU für Projekte zur Bewirtschaftung natürlicher Ressourcen. Die EU will den Bau des Munda-Damms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa unterstützen, bei dem es um Stromerzeugung, aber auch um Bewässerung und Hochwasserregulierung geht. Der politische Dialog wird wiederaufgenommen, wenn eine neue Regierung eingesetzt ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002241/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Water shortage in Pakistan

As already referred to in my question of 3 April 2012 (E-003559/2012), the water shortage experienced by the Pakistani population (owing to the building of high dams by the Indian Government) is causing an ongoing conflict between the two bordering nations.

In its answer of 13 July 2012, the Commission wrote that Pakistan 'is expected to grant India MFN status by the end of this year.'

1. Does the Commission have any information on the aforementioned MFN status? How have trade relations between Pakistan and India progressed so far, especially the finer details?

2. What is next on the agenda for EU-Pakistan relations?

3. How is the sectoral dialogue going? What is being discussed and what are the results so far?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

It is understood that consultations with economic and industrial stakeholders in Pakistan are taking place, and that Pakistan has not yet given MFN ([1]) status to India. The Government of Pakistan concluded its term in office on 16 March, so it is likely that any further developments will take place after a new government has been elected.

Pakistan and India have been making progress on trade and visa issues. In spite of recent tensions over the Line of Control, agreement has been reached on a multiple-visit business visa regime, and most recently to launch a Pakistan-India Joint Business Council following a Pakistani business and trade delegation visit to Delhi. The Confederation of Indian Industry has announced plans to send a high-level delegation to Pakistan later in 2013. The Indus Waters Treaty offers a strong basis for discussion between Pakistan and India on water resources.

The EU is preparing to deploy an observation mission for Pakistan's upcoming elections in support of the democratic process. This is in addition to ongoing EU support for electoral reform in Pakistan. The Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 11 March underline EU plans to engage promptly with the next Pakistani government on the objectives of the EU-Pakistan 5-year Engagement Plan.

Enhanced cooperation on integrated water management is included in the 5-year Engagement Plan. Discussion between the HR/VP and Pakistani Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar in June 2012 touched on EU support for projects for natural resource management. The EU is currently preparing to provide support for the Munda Dam in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which will address power generation but also irrigation and flood regulation. Political dialogue will resume when a new government is in place.

([1]) MFN = Most Favoured Nation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002242/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Drohende Pleite Siziliens

Die Kommission hat in der Antwort vom 25. September 2012 (E-007467/2012) erklärt, dass sie bei Programmabschluss prüft, „ob der Mitgliedstaat allen Unregelmäßigkeiten erfolgreich nachgegangen ist".

1. Wie ist der Stand dieser Erhebungen? Gibt es schon konkrete Ergebnisse?

2. Wenn ja, hat „der Mitgliedstaat" alle Auflagen zur Zufriedenheit erfüllt?

3. Wenn nein, wie viel Zeit wird die Aufarbeitung noch beanspruchen?

4. Konnten alle Unregelmäßigkeiten geklärt werden? Wenn nein, wie hoch ist die verbleibende Summe fraglicher Gelder?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(22. April 2013)

Wie die Kommission in ihrer Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage E-7467/12 ([1]) ausgeführt hat, hat sie die Unterlagen im Zusammenhang mit dem Abschluss des Programmplanungszeitraums 2000-2006 des Europäischen Fonds für Regionalentwicklung in der Region Sizilien geprüft.

Nachdem die sizilianischen Regionalbehörden am 13. Februar 2013 die aktualisierten Unterlagen, insbesondere die Anhänge zum endgültigen Durchführungsbericht und die festgestellten Unregelmäßigkeiten übermittelt haben, nimmt die Kommission derzeit die abschließenden Prüfungen vor, deren Ergebnisse einschließlich eventueller Unregelmäßigkeiten in Kürze vorliegen werden.

In Bezug auf den Europäischen Sozialfonds hat die Kommission den italienischen Behörden im Januar 2013 ein Abschlussschreiben zugesandt. Um die Unregelmäßigkeiten zu bereinigen, hat die Kommission vorgeschlagen, den ESF-Teil des Programms 2000-2006 zu kürzen. Die italienischen Behörden haben zwei Monate Zeit, um hierzu Stellung zu nehmen. Im Falle einer Ablehnung des Vorschlags wird die Kommission zu einer Anhörung einladen und kann eine Finanzkorrektur beschließen. Ein solcher Beschluss bedeutet keine Einziehung bereits gezahlter Mittel.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002242/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Sicily facing bankruptcy

In its answer of 25 September 2012 (E-007467/2012), the Commission explains that on programme closure, it 'verifies [that] all irregularities have been duly addressed by the Member State'.

1. What is the state of play of these reports? Are proper results already available?

2. If so, has the 'Member State' satisfactorily fulfilled all conditions?

3. If not, how much more time will be needed?

4. Was it possible to clarify all irregularities? If not, how large is the remaining sum of money in question?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

As stated in its answer to Question E-7467/12 ([1]), the Commission has examined the documents relating to the closure of the 2000-2006 programming period for the European Regional Development Fund for the Region of Sicily.

Following the submission of updated documents by the Sicilian regional authorities on 13 February 2013, in particular the annexes to the final implementation report, and in view of the irregularities detected, the Commission is now finalising its checks, and the results thereof, including any irregularities, will be available soon.

For the European Social Fund (ESF), the Commission sent a closure letter to the Italian authorities in January 2013. In order to overcome the irregularities, the Commission has proposed a reduction of the ESF part of the 2000-2006 programme. The Italian authorities have two months to send their observations. In case of disagreement, the Commission will organise a hearing and may proceed with a financial correction decision. Any such decision will not entail any recovery of funds already paid.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002243/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Faktisches „Verbot" von E-Zigaretten

Der Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie zur Angleichung der Rechts- und Verwaltungsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten über die Herstellung, die Aufmachung und den Verkauf von Tabakerzeugnissen und verwandten Erzeugnissen sieht eine Reduktion des Nikotingehalts bei E-Zigaretten und deren Behandlung als „Arzneimittel" vor.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass die Einordnung der E-Zigarette als „Arzneimittel" stark umstritten ist und es auch durchaus Fakten gibt, die für eine Definition als Genussmittel sprechen?

2. Wie gedenkt die Kommission mit der Tatsache umzugehen, dass E-Zigaretten für viele Verbraucher als gesündere und sozial verträglichere Alternative zur Zigarette fungieren, dies jedoch nun mit der niedrigen Tabakobergrenze unterbunden wird?

3. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, um einem faktischen „Verbot" von E-Zigaretten entgegenzuwirken, um unbillige Konsequenzen zu vermeiden (Verlust von Arbeitsplätzen/Marktanteilen, Rückumstiege von Verbrauchern auf Zigaretten)?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(5. April 2013)

Die Verkaufszahlen von E-Zigaretten sind in den letzten Jahren erheblich gestiegen; dabei werden sie oft ohne ausreichende Kontrolle in Verkehr gebracht. Die Mitgliedstaaten stufen E-Zigaretten unterschiedlich ein: In den meisten Ländern gelten sie als Arzneimittel, in einigen dagegen als Verbraucherprodukte oder Tabakerzeugnisse. Dies führt zu einer Fragmentierung des Marktes und erfordert Maßnahmen auf EU-Ebene.

Dem Vorschlag für eine überarbeitete Tabakrichtlinie zufolge können E-Zigaretten, wenn ihr Nikotingehalt einen bestimmten Höchstwert überschreitet, unter der Voraussetzung in Verkehr gebracht werden, dass sie im jeweiligen Einzelfall als Arzneimittel zugelassen sind. Die Nikotinhöchstgehalte wurden anhand des Nikotingehalts bei Nikotinersatztherapieprodukten ermittelt, deren Inverkehrbringen bereits von Mitgliedstaaten genehmigt wurde.

Diese Bestimmung stellt unter anderem einen Anreiz zur Forschung, Innovation und Entwicklung von Produkten dar, für die eine Risiko-Nutzen-Bilanz aufgestellt worden ist und die besser dazu geeignet sind, Raucher zum Aufhören zu bewegen, als die derzeit für Verbraucher erhältlichen E-Zigaretten. E-Zigaretten mit einem Nikotingehalt unterhalb des Höchstwerts können als Verbraucherprodukte in Verkehr gebracht werden, sofern sie mit gesundheitsbezogenen Warnhinweisen entsprechend dem Vorschlag für eine überarbeitete Tabakrichtlinie versehen sind.

Nach Einschätzung der Kommission bringen die vorgeschlagenen Maßnahmen keine negativen Beschäftigungseffekte in der EU mit sich.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002243/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: De facto ban on e-cigarettes

The proposal for a directive on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products provides for a reduction in the nicotine level of e-cigarettes and for their treatment as 'medicinal products'.

1. Is the Commission aware that classifying e-cigarettes as a 'medicinal product' is highly controversial and that there are good reasons to view them as stimulants?

2. How does the Commission intend to address the fact that many consumers treat e-cigarettes as a healthier and more socially responsible alternative to cigarettes, but that the former are to be prohibited by way of a low tobacco limit?

3. Is the Commission planning measures to offset a de facto ban on e-cigarettes in order to avoid such unfair consequences as job losses, loss of market share and consumers going back to smoking cigarettes?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The sales of electronic cigarettes have increased substantially in recent years and the products are often placed on the market without appropriate control. Member States take different approaches on how to regulate electronic cigarettes. The majority of Member States treats them as pharmaceutical products, while others treat them as consumer products, or as tobacco products. This leads to fragmentation of the market and requires action at the EU level.

According to the proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive, when electronic cigarettes contain levels of nicotine above certain thresholds, they would be allowed on the market provided they have been authorised as medicinal products on a case by case basis. The nicotine thresholds have been identified by considering the nicotine content of nicotine replacement therapies that have already received a marketing authorisation by Member States.

One effect of this rule will be to encourage research, innovation and development of products, which have undergone a prior risk/benefit balance and which are more adapted for smoking cessation than the current consumer electronic cigarettes on the market. Electronic cigarettes below the thresholds can be brought on the market as consumer products provided they carry health warnings as defined in the proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive.

The Commission does not expect that the measures proposed would negatively impact on employment in the EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002244/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Effect of REACH legislation on amateur beadmaking

Can the Commission confirm that regulation (EU) No 836/2012 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) as regards lead, will severely restrict the availability of soda glass for artisan flameworkers?

Can the Commission also tell me if it is aware of the lack of awareness of these restrictions among manufacturers, many of whom are operating outside of the EU and offering these supplies to very small-scale craftworkers within the EU?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 836/2012 ([1]) restricts the placing on the market and use of lead and its compounds above 0.05% by weight concentration only in jewellery articles. By way of derogation, this restriction does not apply to crystal glass ([2]).

Therefore, soda glass containing lead can be used by artisan flameworkers provided that jewellery articles or their individual parts made with this type of glass comply with the concentration limit for lead provided in the REACH restriction or provided that this type of glass falls under the definition of crystal glass due to its amount of lead.

Enforcement of the REACH Regulation is the primary responsibility of Member States authorities through appropriate inspections, including imposition of penalties in case of non-compliance. However, the REACH Regulation has also established a Forum for Exchange of Information on Enforcement under the auspices of the European Chemicals Agency whose task is to highlight problems and identify enforcement strategies. Furthermore, the Commission is currently working more closely with the Member States customs authorities to raise awareness of the enforcement of the REACH restrictions upon import. However, soda glass as such is not subject to any restriction under REACH.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 836/2012 of 18 September 2012 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Registration, Evaluation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) as regards lead.

([2]) Crystal glass as defined in Annex I to Council Directive 69/493/EEC.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-002245/13
za Svet
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(27. februar 2013)

Zadeva: Zaveza o preprečevanju izogibanja davkom

Na februarskem srečanju skupine G20 v Moskvi in v poznejšem pismu časniku Financial Times so se finančni ministri Nemčije, Velike Britanije in Francije zavezali, da bodo ustrezno ukrepali, da bi preprečili izogibanje davkom. Priznali so, da postaja agresivno davčno načrtovanje vse hujši problem, in se strinjali, da bi usklajeno ukrepanje na mednarodni ravni multinacionalne družbe odvrnilo od tega, da se s pomočjo globalizacije izogibajo plačilu poštenega deleža davkov. Potrdili so tudi, da ukrepi na državni ravni sami po sebi ne bi imeli želenega učinka in da so potrebne spremembe zakonodaje, tako da bo izogibanje plačilu davka postalo nezakonito v mednarodnem merilu.

Ker je to zelo dobro znamenje, ki priča, da se politična volja očitno krepi, želim Svet prositi, naj v imenu omenjenih ministrov odgovori na naslednja vprašanja:

1. Če finančni ministri s to zavezo mislijo resno, kdaj bo Svet sprejel končno odločitev o nerešenih vprašanjih v zvezi z davki v EU – kot so direktiva o obdavčevanju prihrankov, skupna konsolidirana osnova za davek od dobička pravnih oseb in mehanizem za hiter odziv v primeru goljufij z DDV – in tako zakonodajne predloge pretvoril v ukrepe?

2. Svet je že priznal, da je ukrepanje na mednarodni ravni ključnega pomena. Ali meni, da je usklajeno delovanje pomembno tudi na evropski ravni, ne le zaradi učinkovitejšega delovanja enotnega trga, temveč tudi zaradi večje pravičnosti naših nacionalnih davčnih sistemov?

3. Glede na to, da EU zaradi davčnih utaj in izogibanja davkom po ocenah vsako leto izgubi nezaslišanih 1 bilijon EUR, ali se Svet strinja, da bi se morale države članice zavezati velikopoteznemu, vendar stvarnemu cilju, da bodo to davčno vrzel do leta 2020 prepolovile, kar bo postopoma ustvarilo nove davčne prihodke, ne da bi bilo treba zvišati davke?

4. Če bo Komisija predlagala novo in obsežno zakonodajno strategijo za preprečevanje davčnih goljufij, davčnih utaj in davčnih oaz, ali jo bo Svet podprl?

5. Ali bo Svet spodbudil države članice, naj dve nedavni priporočili Komisije glede agresivnega davčnega načrtovanja in davčnih oaz uvrstijo na vrh seznama prednostnih nalog?

Odgovor
(15. maj 2013)

Svet si dejavno prizadeva za reševanje problema davčnih utaj in izmikanja davkom.

Evropski svet je v svojih sklepih z dne 14. in 15. marca 2013 (dok. EUCO 23/13) opozoril, da so potrebna vnovična prizadevanja za učinkovitejše pobiranje davkov in preprečevanje izmikanja davkom, med drugim na podlagi sporazumov o obdavčevanju prihrankov, sklenjenih s tretjimi državami, in takojšnjega napredka pri reševanju problema goljufij na področju DDV. Priznal je, da je potrebno tesno sodelovanje z OECD in G-20, da bi oblikovali mednarodno dogovorjene standarde za preprečevanje erozije osnove in preusmeritve dobička ter da bo EU v ta namen usklajevala stališča.

Poleg tega je Svet v poročilu z dne 23. novembra 2012 o davčnih vprašanjih, namenjenem Evropskemu svetu (dok. 16327/12), menil, da je ukrepanje na ravni držav članic bistvenega pomena v boju proti davčnim utajam in izmikanju davkom in da so na ravni EU potrebna skupna prizadevanja na področjih, kjer bi to prineslo dodano vrednost, povečalo usklajenost in učinkovitost pobiranja davkov ter pomagalo odpraviti vrzeli.

Evropski svet je v sklepih z dne 13. februarja 2013 (dok. 6083/13) opozoril, da bi lahko zasnova in struktura davčnih sistemov znatno prispevala k izboljšanju makroekonomskih rezultatov. Države članice je tudi pozval, naj razmislijo o ukrepih za boljše spoštovanje davčnih predpisov in učinkovitejše pobiranje davkov.

Kar zadeva tekoče delo, Svet in pripravljalna telesa Sveta trenutno preučujejo predloge za revizijo direktive o obdavčitvi prihrankov, skupno konsolidirano osnovo za davek od dohodkov pravnih oseb (CCCTB), mehanizem za hiter odziv ter predlog za mehanizem obrnjene davčne obveznosti za nekatere dobave blaga in storitve.

Poleg tega skupina Sveta za kodeks ravnanja (obdavčitev podjetij) in njena podskupina ocenjujeta težave, ki jih povzročajo razlike med davčnimi sistemi, zlasti udeleženski konzorcijski krediti in hibridni subjekti.

Svet razpravlja tudi o novih pobudah Komisije. Tako je 13. novembra 2012 sprejel sklepe, v katerih je poudaril, da je v skladu z zahtevami, izrečenimi na zasedanju Evropskega sveta junija 2012, in navedbami iz poročila Sveta o tem vprašanju (dok. 11802/12 FISC 90) potrebno odločnejše ukrepanje proti davčnim utajam in izmikanju davkom.

Pozdravil je sporočilo Komisije iz julija 2012 (dok. 12108/12 FISC 96) o konkretnih načinih za krepitev boja proti davčnim utajam in izmikanju davkom, vključno v zvezi s tretjimi državami. Svet in pripravljalna telesa Sveta trenutno preučujejo akcijski načrt Komisije za krepitev boja proti davčnim utajam in izmikanju davkom ter priporočila o agresivnem davčnem načrtovanju in dobrem upravljanju v davčnih zadevah.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002245/13
to the Council
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Commitment to halt tax avoidance

At the February meeting of G20 in Moscow and in the consequent letter to *Financial Times*, the finance ministers of Germany, Britain and France vowed to take necessary action to tackle tax avoidance. By acknowledging the pressing problem of aggressive tax planning, they agreed coordinated action on an international level should stop multinational companies using globalisation as a tool to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. Furthermore, they confirmed that national measures alone would not deliver the desired effects and that laws needed to be changed to make tax avoidance illegal on an international scale.

While this is more than a positive sign and an indication that political momentum is clearly building, I would like the Council, on behalf of the finance ministers concerned, to answer the following questions:

1. If the finance ministers are serious about their commitments, when will the Council start closing all open dossiers regarding tax matters in the EU — such as the European Savings Taxation Directive, the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB), a Quick Reaction Measure (QRM) against VAT fraud — turning legislative proposals into actions?

2. Acknowledging that international action is crucial, does the Council also believe that coordinated action on a European level is vital not only to guarantee the more effective functioning of the Single Market but also to reaffirm the fairness of our national taxation systems?

3. Considering that the EU loses an estimated and scandalous EUR 1 trillion to tax fraud and tax avoidance every year, does the Council agree that it is urgent for the Member States to commit to an ambitious but realistic target of halving the tax gap by 2020, which would gradually generate new tax revenue without raising tax rates?

4. If the Commission proposes a new extensive legislative strategy to tackle tax fraud, tax evasion and tax havens, will the Council commit to it?

5. Will the Council encourage the Member States to place the two recent Recommendations from the Commission, covering the issue of aggressive tax planning and tax havens, high on their agenda?

Reply
(15 May 2013)

The Council has been active in tackling tax fraud and evasion.

In its conclusions of 14-15 March 2013 (doc. EUCO 23/13), the European Council indicated that renewed efforts were needed to improve the efficiency of tax collection and to tackle tax evasion, including through savings taxation agreements with third countries and rapid progress in tackling the problem of VAT fraud. It acknowledged that close cooperation with the OECD and the G20 was needed to develop internationally agreed standards for the prevention of base erosion and profit shifting and that the EU would coordinate its positions to that end.

Furthermore, in its report of 23 November 2012 on tax issues to the European Council (doc. 16327/12), the Council noted that action at the level of Member States was essential to fight tax fraud and evasion and that common efforts ought to be made at EU level in areas where this would add value, increase coherence and efficiency of tax collection and help to close loopholes.

In its conclusions of 13 February 2013 (doc 6083/13), the European Council recalled that the design and structure of tax systems could contribute importantly to enhancing macroeconomic performance. It also invited Member States to consider measures to improve tax compliance and the efficiency of tax collection.

As regards ongoing work, the Council and its preparatory bodies are currently examining the proposals for the revision of the savings taxation directive, for the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB), for the quick reaction mechanism, as well as the proposal for the reverse charge mechanism on certain supplies of goods and services.

In addition, the Council's Code of Conduct Group (Business Taxation) and its subgroup are analysing the problems created by mismatches between tax systems, in particular profit participating loans and hybrid entities.

Lastly, the Council has been discussing new initiatives from the Commission. On 13 November 2012 the Council adopted conclusions which underlined the importance of intensifying action against tax fraud and evasion as requested by the European Council in June 2012 and set out in its report on this issue (doc. 11802/12 FISC 90).

It welcomed the communication presented by the Commission in July 2012 (doc. 12108/12 FISC 96) on concrete ways to reinforce the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion, including in relation to third countries. The Council and its preparatory bodies are currently examining the Commission's Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion as well as the recommendations on aggressive tax planning and good governance.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-002246/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(27. februar 2013)

Zadeva: Zaveza o preprečevanju izogibanja davkom

Na februarskem srečanju skupine G20 v Moskvi in v poznejšem pismu časniku Financial Times so se finančni ministri Nemčije, Velike Britanije in Francije zavezali, da bodo ustrezno ukrepali, da bi preprečili izogibanje davkom. Priznali so, da postaja agresivno davčno načrtovanje vse hujši problem, in se strinjali, da bi usklajeno ukrepanje na mednarodni ravni multinacionalne družbe odvrnilo od tega, da se s pomočjo globalizacije izogibajo plačilu poštenega deleža davkov. Potrdili so tudi, da ukrepi na državni ravni sami po sebi ne bi imeli želenega učinka in da so potrebne spremembe zakonodaje, tako da bo izogibanje plačilu davka postalo nezakonito v mednarodnem merilu.

Ker je to zelo dobro znamenje, ki priča, da se politična volja očitno krepi, želim Komisijo prositi, naj se odzove na besede evropskih finančnih ministrov in odgovori na naslednji vprašanji:

1. Glede na to, da EU zaradi davčnih utaj in izogibanja davkom po ocenah vsako leto izgubi nezaslišanih 1 bilijon EUR, ali se Komisija strinja, da bi se morale države članice zavezati velikopoteznemu, vendar stvarnemu cilju, da bodo to davčno vrzel do leta 2020 prepolovile, kar bo postopoma ustvarilo nove davčne prihodke, ne da bi bilo treba zvišati davke?

2. Kdaj lahko pričakujemo novo in obsežno zakonodajno strategijo za preprečevanje davčnih goljufij, davčnih utaj in davčnih oaz, glede na to, da se Parlament že samoiniciativno ukvarja s to temo in da so se finančni ministri na zadnjem srečanju skupine G20 na mednarodni ravni zavezali, da se bodo borili proti izogibanju davkom?

Odgovor komisarja Algirdasa Šemete v imenu Komisije
(12. april 2013)

Komisija soglaša, da je treba na področju davčnih utaj in izogibanja davkom nujno ukrepati. Zato je prepričana, da bi se morale države članice zavezati ambicioznemu akcijskemu načrtu, ki ga je predlagala decembra 2012, namesto da si zastavljajo nejasne cilje, katerih doseganje je zelo težko preverljivo.

Glede vprašanja, ali namerava Komisija predložiti ukrepe za preprečevanje davčnih goljufij, davčnih utaj in davčnih oaz ter kdaj namerava to storiti, poslanko napotujemo na sporočilo z dne 6. decembra 2012 z naslovom Akcijski načrt za okrepljeni boj proti davčnim goljufijam in davčnim utajam ([1]) in dvoje priporočil ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final (Akcijski načrt za okrepljeni boj proti davčnim goljufijam in davčnim utajam) z dne 6. decembra 2012.
([2]) C(2012) 8805 final (Priporočilo Komisije glede ukrepov, namenjenih spodbujanju tretjih držav k uporabi minimalnih standardov dobrega upravljanja v davčnih zadevah) in C(2012) 8806 final (Priporočilo Komisije o agresivnem davčnem načrtovanju).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002246/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Commitment to halt tax avoidance

At the February meeting of G20 in Moscow and in the consequent letter to *Financial Times*, the finance ministers of Germany, Britain and France vowed to take necessary action to tackle tax avoidance. By acknowledging the pressing problem of aggressive tax planning, they agreed coordinated action on an international level should stop multinational companies using globalisation as a tool to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. Furthermore, they confirmed that national measures alone would not deliver the desired effects and that laws needed to be changed to make tax avoidance illegal on an international scale.

While this is more than a positive sign and an indication that political momentum is clearly building, I would like the Commission, in response to the words of European finance ministers, to answer the following questions:

1. Considering that the EU loses an estimated and scandalous EUR 1 trillion to tax fraud and tax avoidance every year, does the Commission agree that it is urgent for the Member States to commit to an ambitious but realistic target of halving the tax gap by 2020, which would gradually generate new tax revenue without raising tax rates?

2. In light of the current initiative work done on the topic of tax fraud, tax evasion and tax havens in Parliament, and the international commitment to halt tax avoidance by finance ministers at the latest G20 meeting, when can we expect the Commission's proposals for a new extensive legislative strategy to tackle tax fraud, tax evasion and tax havens?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission agrees that there is an urgent need for action to tackle tax fraud and tax avoidance. The Commission therefore believes that Member States should commit to the ambitious Action Plan put forward by the Commission in December 2012 rather than committing to unclear targets against which progress is very difficult to measure.

Concerning the question if and when the Commission will come forward with proposals to tackle tax fraud, tax evasion and tax havens, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its communication of 6 December 2012 on an Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion ([1]) and two Recommendations ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012)722 final (An Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion) of 6.12.2012.
([2]) C(2012)8805 final (Commission Recommendation regarding measures intended to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters) and C(2012)8806 final (Commission Recommendation on aggressive tax planning).

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-002247/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(27 februari 2013)

Angående: UEFI säkerhetsstart och Microsoft som s.k. single point of trust

Den 26 oktober 2012 beslutade sig alla hårdvarutillverkare som har produkter som är kompatibla med Microsofts operativsystem Windows 8 för att använda sig av ett system för säkerhetsstart (secure boot) som enbart tillverkas och används av företaget Microsoft, och som kallas UEFI säkerhetsstart.

Trots att standarden inte innehåller specifika bestämmelser, finns det för vissa slutanvändare som köper hårdvara med denna säkerhetsstartfunktion installerad ingen möjlighet att deaktivera säkerhetsstarten, och därför inte heller någon möjlighet att använda eller installera annan mjukvara på maskinen utan att först köpa en krypteringsnyckel från Microsoft.

Detta gör Microsoft till s.k. *single point of trust* för slutanvändaren. Anser kommissionen med hänsyn till det att Microsoft är en betrodd e-tjänsteleverantör i enlighet med definitionen i förslaget till förordning om elektronisk identifiering och betrodda tjänster för elektroniska transaktioner på den inre marknaden?

Anser kommissionen i så fall fortfarande att Microsoft inte omfattas av den föreslagna begränsningen i skäl 17 i förordningen, med tanke på att slutanvändare och mjukvaruförsäljare inte fritt kan välja en annan leverantör av betrodda tjänster än Microsoft?

Svar från Neelie Kroes på kommissionens vägnar
(30 april 2013)

Kommissionen är medveten om säkerhetskraven i Microsoft Windows 8, bland annat kravet att använda gränssnittet UEFI (*Unified Extensible Firmware Interface*), som förvaltas av UEFI-forumet och är tillgängligt för alla företag.

Enligt artikel 3 i den föreslagna förordningen om eletronisk identifiering och betrodda tjänster för elektroniska transaktioner på den inre marknaden (KOM(2013) 238/2) ska förordningen tillämpas för tillhandahållare av betrodda tjänster som är etablerade i unionen. Ur denna synvinkel är det faktum att Microsoft är en *single point of trust* för slutanvändaren irrelevant.

När det gäller tjänster som avser säkerhetsstart, som är kopplade till produkter i motsats till personer, bör Microsoft inte betraktas som en tillhandahållare av betrodda tjänster enligt definitionen i förslaget.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002247/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: UEFI Secure Boot and Microsoft as a single point of trust

On 26 October 2012, all hardware manufacturers whose products are compatible with Microsoft's Windows 8 operating system chose to adopt a system of secure booting created and implemented by Microsoft known as UEFI Secure Boot.

Although the standard does not contain specific provisions, for some end consumers who buy hardware with this secure boot solution installed, there is no option to deactivate the secure boot, and therefore no option to use or install other software on the device, other than by acquiring an encrypted key from Microsoft.

Since this makes Microsoft a single point of trust for end consumers, does the Commission consider Microsoft to be an electronic trust service provider in accordance with the definition given in the proposal for a regulation on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market?

If so, given that end consumers and software providers have no voluntary or free choice to pick a trust service provider other than Microsoft, does the Commission still believe that Microsoft falls outside the proposed limitation laid down in Recital 17 of the regulation?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the Microsoft Windows 8 security requirements, including the necessity of using the Unified Extensible Firmware Interface, which is managed by the UEFI forum and open to all companies.

Article 3 of the proposed Regulation on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (COM(2010) 238/2) states that it will apply to trust service providers established in the Union. From this point of view, the fact whether Microsoft is a single point of trust for end consumers is irrelevant.

In addition, with regard to the services related to secure booting, which is linked to devices and not to persons, Microsoft should not be considered as a trust service provider according to the definition of the proposal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002248/13
to the Commission
Stephen Hughes (S&D)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: European Investment Bank — promotional literature

In its promotional literature, the European Investment Bank (EIB) states that the projects it supports 'contribute to furthering EU policy objectives'.

Does the Commission review the work of the EIB to see if this statement is in fact true? If not, why not?

The EIB states that 'it offers technical assistance to support project preparation and maintenance, particularly in countries that have recently joined the EU, or are applicant states'.

Can the Commission assure Parliament that when these actions take place, all relevant EU directives are respected? If not, why not?

The EIB states that it is strongly committed to 'integrating environmental and social standards into its business activities'.

Is the Commission aware of what internal structures and procedures exist inside the EIB to achieve this policy objective?

As guardian of the Treaties and of the *acquis* communitaire, what action is the Commission taking to ensure proper governance, transparency and accountability, for itself and for its counterpart the EIB, in the course of their joint activities?

Does the Commission ever make any checks, or take any actions, to ensure that the EIB does not lend any money to organisations that do not respect EU values? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The EIB has an autonomous governance system established under its Statute, which is annexed to the EU Treaty.

The Commission's role in the governance of the EIB is enshrined in the EIB Statute. A member of the Board of Directors is nominated by the Commission. Moreover, in line with Article 19 of the Statute, the Commission provides an opinion on the conformity of project applications submitted to the EIB with relevant EU legislation and policies, on the basis of the information provided by EIB at an early stage of project appraisal. Where the Commission delivers an unfavourable opinion, the Board can only approve the project unanimously, the director nominated by the Commission abstaining.

Ultimately, the EIB is responsible for satisfying itself that, on the basis of its own assessment, its investments comply with applicable EU policies and legislation. To this end, the EIB has built up strong expertise in fields such as environment and procurement.

In addition to these institutional links, the Commission is working closely with the EIB to implement EU policies and has strongly supported the recent EIB capital increase in order to enhance the Bank's capacity to contribute to growth and employment. The Commission and the EIB have developed joint instruments to promote key policy areas like research, transport and regional cohesion. The implementation of these instruments is in line with EU budgetary rules and subject to the usual control mechanisms, including those implemented under the Tripartite Agreement between the Court of Auditors, the EIB and the Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002249/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Insurance scheme in the common agricultural policy

Does the Commission plan to extend the CAP insurance scheme to include fodder crops? What are the Commission's reasons for confining the current scheme to the fruit, vegetable and vineyard sectors? Given the prevalence of unpredictable weather conditions in Europe over recent years, does the Commission intend to extend the harvest insurance scheme to crops affected by severely adverse weather conditions?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The current CAP has a number of instruments which play a role in risk management, including insurance schemes. The sCMO for the fruit and vegetables and wine sectors have particular provisions that allow for harvest insurance, among other actions covered under crisis prevention and management measures of the operational programmes of the producer organisations for the fruit and vegetables sector or national envelops for the wine sector. Other sectors under the sCMO do not have such provisions. Currently Member States have the option to offer insurance for other sectors through Article 68 of the Direct Payments Regulation 73/2009, but uptake of this provision has been low.

Therefore the Commission has proposed that the reformed CAP will contain a new toolkit for Risk Management within Pillar II, building on the current available instruments to subsidise insurance. Specifically Articles 37 and 38 of the Rural Development proposal foresees support for crop, animal and plant insurance contracts which cover losses caused by an adverse climatic event, animal or plant disease, or pest infestation and may be combined with other measures aimed at risk reduction and prevention. Delivery through the second pillar allows Member States to address meteorological risks in a flexible way, in terms of budget allocation, targeting and choice of appropriate risk management instrument, taking account of their own climatic conditions and sectors most at risk.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002250/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Sostanze pericolose per calzature d'importazione

Da un'indagine effettuata nel 2010 dall'Associazione Tessile e Salute su calzature di importazione in pelle o cuoio è risultato che il 50 per cento di queste contenesse cromo VI, agente sicuramente cancerogeno. Dall'analisi e dagli studi condotti dall'Associazione sull'intero territorio nazionale nel corso degli ultimi anni, emerge che circa il 7/8 per cento delle patologie dermatologiche sono dovute a prodotti tessili e calzature importati.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è consapevole delle reazioni allergiche procurate dalle sostanze chimiche usate e rese evidenti dall'indagine e dagli studi effettuati dall'Associazione in questione;

2. quali iniziative intende intraprendere per tutelare la salute dei consumatori e dare un'informazione trasparente in ordine alla sicurezza del prodotto importato e della sua funzionalità;

3. se ritiene che per informare ed educare il consumatore potrebbe svolgere una funzione positiva l'introduzione obbligatoria del marchio d'origine?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2013)

La Commissione ha ricevuto dalle autorità degli Stati membri preposte alla vigilanza del mercato e alle dogane delle notifiche per il tramite del sistema di allarme rapido RAPEX relativo ai prodotti di consumo diversi dagli alimenti ([1]) sul tenore di cromo (VI) di certe calzature e di certi indumenti. L'indagine dell'Associazione tessili e salute menzionata dall'onorevole deputata non è però a conoscenza della Commissione.

Attualmente non esistono valori limite europei, ma vi sono certi valori limite nazionali o standard per la presenza di questa sostanza chimica nei tessuti e nelle calzature. Far rispettare tali limiti rientra nelle responsabilità delle autorità summenzionate. Esse intervengono in relazione ai prodotti non conformi identificati sul mercato al fine di proteggere la salute dei consumatori e tali informazioni sono quindi condivise per il tramite del sistema RAPEX con le autorità degli altri paesi al fine di assicurare un appropriato follow-up.

Una proposta di restrizione unionale della commercializzazione di articoli in pelle contenenti cromo (VI) al di sopra del limite piuttosto basso di 3 mg/kg ([2]) è stata presentata nel gennaio 2012 dalle autorità danesi sulla base del regolamento REACH ([3]). I pareri dei comitati scientifici dell'ECHA ([4]) sono stati recentemente adottati e verranno fra breve inviati alla Commissione europea per una decisione definitiva.

La Commissione ha proposto il rafforzamento delle regole in tema di tracciabilità per tutti i prodotti di consumo, compresa l'indicazione d'origine, nel suo pacchetto «Sicurezza dei prodotti e vigilanza del mercato» adottato il 13 febbraio 2013. Ciò dovrebbe contribuire a migliorare la sorveglianza della sicurezza dei prodotti nell'interesse dei consumatori nell'UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.echa.europa.eu/web/guest/previous-consultations-on-restriction-proposals/-/substance/413/search/+/term.
([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1907/2006 concernente la registrazione, la valutazione, l'autorizzazione e la restrizione delle sostanze chimiche (REACH).
([4]) Agenzia europea per le sostanze chimiche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002250/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Hazardous substances in imported footwear

An investigation carried out in 2010 by the Associazione Tessile e Salute (Association for Textiles and Health) into hide or leather footwear revealed that 50% of the items of footwear tested contained chromium VI, a known carcinogen. The tests and studies carried out by the association throughout Italy in recent years have shown that between 7 and 8% of skin diseases are caused by imported clothing and footwear.

1. Is the Commission aware of the allergic reactions caused by chemicals used in the manufacture of footwear and brought to light by the investigation and tests carried out by the Association for Textiles and Health?

2. What steps does it plan to take in order to protect consumers' health and provide them with reliable information concerning the safety and usability of imported footwear?

3. Does it agree that the mandatory introduction of a designation of origin could help to keep consumers properly informed and make them aware of the risks involved in purchasing imported footwear?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission has received notifications from Member States' market surveillance and customs authorities through the RAPEX rapid alert system for non-food consumer products ([1]) on the chromium(VI) content of some footwear and clothing. However, the investigation of the Association for Textiles and Health, which the Honourable Member refers to, has not been brought to the Commission's attention.

There are currently no European limits but certain national limits or standards exist for the presence of this chemical in textiles and footwear. Their enforcement is the responsibility of the abovementioned authorities. They will take action on any non-compliant product they identify on the market, in order to protect consumers' health, and this information is then shared through the RAPEX system for others to be able to give follow-up as appropriate.

A proposal for an EU-wide restriction on the placing on the market of leather articles containing chromium(VI) above the low limit of 3 mg/kg ([2]) was submitted in January 2012 by the Danish authorities, in accordance with REACH ([3]). The opinions of the ECHA ([4]) Scientific Committees have been recently adopted and will soon be submitted to the European Commission for a final decision.

The Commission has proposed reinforced traceability rules for all consumer products, including an indication of their origin, in its Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package adopted on 13 February 2013. This should help improving the surveillance over the safety of products for consumers in the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.echa.europa.eu/web/guest/previous-consultations-on-restriction-proposals/-/substance/413/search/+/term.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH).
([4]) European Chemicals Agency.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002251/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Cavalli svedesi mancanti

L'«Equine Industry Association» svedese ha effettuato una ricerca da cui risulta che dal 2000 sono spariti dai censimenti circa 100.000 cavalli, una media di oltre 8.000 cavalli all'anno. Le statistiche dicono che ogni anno ne dovrebbero morire circa 22.000, mentre vengono registrati in media 14.000 decessi. Le spiegazioni possibili, secondo gli inquirenti, sono più di una: o gli animali vivono più a lungo o i loro proprietari hanno omesso la loro registrazione oppure i cavalli potrebbero essere finiti in macelli al di fuori della Svezia, dove il loro valore commerciale è ben più alto. Il sospetto è, comunque, che queste carni siano state vendute proprio a quei gruppi alimentari che infarciscono, senza denunciarlo, la carne bovina con carne equina.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se ne sa qualcosa;

2. se è disposta ad aprire indagini per collaborare con la Svezia alla ricerca dei cavalli mancanti;

3. se ha il timore che la recente scoperta di carne equina presente in prodotti dichiarati come carne bovina in realtà sia la conferma di una commercio illegale che dura dal 2000;

4. in tal caso, quali iniziative intende intraprendere per garantire la sicurezza alimentare e evitare frodi così macroscopiche?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2013)

1. La Commissione non è stata informata ufficialmente del recente studio di Hästnäringens nationella stiftelse. Tuttavia, le informazioni disponibili fanno pensare che il sistema TRACES della Commissione sia stato usato quale fonte di dati.

La qualità degli allevamenti equini e degli sport equestri in Svezia accresce la probabilità che i cavalli siano trasportati in altri Stati membri alle condizioni zoosanitarie che si applicano ai cavalli registrati. Inoltre la Svezia consente ai cavalli da corsa e da competizione di viaggiare senza certificazione sanitaria verso la Danimarca, la Finlandia e la Norvegia conformemente all'articolo 6 della direttiva 2009/156/CE ([1]). La legislazione dell'UE non prevede che questi movimenti siano registrati in TRACES e alcuni dei cavalli possono eventualmente morire o essere macellati fuori della Svezia.

2.-3. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni che facciano pensare che un traffico illecito di cavalli dalla Svezia sia legato al recente scandalo delle carni equine. Tuttavia sono in corso indagini in tutti gli Stati membri con la partecipazione di Europol.

4. Sulla base dei risultati di audit condotti negli Stati membri che hanno rivelato carenze nell'attuazione dell'attuale sistema di tracciabilità dei cavalli la Commissione ha preparato un piano d'azione che prevede la registrazione obbligatoria dei passaporti equini su una base dati nazionale centrale nonché regole più rigorose volte a ridurre il numero degli enti che rilasciano i passaporti.

([1]) GU L 192 del 23.7.2010, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002251/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Sweden's missing horses

It appears from research carried out by the Swedish national equine industry association that some 100 000 horses have disappeared from the records since 2000; in other words, on average over 8 000 horses per year are unaccounted for. For, whereas statistics suggest that around 22 000 horses should die per year, on average only 14 000 such deaths are recorded. The researchers list a number of possible explanations for the discrepancy: horses might be living longer, owners might be failing to register their deaths, or the animals might have ended up being slaughtered outside Sweden, where their commercial value is considerably higher. There is a strong suspicion, however, that meat from the animals in question has been sold to the food companies which have been secretly incorporating horsemeat in their 'beef' products.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Does the Commission intend to launch an investigation to help Sweden trace the missing horses?

3. Does the Commission suspect that the recent discovery of horsemeat in products labelled as beef is evidence of an illicit trade that has been going on since 2000?

4. If so, what action does the Commission intend to take to guarantee food safety and prevent fraud on this massive scale?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

1. The Commission has not been officially informed about the recent study of Hästnäringens nationella stiftelse. However, available information suggests that the Commission's TRACES system was apparently used as a data source.

The quality of horse breeding and sports in Sweden increases the likelihood that horses are transported to other Member States under the animal health conditions for registered horses. In addition, Sweden allows race and competition horses to travel without health certification to Denmark, Finland and Norway in accordance with Article 6 of Directive 2009/156/EC ([1]). EU legislation does not foresee that these movements are recorded in TRACES and some of those horses may eventually die or be slaughtered outside Sweden.

2-3. The Commission has no information suggesting that illicit trade in horses from Sweden was related to the recent horsemeat affair. However, investigations are ongoing in all Member States with the involvement of Europol.

4. Based on the outcome of audits in the Member States that identified shortcomings in the implementation of the current system of traceability of horses, the Commission has prepared an Action Plan that envisages to propose mandatory recording of horse passports in a central national database and more stringent rules for and a reduction in the number of passports issuing bodies.

([1]) OJ L 192, 23.7.2010, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002252/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Energie rinnovabili applicate

Succede nell'industria dell'automobile negli Stati Uniti. Un impianto fotovoltaico di 10 ettari e 9,5 megawatt di potenza, costruito a Chattanooga nel Tennessee, venderà l'energia solare prodotta esclusivamente ad una fabbrica di automobili, coprendo il 12 per cento della sua domanda quando è in piena attività e il 100 per cento durante le pause lavorative. I 113 mila gigawatt solari prodotti ogni anno corrispondono ai consumi di 4 mila famiglie italiane. Un'altra marca automobilistica pare voglia usare il vento anziché il sole per produrre carburante per auto. Con la collaborazione di una società specializzata, realizzerà nel nord della Germania un impianto pilota in cui l'energia eolica verrà utilizzata per produrre idrogeno dall'acqua, che verrà fatto reagire con il biossido di carbonio per ottenere metano in quantità tale da permettere la copertura dei consumi annuali di 1.500 automobili.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se conosce altre iniziative del genere, vale a dire l'applicazione delle energie rinnovabili nei settori produttivi;

2. se è in grado di affermare quanto è il risparmio economico di questi impianti rispetto all'uso dell'energia tradizionale;

3. se sono in corso progetti analoghi nell'UE cofinanziati da fondi comunitari? Quali eventualmente?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2013)

(1) Ogni anno, nell'Unione europea, si realizzano numerosi progetti sull'uso delle energie rinnovabili per contribuire al raggiungimento dell'obiettivo del 20 % nel 2020. La Commissione, tuttavia, non dispone di alcuna informazione circa iniziative specifiche relative ai settori produttivi.

(2) Tutti questi progetti producono elettricità a bassa intensità di carbonio (o calore a bassa intensità di carbonio); l'interesse economico varia a seconda di diversi fattori, quali la disponibilità locale di risorse naturali (vento o livelli di insolazione), i prezzi locali dell'energia e la risposta dei processi industriali, degli edifici e delle abitazioni alla variabilità intrinseca dell'energia solare ed eolica. Se in alcuni casi si può risparmiare rispetto all'utilizzo di combustibili fossili, in altri l'uso di sistemi a energia rinnovabile deve ancora essere sovvenzionato per essere economicamente vantaggioso. La Commissione non dispone dei dati aggregati sui risparmi richiesti dall'onorevole deputato.

(3) In genere i finanziamenti per l'utilizzo delle energie rinnovabili sono stanziati dai programmi di sostegno nazionali, di competenza degli Stati membri. Tuttavia, anche i programmi quadro di ricerca dell'Unione europea che si sono succeduti hanno finanziato tecnologie innovative e progetti dimostrativi ([1]); molti progetti sulle energie rinnovabili hanno anche ricevuto il sostegno del meccanismo di finanziamento con ripartizione dei rischi ([2]) o dei fondi strutturali e di coesione dell'UE ([3]). La prossima generazione di progetti che la Commissione intende sostenere includerà le tecnologie innovative di stoccaggio (elettricità, calore, freddo) per migliorare la sostenibilità economica e la sicurezza delle forniture di energia.

([1]) I programmi quadro di ricerca finanziano progetti sulle energie rinnovabili dal 1982. Nel 2013 l'ultimo programma quadro di ricerca (PQ7) finanzierà progetti per più di 100 milioni di EUR (http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm?pg=energy).

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/funding/funding02_en.htm; per una selezione di progetti cfr. http://www.eib.org/about/press/2007/2007-095-risk-sharing-finance-facility-rsff-contributes-eur-359-million-to-research-and-innovation-with-strong-focus-on-renewable-energy-technologies.htm .

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/search.cfm?LAN=IT&pay=ALL&region=ALL&the=68&type=ALL&per=2&lang=it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002252/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Applied renewable energies

A new 10 hectare solar energy plant with a 9.5 megawatt output capacity has been built in Chattanooga, in the US state of Tennessee. Electricity generated by the plant will be sold exclusively to a car factory and will be sufficient to meet 12% and 100% respectively of the factory's energy needs when the latter is operating at full capacity and during breaks between shifts. The 113 000 gigawatts it will generate each year is equivalent to the amount of energy consumed by 4 000 Italian households. Another carmaker, meanwhile, wants to use wind rather than solar power to produce fuel for cars. In collaboration with a specialist company, it is planning to build a pilot plant in the north of Germany where wind energy will be used to produce hydrogen from water. The hydrogen will then be made to react with carbon dioxide in order to produce enough methane to power 1 500 vehicles for a year.

1. Does the Commission know of any other initiatives in which renewable energy technology is being applied in manufacturing sectors?

2. Can it put a figure on how much money will be saved by using these kinds of plants rather than fossil fuels?

3. Are any similar projects co-financed by the Union under way in the Member States? If so,what are the projects involved?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

1. A high number of projects involving the use of renewable energy is realised in the EU every year contributing to the achievement of the 20% target in 2020. The Commission does, however, not hold any information on projects specifically linked to the manufacturig sector.

2. All such projects supply low carbon electricity (or low carbon heat); the business case varies depending on factors such as local availability of natural resources (wind or irradiation levels), the local energy prices and on how well industrial processes, buildings or homes can deal with the variable nature of the energy generated by the sun and wind. While in some cases this might lead to savings when compared with the use of fossil fuels, in other cases the use of renewable energy based systems might still be in need of support to be economically viable. The Commission does not possess cumulative figures on savings in the way requested.

3. In general support for the use of renewable energy is paid out of national support schemes which fall in the responsibility of Member States. However, innovative technologies and demonstration projects have also been funded out of successive EU Research Framework Programmes ([1]); many renewable energy projects have also received support from the Risk Sharing Finance Facility programme ([2]), or have been supported from EU Structural and Cohesion Funds ([3]). The next generation of projects that the Commission intends to support will include innovative energy storage (electricity, heat, cold) in order to improve the economic viability and the security of energy supply.

([1]) Since 1982, renewable energy projects have been supported out of the research framework programmes. The most recent 7th Research Framework Programme will sign such projects in 2013 for more than 100 million euros (http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm?pg=energy)

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/funding/funding02_en.htm ; for a selection of projects see http://www.eib.org/about/press/2007/2007-095-risk-sharing-finance-facility-rsff-contributes-eur-359-million-to-research-and-innovation-with-strong-focus-on-renewable-energy-technologies.htm

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/search.cfm?LAN=EN&pay=ALL&region=ALL&the=68&type=ALL&per=2

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002253/13
Komisijai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2013 m. vasario 27 d.)

Tema: Nacionalinių sveikatos politikos nuostatų atitiktis ES teisei

Nors sveikatos apsauga iš esmės valstybių narių kompetencijos reikalas, tačiau Europos Sąjungos lygiu reguliuojama nemažai su tuo susijusių aspektų. Visų pirma – laisvė teikti paslaugas, laisvos konkurencijos užtikrinimas, pacientų teisė pasirinkti sveikatos priežiūros paslaugas kitose valstybėse narėse.

Kai kuriose valstybėse narėse, kuriose sveikatos apsaugą užtikrina tiek valstybinės, tiek privačios gydymo įstaigos, siūloma reformuoti šią sistemą, įtvirtinant nuostatas, jog privačios gydymo įstaigos konkrečioje teritorijoje galėtų veikti tik tais atvejais, kai ten atitinkamų paslaugų neteikia valstybinės gydymo įstaigos. Kitaip tariant, siūloma įtvirtinti monopolinę valstybinių gydymo įstaigų padėtį. Praktiškai tai reikštų nemažo skaičiaus privačių gydymo įstaigų, kurių teikiamas paslaugas yra pasirinkę ir nemažai pacientų iš kitų ES valstybių, veiklos apribojimus. Todėl galėtų kilti grėsmė, jog bus netinkamai pasiekti Direktyvos 2011/24/ES dėl pacientų teisių į tarpvalstybines sveikatos priežiūros paslaugas įgyvendinimo tikslai.

Ar, Komisijos manymu, toks teisinio reguliavimo pasikeitimas būtų suderinamas su ES teise, būtent:

— su laisve teikti paslaugas, įtvirtinta Sutarties dėl ES veikimo 61 straipsnyje;

— su ES konkurencijos taisyklėmis, visų pirma – valstybės pagalbos teikimo sąlygomis;

— su ES Teisingumo Teismo byloje C-129/96 ir vėlesnėse bylose įtvirtintu principu, jog valstybės narės, kurioms direktyva yra skirta, joje nustatyto įgyvendinimo laikotarpiu nesiimtų priemonių, galinčių labai pakenkti pagal šią direktyvą siekiamam rezultatui?

Tonio Borgo atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. balandžio 25 d.)

Komisijos nuomone, valstybių narių sprendimas riboti sveikatos priežiūros paslaugų, kurias gali teikti jų teritorijoje įsteigtos privačios medicinos įstaigos, apimtį tiesiogiai nepažeidžia laisvės teikti paslaugas.

Tai nėra nesuderinama ir su tikslais, kurių siekiama Direktyva 2011/24/ES ([1]) dėl tarpvalstybinių sveikatos priežiūros paslaugų, nes jos 1 straipsnio 2 dalyje nustatyta, kad ši direktyva taikoma „pacientams teikiamoms sveikatos priežiūros paslaugoms, neatsižvelgiant į tai, kaip šios paslaugos organizuojamos, teikiamos ir finansuojamos“.

Remdamasi Europos Sąjungos Teisingumo Teismo sprendime dėl bylos Nr. C-129/96 nustatytu principu Komisija pažymi, jog svarbu tai, kad visi ES apdrausti piliečiai, kurie atitinkamoje valstybėje narėje nori pasinaudoti sveikatos priežiūros paslaugomis, tai padaryti turėtų bent tokias pačias galimybes, kaip ir toje šalyje apdrausti piliečiai.

Todėl sveikatos priežiūros paslaugų, kurias gali teikti privačios medicinos įstaigos, apimties ribojimą nebūtinai reikėtų laikyti kliūtimi Direktyvos 2011/24/ES nuostatoms perkelti į nacionalinę teisę.

Jeigu valstybės narės laikosi ES konkurencijos taisyklių, jos gali laisvai formuoti savo sveikatos politiką ir nustatyti, kaip organizuojamos ir teikiamos sveikatos priežiūros paslaugos bei medicininė priežiūra. Tačiau, jeigu sveikatos priežiūros paslaugų finansavimas yra valstybės pagalba, kaip apibrėžta Sutarties dėl Europos Sąjungos veikimo 107 straipsnio 1 dalyje, ši pagalba gali būti laikoma suderinama su vidaus rinka. Tokios pagalbos suderinamumas bus vertinamas remiantis 2012 m. Sprendimu dėl visuotinės ekonominės svarbos paslaugų (VESP) ([2]), kai tai susiję su ligoninių ir socialinėmis paslaugomis, arba 2012 m. VESP bendrosiomis nuostatomis ([3]), kai tai susiję su kitų rūšių paslaugomis.

([1]) OL L 88, 2011 04 04, p. 1.
([2]) 2011 m. gruodžio 20 d. Komisijos sprendimas dėl Sutarties dėl Europos Sąjungos veikimo 106 straipsnio 2 dalies taikymo valstybės pagalbai, kompensacijos už viešąją paslaugą forma skiriamai tam tikroms įmonėms, kurioms pavesta teikti visuotinės ekonominės svarbos paslaugas, OL L 7, 2012 1 11, p. 3.
([3]) Europos Sąjungos bendrosios nuostatos dėl valstybės pagalbos kompensacijos už viešąją paslaugą forma, OL C 8, 2012 1 11, p. 15.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002253/13
to the Commission
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Compatibility of national health policies with Union law

Although health protection is fundamentally a Member State matter, many aspects of this policy area are regulated at EU level, in particular the freedom to provide services, the safeguarding of free competition and patients' rights in cross-border healthcare.

In some Member States, where health protection is provided by both public and private bodies, proposals have been made for a reform of this system, involving the introduction of rules stipulating that private medical facilities in a given area would be allowed to provide only services not offered by public-sector bodies. In other words, these proposals would establish a monopoly to the benefit of the public sector. In practice, this would curtail the activities of many private medical facilities, whose services are also used by patients from other EU Member States. The achievement of the objectives of Directive 2011/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare could be called into question.

In the Commission's view, would a change in the rules of this kind be compatible with Union law and, in particular, with:

— the freedom to provide services, as laid down by Article 61 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;

— the Union's competition rules, in particular the conditions governing state aid;

— the principle established by the Court of Justice of the European Union in its judgment in Case C-129/96 and in subsequent cases stipulating that, during the period laid down for the transposition of a directive, the Member States to which it is addressed should refrain from taking measures which might seriously compromise the achievement of the objectives of the directive in question?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

The Commission's view is that a decision by a Member State to limit the scope of healthcare services that may be provided on its territory by private medical facilities established within its territory is not in direct breach of the freedom to provide services.

This is also not incompatible with the achievement of the objectives of Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) on cross border healthcare given that Article 1.2 of that directive states that the directive applies to 'the provision of healthcare to patients, regardless of how it is organised, delivered, and financed'.

In accordance with the principle established by the Court of Justice of the European Union in its judgment in Case C-129/96, the Commission notes that what matters is that all EU insured citizens seeking healthcare in the Member State in question have at least the same access to healthcare as nationally insured citizens.

Limiting the scope of healthcare services that may be provided by private medical facilities should therefore not necessarily be seen as compromising the transposition of Directive 2011/24/EU.

While respecting EU competition rules, Member States are free to define their health policy, and the organisation and delivery of health and medical care. However, in case the financing of healthcare constitutes state aid within the meaning of Art. 107(1) TFEU, this aid can be regarded as compatible with the internal market The compatibility of such aid would be assessed on the basis of the 2012 Decision on Services of General Economic Interest (SGEI) ([2]) for hospital services and social services or the 2012 SGEI Framework ([3]) for other types of services involved.

([1]) OJ L 88, 04.04.2011.
([2]) Commission decision of 20 December 2011 on the application of Article 106(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to state aid in the form of public service compensation granted to certain undertakings entrusted with the operation of services of general economic interest, OJ L 7, 11.1.2012, p.3.
([3]) European Union framework for state aid in the form of public service compensation, OJ C 8, 11.1.2012, p. 15.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002254/13
aan de Commissie
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(27 februari 2013)

Betreft: Inzet Filipijnse werknemers via uitzendconstructie door Europese wegvervoerders

Afgelopen week berichtte het Nederlandse magazine Truckstar dat een Duits/Letse wegvervoeronderneming Filipijnse werknemers inzet voor internationaal wegvervoer in Europa ([1]). Volgens het bedrijf is dit nodig in verband met een acuut personeelstekort, maar dat is gezien de huidige Europese werkloosheidcijfers niet aannemelijk. Het lijkt vooral een nieuwe poging van onverantwoordelijke ondernemers om de sociale kosten van het bedrijf te drukken, ten koste van de werknemers.

1. Heeft de Commissie kennis van het bericht dat een Duits/Letse wegvervoeronderneming Filipijnse werknemers inzet voor internationaal wegvervoer?

2. Zijn er bij de Commissie meer gevallen bekend waarin een wegvervoeronderneming via een uitzendconstructie werknemers van buiten de EU inzet voor internationaal wegvervoer in Europa?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat deze juridische constructie in overeenstemming is met het Europese recht?

4. Is de Commissie van mening dat het onwenselijk is dat dit soort juridische constructies wordt opgezet om de sociale lasten van de wegvervoeronderneming te drukken? Zo nee, waarom niet?

5. Is de Commissie van mening dat werknemers in het internationaal wegvervoer onrechtvaardig worden benadeeld door het gebruik van dit soort uitzendconstructies met werknemers van buiten de EU?

6. Deelt de Commissie mijn opvatting dat de gelijke beloning van gelijk werk een essentiële voorwaarde is om echt gelijke voorwaarden te creëren op de Europese interne vervoersmarkt? Zo nee, waarom niet?

7. Is de Commissie van plan het beginsel van een gelijke beloning voor gelijk werk leidend te laten zijn bij de aankomende herziening van Verordening (EG) nr. 1072/2009 over de toegang tot de Europese wegvervoermarkt (cabotage) ([2])? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(23 april 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaalde zaak. De diensten van de Commissie zijn niet bekend met andere soortgelijke gevallen.

Zolang de Commissie werkt aan een gemeenschappelijk immigratiebeleid (artikel 79 VWEU), behouden de lidstaten het recht om zelf te bepalen hoeveel onderdanen van derde landen, afkomstig uit derde landen, tot hun grondgebied worden toegelaten teneinde daar al dan niet in loondienst arbeid te verrichten (artikel 79, lid 5, VWEU). Bij het verlenen van toegang tot werk aan onderdanen van derde landen houden de individuele lidstaten dus rekening met de situatie op de arbeidsmarkt in de desbetreffende lidstaat ([3]).

Het beginsel van het vrije verkeer van werknemers is in artikel 45 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU) vastgesteld. Voor onderdanen uit derde landen zonder overeenkomst met de EU is het recht om in een EU-lidstaat te werken echter vooral afhankelijk van de wetgeving in het gastland (de artikelen 45 en 153 van het VWEU). In eerste instantie zijn de nationale autoriteiten verantwoordelijk voor de handhaving van deze regels.

De Commissie is bijgevolg van mening dat een analyse van het wettelijke kader van het gastland en van de arbeidsomstandigheden van de desbetreffende werknemers vereist is om deze vraag te beantwoorden.

([1]) http://www.truckstar.nl/nieuws/detail/lets-transportbedrijf-huurt-filipijnse-chauffeurs-in/.

([2]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1072/2009 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 21 oktober 2009 tot vaststelling van gemeenschappelijke regels voor toegang tot de markt voor internationaal goederenvervoer over de weg.

([3]) Vaak houdt dit in dat er wordt gecontroleerd of vacatures in een lidstaat kunnen worden ingevuld door nationale en EU-werkkrachten, of door werkkrachten die niet uit de EU komen maar die wel permanent in de desbetreffende lidstaat verblijven en dus reeds deel uitmaken van de reguliere arbeidsmarkt van die lidstaat (het beginsel van EU-preferentie).

Het acquis van de EU in de sector goederenvervoer ([4]) legt een basis voor het voorkomen van ongelijke behandeling bij de toegang tot de markt voor internationaal goederenvervoer. Het bevorderen van gelijke toegangsvoorwaarden, een betere handhaving van de regels, een grotere „nalevingscultuur" en de efficiëntie van de sector vormen het doel van de geplande herziening van de regelgeving inzake markttoegang. Er dient te worden opgemerkt dat vergoedingsniveaus buiten de werkingssfeer van de EU-wetgeving vallen ([5]).

([4]) Bijvoorbeeld Verordening (EU) nr. 492/2011, Richtlijn 2000/78/EG, Verordening (EG) nr. 1071/2009, Verordening (EG) nr. 1072/2009.
([5]) Artikel 153 van het VWEU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002254/13
to the Commission
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Use of Filipino workers as temporary agency workers by European road hauliers

Last week, the Dutch magazine Truckstar reported that a German/Latvian road haulage business was using Filipino workers for international road haulage in Europe ([1]). According to the business concerned, this is necessary because of an acute shortage of staff, but in view of current unemployment rates in Europe, that is implausible. It seems primarily to be a fresh attempt by irresponsible entrepreneurs to cut a business's employment overheads, at the expense of employees.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report that a German/Latvian road haulage business is using Filipino workers for international road haulage?

2. Does the Commission know of other cases in which road hauliers are using workers from outside the EU as temporary agency workers for international road haulage in Europe?

3. Does the Commission consider that this legal arrangement accords with European law?

4. Does the Commission consider it undesirable for such legal arrangements to be instituted in order to reduce a haulier's employment overheads? If not, why not?

5. Does the Commission consider that workers in international road haulage are unjustly disadvantaged by the resort to such temporary agency arrangements using workers from outside the EU?

6. Does the Commission agree that equal wages for equal work are an essential precondition for creating genuinely equal conditions on the European internal transport market? If not, why not?

7. Will the Commission assign the principle of equal wages for equal work priority in the forthcoming revision of Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 on access to the European road haulage market (cabotage) ([2])? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the case to which the Honourable Member refers. No other similar cases are known to the Commission services.

While the EU develops a common immigration policy (Art. 79 TFEU), Member States retain the right to determine volumes of admission of third-country nationals coming from third countries to their territory in order to seek work, whether employed or self-employed (Art. 79.5 TFEU), Thus, individual Member States accord access to employment for third-country national workers, taking into account the labour market situation in the Member State concerned. ([3])

The principle of free movement of workers is enshrined in Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). However, as regards the work of non-EU nationals from countries without agreement with the EU, the right to work in an EU country mainly depends on the laws of the host country (Article 45, 153 of the TFEU). National authorities have primary responsibility for enforcing these rules.

The Commission therefore considers that an analysis of the legal framework of the host country and the working conditions of the workers concerned is needed to answer this question.

([1]) http://www.truckstar.nl/nieuws/detail/lets-transportbedrijf-huurt-filipijnse-chauffeurs-in/.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market.
([3]) This often entails checking whether vacancies in a Member State cannot be filled by national and EU manpower or by non-EU manpower resident on a permanent basis in that Member State and already forming part of that Member State's regular labour market (principle of Union preference).

The EU *acquis* in the sector of road haulage ([4]) establishes a basis for prevention of unequal treatment when accessing EU haulage market. Ensuring fair conditions of access, improved efficiency of enforcement, a higher 'culture of compliance' and the efficiency of the sector will be the aim of the considered review of market access legislation. It should be noted that remuneration rates remain outside the scope of EU legislation ([5]).

([4]) e.g. Regulation 492/2011, Directive 2000/78/EC, Regulation 1071/2009, Regulation 1072/2009.
([5]) Article 153 of TFEU.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002255/13
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(27 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Konsultacje społeczne w sprawie gazu łupkowego

Przeprowadzane przez Komisję Europejską konsultacje społeczne w sprawie niekonwencjonalnego wydobycia paliw kopalnych, w tym tzw. gazu łupkowego, opierają się na ankiecie, która w opinii socjologów nie spełnia elementarnych kryteriów poprawności warsztatowej i obiektywizmu.

Poprzez konstrukcję pytań sugerowane są odpowiedzi nieprzychylne dla technologii niekonwencjonalnego wydobycia gazu. Ponadto przez pierwsze 30 dni ankieta była dostępna tylko w 3 językach, co dyskryminowało dużą część obywateli UE. Takie zarzuty zawierają: przedstawiona mi ekspertyza prof. Andrzeja Rycharda oraz wykonane na zlecenie Instytutu PBS, recenzja prof. Pawła Sztabińskiego oraz opinia dr hab. inż. Marii Ciechanowskiej.

Proces konsultacji jest ważnym elementem demokracji, dlatego powinien być przeprowadzony z dużą starannością i obiektywizmem. Obecnie zastosowana ankieta zawiera zaś podstawowe błędy metodologiczne.

Z tego powodu jej wynik nie może zostać uznany za wiarygodne źródło informacji i dlatego uważam, że cały proces konsultacji powinien być powtórzony.

Czy Komisja zamierza powtórzyć konsultacje społeczne w sprawie gazu łupkowego?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-002917/13
do Komisji
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(13 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Konsultacje społeczne w sprawie przyszłości rozwoju w Europie niekonwencjonalnych paliw kopalnych

W grudniu ubiegłego roku Komisja Europejska poinformowała o rozpoczęciu konsultacji społecznych w sprawie przyszłości rozwoju w Europie niekonwencjonalnych paliw kopalnych (np. gazu łupkowego). Z opinii dotyczących tej kwestii, które napływają do mojego biura, wynika, że ankieta stanowiąca główne narzędzie konsultacji nie spełnia podstawowych kryteriów obiektywizmu. Natomiast sposób stawiania pytań sugeruje oczekiwane przez jej autora odpowiedzi. Dodatkowo elementem podważającym wiarygodność ankiety było również to, że początkowo nie była ona dostępna we wszystkich językach urzędowych Wspólnoty, co uniemożliwiało dostęp do niej znacznej części obywateli Unii Europejskiej. Wypełniając ankietę, trudno nie zgodzić się z tymi argumentami, jak również z tym, że właśnie te uchybienia powinny doprowadzić do powtórzenia konsultacji społecznych dotyczących paliw kopalnych.

Dlatego uznając wagę problemu i jednocześnie dbając o możliwość zapewnienia swobodnej wypowiedzi na temat gazu łupkowego zarówno jego zwolennikom, jak i przeciwnikom, chciałabym zapytać, czy Komisja poczyniła już odpowiednie kroki w celu opracowania nowej ankiety, pozbawionej wskazanych wyżej merytorycznych błędów?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(11 kwietnia 2013 r.)

W ramach konsultacji społecznych, do których nawiązuje Szanowny Pan Poseł, ankieta została udostępniona we wszystkich językach urzędowych UE. Czas trwania konsultacji wynosi 12 tygodni i jest zgodny z zasadami i normami stosowanymi przez Komisję podczas konsultacji z zainteresowanymi stronami.

Komisja uważa, że ankieta została opracowana w rzetelny sposób, i nie planuje powtórzenia przedmiotowych konsultacji społecznych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002255/13
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Public consultation on shale gas

The holding of public consultations by the Commission on the subject of unconventional extraction of fossil fuels, including shale gas, is based on a survey which, according to sociologists, does not satisfy the basic criteria of technical correctness and objectivity.

The way the questions are formulated invites responses which are critical of unconventional gas extraction. In addition, the survey was accessible for the first 30 days in only three languages, which constitutes serious discrimination against many EU citizens. Such accusations are contained in an expert opinion presented to me by Professor Andrzej Rychard, a review by Professor Paweł Sztabiński and an opinion by Dr Maria Ciechanowski on behalf of the PBS Institute — the latter two both having been commissioned by the PBS Institute.

The consultation process is an important feature of democracy, which is why it should be conducted with the utmost care and objectivity. Yet the survey currently in use contains fundamental errors of methodology.

For this reason the results obtained must not be regarded as a reliable source of information, and I therefore think that the whole consultation process should be repeated.

Does the Commission intend to repeat the public consultation on the subject of shale gas?

Question for written answer P-002917/13
to the Commission
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(13 March 2013)

Subject: Public consultations on the future development of unconventional fossil fuels

In December 2012, the Commission announced that public consultations would be held on the future development of unconventional fossil fuels in Europe (e.g. shale gas). On the basis of opinions on this issue received by my office, it appears that the questionnaire that served as the main means of consultation failed to fulfil basic criteria of objectivity. The way in which the questions were formulated suggested responses that were anticipated by the questionnaire's author. Yet another element that undermines the questionnaire's credibility is the fact that it was not initially available in all of the EU's official languages, which prevented a large number of EU citizens from accessing it. It would be difficult for someone filling out this questionnaire to disagree with these arguments or with the affirmation that the existence of such shortcomings should lead to the public consultations on fossil fuels being repeated.

Given the gravity of this problem and the desirability of ensuring that both supporters and opponents of shale gas have the opportunity to express themselves freely on the issue, has the Commission taken appropriate steps to put together a new questionnaire without the aforementioned content-related errors?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

In the case of the public consultation referred to by the Honourable Member, the questionnaire was made available in all EU official languages. The duration of the consultation is 12 weeks and meets the Commission principles and standards for consultations of interested parties.

The Commission considers the questionnaire as balanced and has no plans to repeat the public consultation.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002256/13
do Komisji
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(27 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Kary dla Polski w rolnictwie

Komisja Europejska przedstawiła roczną ocenę na temat wydawania przez Polskę funduszy rolnych na lata 2007-2010. Unijni eksperci zdecydowali, że Polska musi zwrócić 35 milionów euro do budżetu UE w związku ze źle wydanymi funduszami rolnymi.

Rozbieżności miedzy Komisją Europejską a Polską dotyczą między innymi wielkości gospodarstw rolnych, które uprawniały do otrzymania wcześniejszych emerytur przez rolników.

W związku z powyższym chciałabym zapytać Komisję w następującej kwestii:

1. Na podstawie jakich kryteriów Komisja zdecydowała, że występują takie rozbieżności między oceną Komisji Europejskiej i stroną Polską?

2. Jakie kryteria powodowały podjęcie przez KE decyzji o nałożeniu kar finansowych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(22 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Decyzja o wyłączeniu 35 mln EUR z finansowania UE opiera się na procedurze sprawdzania zgodności rozliczeń. Odnosi się ona do finansowania przez UE systemu wczesnych emerytur w Polsce. Komisja stwierdziła, że władze polskie nie sprawdziły prawidłowo kryteriów kwalifikowalności.

W szczególności kryterium wspomniane przez Szanowną Panią Poseł dotyczy weryfikacji prowadzenia przez rolnika działalności gospodarczej przez skorzystaniem z wcześniejszej emerytury.

1. Zdaniem Komisji obowiązujące przepisy przewidują, że rolnik musiał prowadzić działalność gospodarczą przed skorzystaniem z wcześniejszej emerytury. Władze polskie sprzeciwiły się takiemu podejściu, uważając, że wymogi przewidziane w rozporządzeniu uznaje się za spełnione, o ile wnioskodawca był właścicielem gospodarstwa przez okres co najmniej dziesięciu lat i był w pełni ubezpieczony jako rolnik przez co najmniej pięć lat.

Służby audytowe Komisji stwierdziły, że w Polsce nie zostały przeprowadzone żadne kontrole mające na celu sprawdzenie, czy rolnicy faktycznie sprzedawali (część) swojej produkcji (np. sprawdzając, czy istnieją faktury). Władze polskie weryfikowały wyłącznie powierzchnię gospodarstwa i na okres programowania 2004-2006 przyjęły minimalną powierzchnię 1 ha, a na okres programowania 2007-2013 – minimalną powierzchnię 3 ha, zakładając, że było to dowodem na istnienie działalności gospodarczej.

2. Komisja uważa, że ten system kontroli miał poważne niedociągnięcia, narażając fundusze UE na znaczące ryzyko nieprawidłowości. Komisja podjęła decyzję o wyłączeniu z finansowania UE 5 % wydatków za lata 2004-2006 i 2 % wydatków za lata 2007-2013 (podwyższony próg zmniejszył ryzyko dla Funduszu).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002256/13
to the Commission
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Sanctions imposed on Poland in the field of agriculture

The Commission has presented an annual assessment of Poland's spending of agricultural funds in the period 2007-2010. EU experts have decided that Poland must repay EUR 35 million to the EU budget in connection with the improper distribution of agricultural funds.

This divergence of opinions between the Commission and Poland concerns, among other things, the size of farms where farmers are entitled to take early retirement.

1. On the basis of what criteria did the Commission decide that discrepancies existed between its own assessment and that of Poland?

2. On the basis of what criteria did the Commission decide to impose financial sanctions?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The decision for excluding EUR 35 million from EU financing is based on a Conformity clearance procedure ([1]). It concerned the EU financing of the Early retirement scheme in Poland. The Commission considered that the Polish authorities did not check correctly the eligibility criteria.

In particular the criterion mentioned by the honourable Member concerns the verification of the existence of commercial activity by a farmer before early retirement.

1. The Commission considers that the regulations in force foresee that the farmer must have had commercial activity before early retirement. The Polish authorities contested this approach as they consider that the requirements laid down by the regulation are deemed to have been met if the applicant owned a farm for at least 10 years and was fully insured as a farmer for at least 5 years.

The Commission audit services noted that no checks at all had been done in Poland for verifying if the farmers had actually commercialised (part of) their production (e.g. by verifying the existence of invoices). In this respect, the Polish authorities only verified the size of the holding and fixed as minimum surface 1 ha for the programming period 2004-2006 and 3 ha for the programming period 2007-2013, assuming that it in itself demonstrated the existence of a commercial activity.

2. The Commission considers that the control system had serious weaknesses, exposing the EU Funds to a significant risk of irregularity. The Commission decided to exclude from EU financing 5% of the expenditure for period 2004-2006 and 2% of the expenditure for period 2007-2013 (the increased threshold lowered the risk to the Fund).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-002257/13
an die Kommission
Thomas Händel (GUE/NGL)
(27. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Konzessionsrichtlinie/Privatisierung bei der öffentlichen Daseinsvorsorge

Am 26. September 2012 gab die Kommission in einem Schreiben (Ref. Ares(2012)1125135) an NGOs zum Thema Privatisierung der Wasserversorgung folgende Antwort: „Die Kommission glaubt, dass die Privatisierung von öffentlichen Einrichtungen, einschließlich der Wasserversorgung, Vorteile für die Gesellschaft bringen kann, wenn sie sorgfältig durchgeführt wird".

In einem Interview mit der österreichischen Tageszeitung „Der Standard" sagte Kommissionsmitglied Michel Barnier am 21. Februar 2013 hingegen u. a.: „Ich persönlich ziehe es auch vor, wenn die Wasserversorgung im öffentlichen Bereich vorgenommen wird, und nicht privat. Wir reden von einem öffentlichen Gut".

Kann die Kommission folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Gibt es diesbezüglich ein Umdenken in der Kommission, das die Werthaltigkeit der öffentlichen Daseinsvorsorge wie der Wasserversorgung anerkennt und künftig größere Sorgfalt hinsichtlich neuer Regulierungsvorschläge der Kommission erwarten lässt?

2. Können wir demnach davon ausgehen, dass sich die Kommission im Rahmen der Krisenbewältigung gegenüber dem Internationalen Währungsfonds und der Europäischen Zentralbank dafür einsetzen wird, dass Forderungen nach Privatisierung der öffentlichen Daseinsvorsorge, insbesondere der Wasserversorgung, gegenüber Mitgliedstaaten, die finanzielle Hilfen der Union und der anderen Mitgliedstaaten in Anspruch nehmen müssen, zukünftig unterbleiben werden und in dieser Hinsicht keine Eingriffe irgendwelcher Art in die den Mitgliedstaaten vorbehaltene Organisation der öffentlichen Daseinsvorsorge vorgesehen werden?

3. Erklärt sich die Kommission bereit, die Forderung der Europäischen Bürgerinitiative „Recht auf Wasser" mit mehr als 1,2 Mio. Unterschriften zu akzeptieren und folglich die Wasserversorgung aus der Konzessionsrichtlinie und allen weiteren Regulierungsvorschlägen auszunehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2013)

Die Kommission verfolgt keine Politik der direkten oder indirekten Privatisierung der Wasserversorgung oder anderer Leistungen der Daseinsvorsorge in den Mitgliedstaaten. Das Schreiben der Kommissionsdienststellen vom 26. September 2012 bezieht sich auf einen ganz spezifischen Kontext. Darin wird keineswegs erklärt, dass die Kommission die Privatisierung der Wasserversorgung generell befürwortet.

Wasser ist ein öffentliches Gut und für alle Bürger von grundlegender Bedeutung. Der Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die Konzessionsvergabe achtet und stärkt sogar die Freiheit der Gemeinden, Kreise und Städte, zu entscheiden, wie sie die Trinkwasserversorgung ihrer Bürger organisieren wollen.

Gemäß Artikel 345 AEUV nimmt die Kommission hinsichtlich der Wahl einer öffentlich oder privat betriebenen Wasserversorgung eine neutrale Position ein, und in der EU gibt es für die öffentliche Daseinsvorsorge Erfahrungen mit verschiedenen Modellen. Die Behörden können frei entscheiden, ob sie die Versorgung direkt oder über einen privaten Wirtschaftsteilnehmer gewährleisten wollen.

Die Kommission erkennt die Europäische Bürgerinitiative „Recht auf Wasser" zur Förderung des allgemeinen Zugangs zu hochwertiger Wasserversorgung und Abwasserentsorgung an. Ihr Vorschlag steht diesen Zielen in keiner Weise entgegen. Vielmehr soll mit ihm sichergestellt werden, dass, falls Konzessionsverträge mit Dritten, insbesondere mit privaten Wasserversorgern, geschlossen werden, dieses in transparenter, nichtdiskriminierender Art und Weise geschieht und so die Gefahr von Vetternwirtschaft und Korruption gebannt wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002257/13
to the Commission
Thomas Händel (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Concession directive/privatisation of public services

In a letter replying to NGOs, dated 26 September 2012 (ref. Ares(2012)1125135), the Commission stated the following: 'The Commission believes that the privatisation of public utilities, including, water supply firms, can deliver benefits to the society when carefully made.'.

On 21 February 2013, however, in an interview with the Austrian newspaper *Der Standard*, Commissioner Michel Barnier stated *inter alia* the following: 'I personally prefer water to be supplied as part of the public domain, not private. This is a public good.' (unofficial translation).

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission having a rethink in this connection in that it acknowledges the value of public services such as water supply, suggesting that, in future, it will take greater care with regard to regulatory proposals?

2. Can it accordingly be assumed that, in its crisis management dealings with the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank, it will make every effort to ensure that Member States drawing on financial assistance from the Union and from the other Member States are no longer called on to privatise public services, in particular water supply, and that, in this connection, there are no plans to encroach in any way whatsoever upon the arrangements, exclusive to Member States, for organising public services?

3. Is the Commission prepared to accept the call by the European citizens' initiative 'Water is a Human Right', for which more than 1 200 000 signatures have been collected, and, accordingly, exclude water supply from the concession directive and all further regulatory proposals?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission does not pursue any policy on the direct or indirect privatisation of water services or of any other services in Member States. The letter of the Commission services of 26 September 2012 is related to a very specific context and does not state that the Commission would be generally in favour of water privatisations.

Water is a public good of fundamental importance to all citizens. The proposal for a directive on the award of concessions respects and even emphasises the freedom of municipalities, districts and towns to decide how they want to organise the supply of drinking water to their citizens..

The Commission position is neutral concerning the choice of a regime of public or private property of water utilities, in accordance with Article 345 of the TFEU and EU experience offers a variety of models for the provision of public utility services. Public authorities are free to choose to provide the services directly or via a private economic operator.

The Commission acknowledges the European citizens' initiative 'Water is a Human Right' regarding the promotion of universal access to high quality water and sanitation services. These objectives are not, in any way, undermined by the Commission's proposal. To the contrary, the proposal seeks to ensure that whether concessions contracts are concluded with third parties, notably private water services providers, the conclusion of such contracts should be done in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner thus reducing risks of favouritism and even corruption.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002258/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Saúde e segurança públicas — selagem de produtos de higiene pessoal

O conteúdo de diversos produtos de higiene pessoal, como champôs e sabonetes líquidos, é imediatamente acessível e manuseável por quem frequenta as superfícies comerciais, mesmo quando não adquire aqueles produtos. Esta exposição, motivada pela ausência de selagem destes produtos, coloca evidentes questões de segurança e saúde públicas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Não considera que o acesso ao conteúdo de produtos de higiene pessoal por quem os não adquire pode pôr em causa a segurança e saúde públicas?

— Não crê que se justifica particularmente um especial cuidado com o acesso indiscriminado a este tipo de produtos, que são objeto de grande procura pelos consumidores?

— Que medidas tomou ou prevê tomar a este respeito?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002259/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Saúde e segurança públicas — vernizes para as unhas

O conteúdo de diversos produtos cosméticos, como vernizes para as unhas, é imediatamente acessível e manuseável por quem frequenta as superfícies comerciais mesmo quando não adquire aqueles produtos. Esta exposição, motivada pela ausência de selagem destes produtos, coloca evidentes questões de segurança e saúde públicas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Não considera que o acesso ao conteúdo de produtos cosméticos por quem os não adquire pode pôr em causa a segurança e saúde públicas?

— Não crê que se justifica particularmente um especial cuidado com o acesso indiscriminado a este tipo de produtos, que são objeto de grande procura pelos consumidores?

— Que medidas tomou ou prevê tomar a este respeito?

Resposta conjunta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(9 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada pela Comissão à pergunta escrita E-5569/10 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002258/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Public health and safety — sealing of personal care products

The contents of various personal care products, such as shampoo and liquid soap, are immediately accessible and open to manipulation by people visiting shops, even if they are not purchasing the product. This exposure, which is possible because the products are not sealed, raises clear public health and safety issues.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

— Does it not consider that access to the contents of personal care products on the part of people who are not purchasing them could pose a threat to public health and safety?

— Does it not think that there is a particular justification for special care with indiscriminate access to this type of product, which is in great consumer demand?

— What measures has it taken or does it plan to take in this regard?

Question for written answer E-002259/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Public health and safety — nail varnish

The contents of various cosmetic products, such as nail varnish, are immediately accessible and open to manipulation by people visiting shops, even if they are not purchasing the product. This exposure, which is possible because the products are not sealed, raises clear public health and safety issues.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

— Does it not consider that access to the contents of cosmetic products on the part of people who are not purchasing them could pose a threat to public health and safety?

— Does it not think that there is a particular justification for special care with indiscriminate access to this type of product, which is in great consumer demand?

— What measures has it taken or does it plan to take in this regard?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to refer to its response to Parliamentary Question E-5569/10 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002260/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Saúde e segurança públicas — selagem de detergentes

O conteúdo de diversos produtos de limpeza doméstica, como detergentes, está imediatamente acessível e manuseável a quem frequenta as superfícies comerciais mesmo quando não adquirem aqueles produtos. Esta exposição, motivada pela ausência de selagem destes produtos, coloca evidentes questões de segurança e saúde públicas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Não considera que o acesso ao conteúdo de produtos de limpeza doméstica por quem os não adquire pode pôr em causa a segurança e saúde públicas?

— Não crê que se justifica particularmente um especial cuidado com o acesso indiscriminado a este tipo de produtos que são objeto de grande procura pelos consumidores?

— Que medidas tomou ou prever tomar a este respeito?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

Os produtos de limpeza doméstica estão sujeitos às obrigações de classificação, rotulagem e embalagem previstas na legislação da UE ([1]).

Como princípio geral, os fornecedores devem garantir que as misturas que contenham substâncias consideradas perigosas para a saúde humana ou para o ambiente são rotuladas e embaladas em conformidade com essas normas. Além disso, os fabricantes devem ainda cumprir os requisitos de rotulagem que foram estabelecidos por legislação específica relativa aos produtos químicos, quando aplicáveis, como o Regulamento (CE) n.° 648/2004 relativo aos detergentes.

Por outro lado, se o produto fornecido ao grande público for classificado relativamente a determinadas classes de perigo, as embalagens devem estar munidas de um fecho de segurança para crianças e ostentar avisos táteis.

Estas obrigações devem ser respeitadas aquando da colocação de um produto no mercado.

A Comissão está a trabalhar com os centros antiveneno dos Estados-Membros, a fim de harmonizar as informações pertinentes para a resposta de emergência na área da saúde que deverão ser apresentadas pelos importadores e utilizadores a jusante que colocam misturas no mercado.

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de problemas de saúde e segurança que tenham ocorrido nas circunstâncias descritas pelo Senhor Deputado. Consequentemente, não foram tomadas nem estão previstas medidas específicas.

([1]) Ver Regulamento (CE) n.° 1272/2008 relativo à classificação, rotulagem e embalagem de substâncias e misturas e Diretiva 1999/45/CE relativa às preparações perigosas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002260/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Public health and safety — sealing of detergents

The contents of various household cleaning products, such as detergents, are immediately accessible and open to manipulation by people visiting shops, even if they are not purchasing the product. This exposure, which is possible because the products are not sealed, raises clear public health and safety issues.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

— Does it not consider that access to the contents of household cleaning products on the part of people who are not purchasing them could pose a threat to public health and safety?

— Does it not think that there is a particular justification for special care with indiscriminate access to this type of product, which is in great consumer demand?

— What measures has it taken or does it plan to take in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Household cleaning products are subject to the obligations under EU legislation on classification, labelling and packaging ([1]).

As a general principle, suppliers must ensure that mixtures containing substances that are considered hazardous to human health or the environment are labelled and packaged in accordance with these rules. In addition, manufacturers must also comply with labelling requirements that have been established by specific chemicals legislation, where applicable, such as Regulation 648/2004 on detergents.

Furthermore, where the product supplied to the general public is classified for certain hazard classes, the packaging shall be fitted with child resistant fastenings and bear tactile warnings.

The above obligations must be fulfilled when a product is placed on the market.

The Commission is currently working with Member States' Poison Centres in order to harmonise information relevant for emergency health response, which would be submitted by importers and downstream users placing mixtures on the market.

The Commission is not aware of health and safety problems that have occurred under the circumstances described by the Honourable Member. No specific measures have therefore been taken or are envisaged.

([1]) see Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, and Directive1999/45/EC on dangerous preparations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002261/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Ações de reconstrução e de prevenção estrutural na sequência do 20 de fevereiro

Numa visita recente à Região Autónoma da Madeira (RAM), com o intuito de fazer um balanço das intervenções realizadas após a catástrofe de 20 de fevereiro de 2010, tive oportunidade de reunir com a Associação de Municípios da RAM. Durante a reunião, fui alertado para um conjunto de medidas que importa levar a cabo no âmbito da prevenção estrutural de futuras catástrofes: revisão dos instrumentos de planeamento, como os Planos Diretores Municipais, elaboração de Planos de Emergência e de Cartas de Risco, entre outras medidas. Estas medidas envolvem custos elevados, que ascendem às centenas de milhares de euros. Custos a que muitas autarquias — dada a situação financeira difícil em que se encontram, agravada pelos cortes nas transferências do Orçamento de Estado, impostos ao abrigo do programa UE-FMI — não estão em condições de fazer face. Na ausência destas medidas, ficam as populações mais expostas ao risco e mais vulneráveis a eventuais futuras catástrofes.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que fundos da UE poderão apoiar a revisão e/ou elaboração dos referidos instrumentos de planeamento por parte das autarquias da RAM?

2. Que disposições, designadamente ao nível do Regulamento do Fundo de Solidariedade da UE ou outras relevantes, garantem o envolvimento do poder local no planeamento e execução das ações de reconstrução empreendidas ao abrigo deste instrumento?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

1. A Comissão considera que as medidas de reconstrução e de prevenção estrutural são muito importantes, em particular na Região Autónoma da Madeira, onde se registaram prejuízos graves em 2010 e 2012.

Os fundos da UE podem ser mobilizados para apoiar projetos relativos à prevenção de riscos associados às catástrofes naturais (ações materiais e imateriais — estudos, planos diretores, planos de emergência, etc.). As autoridades regionais competentes são responsáveis pela seleção dos projetos apropriados, em especial os que podem ser apoiados pelo Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional e o Fundo de Coesão.

A Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte a autoridade de gestão do programa «Intervir +» (2007-2013):

Instituto de Desenvolvimento Regional da Região Autónoma da Madeira (IDR-RAM)
Travessa do Cabido, 16
Funchal — Madeira
Tel.: (00.351) 291 214 000
Email: idr-srpf@gov-madeira.pt
www.idr.gov-madeira.pt

2. Em 2011, a Comissão concedeu um auxílio financeiro a Portugal a título do Fundo de Solidariedade da UE no montante de 31 255 milhões de euros, para os deslizamentos de terras e lamas na Madeira. Esta subvenção pretende complementar os esforços desenvolvidos por Portugal para garantir operações de emergência essenciais (nomeadamente os serviços de salvamento, o restabelecimento de infraestruturas básicas, a disponibilização de alojamento temporário, as operações de limpeza das zonas sinistradas, a proteção do património cultural contra novos danos, etc.). O Acordo de Execução celebrado entre a Comissão e Portugal estabelece as medidas a financiar (artigo 5.º). Em conformidade com as regras do Fundo, a execução da subvenção é da responsabilidade das autoridades portuguesas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002261/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Reconstruction and structural prevention measures in the wake of 20 February 2010

In a recent visit to Madeira, to take stock of the action taken following the floods and mudslides of 20 February 2010, I had the opportunity to meet with the Municipalities Association of the Autonomous Region of Madeira (AMRAM). During the meeting, I was alerted to a number of structural prevention measures required to help prevent future disasters, including: a review of planning instruments, such as the municipal master plans, and the drafting of emergency plans and risk maps. These measures are costly and amount to hundreds of thousands of euros. Many municipalities — given the difficult financial situation they are in, exacerbated by cuts in transfers from the state budget imposed by the EU-IMF programme — are unable to cover these costs. A failure to implement these measures leaves populations more exposed to the risks of and more vulnerable to potential future disasters.

1. What EU funds could be used to help municipalities in Madeira review and/or draft these planning instruments?

2. What provisions, particularly in terms of the EU Solidarity Fund Regulation and other relevant regulations, ensure local authorities' involvement in the planning and execution of reconstruction measures under this instrument?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

1. The Commission considers reconstruction and structural prevention measures very important, in particular in the Autonomous Region of Madeira where serious damages were recorded in 2010 and 2012.

EU funds can be mobilised to support projects on risk prevention related to natural disasters (material and immaterial actions — studies, master plans, emergency plans, etc.). The relevant regional authorities are responsible for selecting the appropriate projects, in particular those which can be supported by the European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund.

The Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the managing authority of the programme 'Intervir+, 2007-2013':

Instituto de Desenvolvimento Regional da Região Autónoma da Madeira (IDR-RAM)
Travessa do Cabido, 16
FUNCHAL — MADEIRA
Tel. (00.351) 291 214 000
Email: idr-srpf@gov-madeira.pt
www.idr.gov-madeira.pt

2. In 2011 the Commission granted EU Solidarity Fund financial aid to Portugal amounting to EUR 31 255 million for the land- and mudslides on Madeira. This grant is to complement the efforts of Portugal to carry out essential emergency operations (such as rescue services, restoring essential infrastructure, providing temporary accommodation, cleaning-up operations of disaster stricken areas, protecting cultural heritage assets from further damage etc). The Implementation Agreement concluded between the Commission and Portugal lays down the measures to be financed (Article 5). Under the rules governing the Fund, the implementation of the grant is the responsibility of the Portuguese authorities.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002262/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios à destilação

Em Portugal, o setor vitivinícola vê aprofundarem-se as dificuldades que há muito vem enfrentando.

Aliadas às dificuldades de escoamento do vinho nacional e à baixa dos preços na produção, por exemplo na Região Demarcada do Douro, o custo dos fatores de produção é responsável pela compressão dos rendimentos e pela agonia de muitos pequenos e médios produtores. O abastecimento de aguardente vínica para a produção de vinho fino ou generoso é um dos constrangimentos que os produtores enfrentam. Em campanhas anteriores, verificaram-se graves problemas no abastecimento de aguardente, com dificuldades na sua obtenção, uma evidente especulação nos preços e importação de quantidades substanciais.

Ora, a existência de apoios à destilação poderia ajudar a resolver quer o problema do escoamento da produção com que vários produtores se confrontam, quer as restrições no acesso à aguardente vínica para produção de vinho fino ou generoso.

É a sobrevivência de muitos produtores que está em causa e a sobrevivência de um setor de manifesta importância para o país, numa altura em que se impõe, como nunca, o apoio à dinamização e ao incremento da produção nacional, como imprescindível caminho para superar a crise.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera a possibilidade de concessão de apoios à destilação, tendo em conta a situação acima descrita?

2. Em que países existem auxílios europeus para as medidas de destilação em álcool de boca e de destilação de crise? Qual a duração prevista desses apoios?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

A destilação de álcool de boca e a destilação de crise constituíam duas medidas que faziam parte dos programas de apoio nacionais ao setor vitivinícola referidos na secção IV-B do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1234/2007 do Conselho, de 22 de outubro de 2007 ([1]), que estabelece uma organização comum dos mercados agrícolas. Todavia, o apoio da União a estas duas medidas terminou. Com efeito, os artigos 103.°-W e 103.°-X do referido regulamento precisam que o apoio a estas medidas é concedido até 31 de julho de 2012.

Em conformidade com o artigo 182.°-A deste regulamento, desde 1 de agosto de 2012 os Estados-Membros podem conceder uma ajuda nacional aos produtores de vinho para a destilação voluntária ou obrigatória de vinho, em casos justificados de crise. Em caso de destilação de crise, o álcool produzido é utilizado exclusivamente para fins industriais ou energéticos, de modo a evitar distorções da concorrência.

No âmbito dos programas de auxílio 2009-2013, a medida relativa à destilação de álcool de boca foi utilizada em Espanha, na Hungria, em Itália e em Portugal, e a medida relativa à destilação de crise foi utilizado em França e em Itália.

É de notar que a medida relativa à destilação de subprodutos, definida no artigo 103.°-V, continua a aplicar-se durante o novo período de programação 2014-2018; no entanto, tal como no caso da ajuda à destilação de crise, o álcool produzido só pode ser utilizado para fins industriais ou energéticos.

([1]) JO L 299 de 16.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002262/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Support for distillation

The wine sector in Portugal is seeing a worsening of the difficulties it has been facing for some time.

Alongside the difficulty of finding outlets for the country's wine production, and the drop in producer prices, for example in the designated Douro Region, the cost of inputs is squeezing profits and creating very difficult conditions for many small and medium-sized producers. One of the difficulties facing producers is the supply of wine spirits for producing fortified or dessert wine. In the last few years these supplies have posed a serious problem, with difficulties in obtaining them, blatant price speculation, and substantial quantities having to be imported.

Support for distillation could help to secure an outlet for production — a problem facing a number of producers — while also remedying the shortage of wine spirits available for the production of fortified or dessert wine.

The very survival of many producers is at stake here, and the survival of a sector which is of evident importance for Portugal, at a time when support is more necessary than ever in order to boost national production as a key precondition for tackling the crisis.

Accordingly, I would ask the Commission:

1. Is it considering the possibility of granting support for distillation, taking account of the situation outlined above?

2. In which countries is EU support available for potable-alcohol distillation and crisis distillation? For what period of time is this support scheduled to continue?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(22 avril 2013)

La distillation d'alcool de bouche et la distillation de crise étaient deux mesures qui faisaient partie du menu des programmes d'aides nationaux en faveur du secteur vitivinicole, visés à la section IV *ter* du règlement (CE) n° 1234/2007 du Conseil du 22 octobre 2007 ([1]), portant organisation commune de marché dans le secteur agricole. Toutefois, le soutien de l'Union à ces deux mesures est actuellement terminé. Les articles 103 *quatervicies* et *quinvicies* dudit règlement précisent en effet que le soutien à ces mesures est accordé jusqu'au 31 juillet 2012.

Depuis le 1er août 2012, conformément à l'article 182 *bis* de ce règlement, les États membres peuvent accorder des aides nationales aux producteurs de vin pour la distillation facultative ou obligatoire du vin dans des cas de crise justifiés. En cas de distillation de crise, l'alcool produit est utilisé exclusivement à des fins industrielles ou énergétiques, de manière à éviter une distorsion de concurrence.

Dans le cadre des programmes d'aide 2009-2013, la mesure de distillation d'alcool de bouche a été utilisée en Espagne, en Hongrie, en Italie et au Portugal, et la mesure de distillation de crise a été utilisée en France et en Italie.

Il est à noter que la mesure de distillation des sous-produits, définie à l'article 103 *tervicies*, continue de s'appliquer pour la nouvelle programmation 2014-2018; toutefois, à l'instar de l'aide à la distillation de crise, l'alcool produit ne peut être utilisé qu'à des fins industrielles ou énergétiques.

([1]) JO L 299 du 16.11.2007.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002263/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Auxílios estatais ao setor das pescas

No âmbito dos auxílios estatais ao setor das pescas nos diferentes Estados-Membros (fundos puramente nacionais), solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Quais os auxílios estatais, notificados à Comissão, canalizados para o setor das pescas em cada Estado-Membro nos últimos cinco anos? Dispõe a Comissão de informação sobre que parte dessas ajudas foi reembolsada pelos armadores?

2. Em que Estados-Membros há algum tipo de apoio estatal aos combustíveis no setor das pescas? Tem conhecimento sobre em que moldes é feito esse apoio (nomeadamente que tipos de combustível são apoiados e qual o tipo de apoio)?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(2 de maio de 2013)

Em relação a 2012, a Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para o documento de trabalho dos serviços da Comissão «*Facts and figures on State aid in the EU Member States — 2012 update — accompanying the document State aid Scoreboard 2012, Report on State aid granted by the EU Member States*», que pode ser consultado no seguinte endereço: (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/2012_autumn_working_paper_en.pdf).

Para anos anteriores, há informação disponível em:
(http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/archive/scoreboard_arch.html).

Quanto ao apoio estatal destinado a contrabalançar a subida dos custos dos combustíveis, qualquer apoio desse tipo que ultrapassasse os limites constantes do regulamento *de minimis* equivaleria a uma redução dos custos de exploração e constituiria, portanto, auxílio estatal ilegal. A este respeito, a Comissão foi notificada de um regime de auxílio instituído em França sob a forma de seguro contra o risco de aumento dos preços dos combustíveis, o qual foi considerado incompatível com o mercado interno ([1]). A Comissão não foi notificada nem tem conhecimento de qualquer outro regime de auxílio estatal para aquele efeito.

Na sequência do pico registado em 2008 nos preços dos combustíveis, o setor das pescas fez esforços significativos para reduzir o consumo de combustível mediante adaptações técnicas das embarcações e das artes de pesca. Importa assinalar igualmente que, modificando o seu comportamento em relação às capturas, os pescadores poderão conseguir poupanças substanciais no consumo (é regularmente referido um nível de poupança de 16%).

A posição da Comissão é de que tais iniciativas por parte do setor fazem sentido numa perspetiva económica e devem ser encorajadas — razão pela qual o proposto Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e da Pesca mantém o apoio aos investimentos a bordo e inclui apoio a auditorias energéticas, para que os pescadores compreendam que tipo de poupança poderão fazer no consumo de combustível.

([1]) Decisão n.° 2008/936 — JO L 334 de 12.12.2008, p. 2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002263/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: State aid for the fisheries sector

With regard to state aid for the fisheries sector (purely national funds) in the various Member States:

1. What state aid, as notified to the Commission, has been channelled to the fisheries sector in each Member State in the last five years? Does the Commission have any data on what proportion of that aid has been reimbursed by shipowners?

2. In which Member States is there some kind of state support for fuel in the fisheries sector? Does the Commission know what form that support takes (particularly what kinds of fuel are supported and what kind of aid is provided)?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

For 2012, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Commission Staff Working document 'Facts and figures on state aid in the EU Member States — 2012 update — accompanying the document state aid Scoreboard 2012, Report on state aid granted by the EU Member States' available at:
(http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/2012_autumn_working_paper_en.pdf)
For previous years, information is available on:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/archive/scoreboard_arch.html

On State support destined to offset increased fuel costs, any such support beyond the thresholds in the *de minimis* regulation would amount to a reduction of operational costs and hence would be illegal state aid. In this respect, the Commission was made aware of an aid scheme established in France as an insurance scheme against the risk of increases in fuel prices which was considered it as incompatible with the internal market ([1]). The Commission has not been notified and is not aware of any other state aid scheme for that purpose.

Following the 2008 fuel prices peak, the fisheries sector has made significant efforts to reduce fuel consumption by technical adaptations of vessels and fishing gear. It is important to note also that by changing their fishing behaviour fishermen can achieve very substantial consumption savings (a figure of 16% savings is regularly reported).

The Commission's position is that such initiatives by the sector make economic sense and should be encouraged. For that reason, the proposed European Maritime and Fisheries Fund maintains support for investments on board and includes support for energy audits, so fishermen understand what kind of savings in fuel consumption they could make.

([1]) Decision No 2008/936, OJ L 334, 12.12.2008.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002264/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Desligamento das ajudas agrícolas à produção

Invocando como pretexto as negociações no âmbito da Organização Mundial do Comércio (a «caixa verde» da OMC), a UE levou a cabo o desligamento das ajudas agrícolas à produção, indo inclusive além do acordado nestas negociações.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual o ponto de situação relativamente ao desligamento das ajudas agrícolas à produção nos EUA e nos outros países envolvidos nas referidas negociações?

2. Qual o ponto de situação relativamente aos compromissos relativos ao fim das ajudas às exportações?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

A UE desligou os pagamentos diretos da produção no âmbito da reforma da PAC de 2003 para promover uma política agrícola mais sustentável e orientada para o mercado. O processo de reforma foi, por conseguinte, orientado por preocupações mais vastas de caráter económico, social e ambiental, pelo que estabeleceu uma base sólida para a atuação da UE na ronda de negociações de Doha da OMC.

O nível de desligamento dos apoios previstos noutros países é variável. De acordo com o relatório do Secretariado da OMC elaborado no contexto do exame da política comercial dos Estados Unidos, que teve lugar em dezembro de 2012, os apoios notificados (pelos EUA) ao abrigo da «caixa verde» continuaram a aumentar em comparação com os anos anteriores, já que se registou um aumento dos programas de ajuda alimentar interna, de serviços gerais e ambientais. O valor total corrente dos chamados AMS (apoios causadores de distorções comerciais) continuou, de acordo com as notificações apresentadas por esse país, a diminuir, passando a ser inferior a 5 mil milhões de dólares americanos pela primeira vez em 2009 ([1]).

No que respeita às ajudas às exportações, os membros da OMC, incluindo a UE, assumiram através da Declaração Ministerial de Hong Kong de 2005 o compromisso de eliminar em paralelo todas as formas de ajudas às exportações e de impor disciplinas para todas as medidas ligadas à exportação com efeito equivalente até ao final de 2013. No entanto, esse prazo é condicional à conclusão das modalidades previstas para a Ronda de Doha, que ainda estão por finalizar.

([1]) Documento OMC WT/TPR/S/275, página 99, pontos 35-36.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002264/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Decoupling of agricultural production aid

Supposedly on the basis of talks within the World Trade Organisation (the WTO's 'green box'), the EU has decoupled agricultural production aid, going beyond what was agreed during those talks.

1. What is the current situation with regard to the decoupling of agricultural production aid in the United States and in other countries that took part in the aforementioned talks?

2. What is the state of play as regards commitments to ending export aid?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The EU has decoupled direct payments from production in the course of the 2003 CAP reform to promote a more market oriented, sustainable agricultural policy. The reform process was therefore driven by wider economic, social and environmental concerns and as a result it also established a sound basis for the EU in the WTO Doha Round negotiations.

Decoupling level of the support in other countries differ from country to country. According to the report of the WTO Secretariat drafted in the context of the Trade Policy Review of the United States which took place in December 2012 'the support (the US) notified under the Green Box has continued to increase compared with earlier years as domestic food aid, general services, and environmental programmes increased. The Current Total AMS (trade distorting support) in the U.S. notifications has continued to decline, falling below USD 5 billion for the first time in 2009' ([1]).

On export subsidies, WTO members, including the EU, committed themselves in the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration of 2005 to parallel elimination of all forms of export subsidies and disciplines on all export measures with equivalent effect by the end of 2013. However, this date is contingent upon completion of the Doha Round modalities, which still remain to be finalised.

([1]) WTO document WT/TPR/S/275, page 99, paragraphs 35-36.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002265/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Pressões da Comissão Europeia para o encerramento de balcões e a redução de pessoal da CGD em Espanha

Notícias recentes na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de que a Direção-Geral da Concorrência da Comissão Europeia pretende que a Caixa Geral de Depósitos — banco público português — reduza o seu quadro de pessoal e encerre balcões em Espanha. Esta seria, alegadamente, uma contrapartida pelo apoio público.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão os seguintes esclarecimentos:

1. Confirma as pressões para o encerramento de balcões e a redução de pessoal da Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD) em Espanha? Em caso afirmativo, como as justifica? Como explica esta intromissão da Comissão Europeia nos assuntos internos da CGD — um banco público português?

2. Tendo em conta que vários bancos privados receberam financiamento público ao abrigo do programa FMI-UE, mas que o mesmo não sucedeu com a CGD, a que «apoio público» se refere a Comissão no caso da CGD? Quais os montantes e as transferências em causa?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2013)

O Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia estabelece que qualquer auxílio estatal necessita de autorização por parte da Comissão Europeia. Segundo as regras especiais para os bancos adotadas no contexto de crise, os auxílios estatais só podem ser autorizados na condição de existir um plano de reestruturação credível, que assegure o restabelecimento da viabilidade financeira do beneficiário a longo prazo. Além disso, o plano de reestruturação deve prever uma repartição adequada dos encargos entre o beneficiário e os seus acionistas, bem como medidas que limitem as distorções da concorrência provocadas pelo auxílio e, especialmente, em relação aos bancos que não receberam ajuda pública.

Tal como três bancos privados portugueses, a CGD recebeu apoio público. Em 29 de junho de 2012, Portugal assinou duas medidas de recapitalização para a CGD. As medidas consistiram numa subscrição de ações ordinárias no valor de 750 milhões de euros e de numa subscrição de instrumentos convertíveis no valor de 900 milhões de euros. A totalidade do auxílio estatal à CGD ascendeu a 1 650 milhões de euros. Estas medidas foram aprovadas como auxílio estatal compatível pela Decisão da Comissão de 18 de julho de 2012, com caráter temporário e sujeitas à apresentação de um plano de restruturação.

O principal objetivo do plano é restabelecer a viabilidade financeira da CGD, tornando desnecessário um auxílio estatal adicional no futuro. Essa viabilidade implica reorientar as atividades do banco para a sua atividade principal, através da qual possa contribuir da melhor forma, enquanto instituição de crédito, para a economia real de uma forma sustentável. Em alguns casos, tal reorientação significa reduzir as outras atividades não principais e poderá exigir ajustamentos a nível das agências e/ou do pessoal.

A administração da CGD é responsável pela elaboração de um plano de reestruturação que esteja em conformidade com as regras relativas aos auxílios estatais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002265/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Pressure by the Commission on Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD) to close branches and cut staff in Spain

According to recent reports in the Portuguese press, the Commission's Director-General for Competition wants Caixa Geral de Depósitos — a Portuguese public bank — to cut staff numbers and close branches in Spain. Such a move would supposedly be in return for CGD receiving public funding.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether it is putting pressure on CGD to close branches and cut staff in Spain? If so, how can it justify this? How can the Commission explain its meddling in the internal affairs of CGD, which is a Portuguese public bank?

2. Considering that several private banks have recently received public funding under the IMF-EU programme, but CGD has not, what 'public funding' is the Commission referring to in the case of CGD? What are the sums and payments involved?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union stipulates that any state aid needs to be authorised by the European Commission. According to the special crisis rules for banks, State aid can only be authorised subject to a credible restructuring plan which ensures the return to long-term viability of the beneficiary. Furthermore, the restructuring plan needs to provide for appropriate burden sharing by the beneficiary and its owners and for measures which limit distortions of competition brought about by the aid and in particular vis-à-vis those banks which have not received public aid.

Like three Portuguese private banks, CGD has received public support. On 29 June 2012 Portugal subscribed to two recapitalisation measures for CGD. The measures consisted of a subscription of ordinary shares in the amount of EUR 750 million and a subscription of convertible instruments in the amount of EUR 900 million. All together the state aid to CGD amounted to EUR 1.65 billion. These measures were approved as compatible state aid by Commission decision of 18 July 2012 on a temporary basis, subject to the submission of a restructuring plan.

The plan's main goal is to restore CGD's viability, without the need for additional state aid in the future. Viability involves refocusing the bank's activities on its core business, where it can best contribute to lending to the real economy in a sustainable way. In some cases this refocus means reducing non-core activities and can require adjustments in branches and/or employees.

The management of CGD is responsible for drafting a restructuring plan which is in line with state aid rules.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002266/13
ao Conselho
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Envelopes nacionais da PAC (2014-2020) e situação de Portugal

No Conselho Europeu de 7 e 8 de fevereiro, foi acordada uma proposta relativa ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020, incluindo verbas relativas à Política Agrícola Comum. Todavia, até à data, não foram divulgados quais os envelopes nacionais dos diferentes Estados-Membros, incluindo as verbas relativas aos pagamentos diretos (primeiro pilar) e ao desenvolvimento rural (segundo pilar).

Assim, solicitamos ao Conselho que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Quais os envelopes nacionais de cada um dos 27 Estados-Membros, detalhando as verbas relativas aos pagamentos diretos (primeiro pilar) e ao desenvolvimento rural (segundo pilar)?

2. No caso concreto de Portugal, que variação, para cada um dos dois pilares da PAC, representa o montante agora acordado face ao atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2007-2013?

Resposta
(7 de maio de 2013)

O Conselho não tomou posição sobre os envelopes nacionais dos Estados-Membros previstos nas propostas de regulamentos, apresentadas no âmbito da reforma da PAC, sobre pagamentos diretos ([1]) e sobre desenvolvimento rural ([2]), visto estas propostas não terem ainda sido debatidas no Conselho.

([1]) 15396/11.
([2]) 15425/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002266/13
to the Council
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: National envelopes under the common agricultural policy (CAP) (2014-2020) and Portugal's situation

At the European Council of 7 and 8 February 2013, a proposal was agreed with regard to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, including common agricultural policy funds. However, the Member States' national envelopes, including direct payment (first pillar) and rural development (second pillar) funds, have not been disclosed as yet.

1. What are the national envelopes of each of the 27 Member States, including direct payment (first pillar) and rural development (second pillar) funds?

2. In the specific case of Portugal, what change is there in the amount now agreed for each of the two pillars of the CAP in comparison with the current Multiannual Financial Framework 2007-2013?

Reply
(7 May 2013)

The Council has not taken a position on Member States' national envelopes under the draft CAP reform regulation on direct payments ([1]) and the draft CAP reform regulation on rural development ([2]), since these have not yet been discussed in the Council.

([1]) 15396/11.
([2]) 15425/11.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002267/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Envelopes nacionais da PAC (2014-2020) e situação de Portugal

No Conselho Europeu de 7 e 8 de fevereiro, foi acordada uma proposta relativa ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020, incluindo verbas relativas à Política Agrícola Comum. Todavia, até à data, não foram divulgados quais os envelopes nacionais dos diferentes Estados-Membros, incluindo as verbas relativas aos pagamentos diretos (primeiro pilar) e ao desenvolvimento rural (segundo pilar).

Assim, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Quais os envelopes nacionais de cada um dos 27 Estados-Membros, detalhando as verbas relativas aos pagamentos diretos (primeiro pilar) e ao desenvolvimento rural (segundo pilar)?

2. No caso concreto de Portugal, que variação, para cada um dos dois pilares da PAC, representa o montante agora acordado face ao atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2007-2013?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(23 de maio de 2013)

No que respeita às dotações dos Estados-Membros relativas aos pagamentos diretos e ao desenvolvimento rural, informo que, na sequência das conclusões do Conselho Europeu de 8 de fevereiro de 2013 sobre o Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020, foi trocada correspondência sobre uma questão semelhante entre o Senhor Deputado Alain Lamassoure, Presidente da Comissão dos Orçamentos, e o Senhor Presidente José Manuel Barroso. A resposta do Presidente Barroso ao Senhor Deputado Alain Lamassoure, enviada a 27 de fevereiro de 2013, define o parecer da Comissão sobre este assunto.

No que respeita aos pagamentos diretos, os limites máximos para o exercício financeiro de 2014 foram definidos no Regulamento (UE) n.° 671/2012 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho ([1]). Relativamente aos exercícios financeiros de 2015-2020, a proposta da Comissão determina que os limites máximos dos Estados-Membros sejam estabelecidos no anexo do futuro regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativo aos pagamentos diretos. A 10 de abril de 2013, a presidência do Conselho apresentou um documento que estabelece os limites máximos nacionais atualizados na sequência das conclusões do Conselho Europeu.

Relativamente ao desenvolvimento rural, cabe à Comissão estabelecer a repartição anual da dotação por Estado-Membro, através de um ato de execução, depois da adoção do ato de base sobre o desenvolvimento rural pelo Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho. O que precede respeita as conclusões do conselho Europeu e a proposta da Comissão sobre a reforma da PAC.

([1]) JO L 204 de 31.7.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002267/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: National envelopes under the common agricultural policy (CAP) (2014-2020) and Portugal's situation

At the European Council of 7 and 8 February 2013, a proposal was agreed with regard to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, including common agricultural policy funds. However, the Member States' national envelopes, including direct payment (first pillar) and rural development (second pillar) funds, have not been disclosed as yet.

1. What are the national envelopes of each of the 27 Member States, including direct payment (first pillar) and rural development (second pillar) funds?

2. In the specific case of Portugal, what change is there in the amount now agreed for each of the two pillars of the CAP in comparison with the current Multiannual Financial Framework 2007-2013?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

As regards the Member States' envelopes for direct payments and rural development following the European Council conclusions of 8 February 2013 on the multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for the period 2014-2020, there has been correspondence on a similar question between MEP Lamassoure, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets and President Barroso. The reply of President Barroso sent to MEP Lamassoure on 27 February 2013 set out the views of the Commission on this matter.

For direct payments, the ceilings for financial year 2014 were already set out in Regulation (EU) No 671/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([1]). For financial years 2015-2020, the Commission proposal is that the Member States' ceilings will be set out in an annex to the new regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the direct payments. On 10 April 2013, the Presidency of the Council provided a paper setting out the updated national ceilings reflecting the European Council conclusions.

For rural development, the annual breakdown of the envelope by Member State shall be established by the Commission by means of an implementing act, when the basic act on rural development is adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. This is in line with the European Council conclusions and the Commission proposal on the CAP reform.

([1]) OJ L 204, 31.7.2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002268/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Utilização de menções tradicionais associadas a vinhos portugueses por vinhos produzidos noutros países

Tendo em conta as dúvidas que persistem relativamente à possibilidade de utilização de menções tradicionais associadas a vinhos portugueses por vinhos produzidos noutros países, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que países produzem atualmente vinhos ou outros produtos contendo a designação «Porto» ou «Port Wine»? Esses produtos destinam-se apenas ao mercado interno dos respetivos países ou também à exportação?

2. Que países produzem atualmente vinhos ou outros produtos contendo as designações «Vintage», «Ruby» e «Tawny»? Esses produtos destinam-se apenas ao mercado interno dos respetivos países ou também à exportação?

3. Que alterações estão previstas neste domínio no âmbito das negociações em curso com os EUA?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de vinhos comercializados com as designações «Porto» ou «Port Wine», nem com as menções tradicionais «Vintage», «Ruby» ou «Tawny» por países terceiros, exceto os EUA. A Comissão não recebeu reclamações sobre a matéria, o que indica que tais menções não foram usurpadas.

A partir da década de 1990, a UE negociou muitos acordos bilaterais com países terceiros (Austrália, Canadá, Chile, África do Sul, Coreia, Peru, Colômbia, países da América Central, etc.), com o objetivo de aumentar a proteção de indicações geográficas da UE nesses países, contando-se, entre elas, a menção «port». De acordo com tais acordos, a proteção destes nomes aplica-se exclusivamente a vinhos da UE originários das indicações geográficas em questão e, por conseguinte, proíbem a comercialização de vinhos rotulados como «Port», «Port Wine», etc. Pretende-se assegurar o acesso ao mercado e promover os vinhos de qualidade da UE nos mercados de países terceiros. Idêntica abordagem foi igualmente negociada no caso do Chile, Suíça, Canadá e Austrália sobre termos tradicionais, como «Vintage», «Ruby» ou «Tawny».

As negociações em curso pretendem garantir um elevado nível de proteção das indicações geográficas da UE em países terceiros.

No entanto, há uma cláusula antiga aplicável aos vinhos dos EUA que utilizam a menção «Port», ao abrigo de um certificado COLA (certificado de aprovação de rótulos) adotado antes da assinatura do acordo UE/EUA sobre o comércio de vinhos, ou seja, anterior a 10 de março de 2006, que autoriza os operadores em causa a continuarem a utilizar estes termos. No âmbito das discussões em curso com os EUA, a Comissão continua a abordar a proteção das indicações geográficas da UE no mercado dos EUA, consideradas no referido acordo ([1]) como semigenéricas (por exemplo, «Port»).

([1]) JO L 87 de 24.3.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002268/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Use of traditional terms associated with Portuguese wines for wines produced in other countries

In light of the ongoing confusion regarding the right to use traditional terms associated with Portuguese wines for wines produced in other countries, can the Commission provide the following information:

1. What countries currently produce wines or other products making use of the terms 'Port' or 'Port Wine'? Are these products intended solely for the domestic market of the countries concerned or also for export?

2. What countries currently produce wines or other products making use of the terms 'Vintage', 'Ruby' or 'Tawny'? Are these products intended solely for the domestic market of the countries concerned or also for export?

3. What changes are planned in this area as part of the negotiations now taking place with the United States?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission is not aware of wines marketed under the denominations 'Port' or 'Wine Port' as well as wines using the traditional terms 'Vintage', 'Ruby' or 'Tawny' by third countries, except the US. No complaints were addressed to the Commission on this issue which indicates that these names and terms are in practice not usurped.

Since the 90s, the EU has negotiated many bilateral agreements with third countries (Australia, Canada, Chile, South Africa, Korea, Peru, Columbia, America Central etc.) with the view to enhancing the protection in third countries of EU geographical indications, among others 'port'. According to these agreements, these names are exclusively protected for EU wines originating in these geographical indications and therefore prohibit the marketing of wines labeled as 'Port' or 'Port Wine', etc. The aim is to secure market access and promote EU quality wines on third country markets. The same approach has been also negotiated in the case of Chile, Switzerland, Canada and Australia concerning traditional terms such as 'Vintage', 'Ruby' or 'Tawny'.

The ongoing negotiations follow the approach of ensuring a high level of protection of EU geographical indications in third countries.

However, a grandfathering clause applies to US wines using 'Port', for which a COLA (certificate of label approval) was approved prior to the signature of the EU/US wine agreement, namely, prior to 10 March 2006 allowing the concerned operators to continue to use these terms. Within the framework of the ongoing discussions with the U.S., the Commission continues to address the protection on the US market for the EU geographical indications, which are currently considered under the EU/US wine agreement ([1]) as semi-generics, for example 'Port'.

([1]) OJ L 87, 24.3.2006.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002269/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Reforço do Fundo de Coesão e empréstimo do BEI a favor da Região Autónoma da Madeira

Na sequência da catástrofe natural ocorrida em 20 de fevereiro na Região Autónoma da Madeira (RAM), foi fixado um pacote financeiro, para o quadriénio 2010-2013, visando apoiar o necessário esforço de reconstrução das infraestruturas afetadas. Esse pacote, consubstanciado na chamada «Lei de Meios», previa, entre outras, verbas provenientes de um reforço do Fundo de Coesão, no montante de 265 milhões de euros para o quadriénio, através da reprogramação dos programas operacionais, assim como a garantia de uma linha especial de financiamento junto de Banco Europeu de Investimento (BEI), no montante de 250 milhões de euros (62,5 milhões de euros por ano).

Todavia, a execução da Lei de Meios encontra-se aquém do previsto. Até ao momento, no que se refere ao Fundo de Coesão, apenas se prevê que a RAM possa receber, até ao final de 2013, 135 milhões de euros. Por outro lado, a linha de financiamento do BEI não foi concretizada em 2011, tendo sido adiada para 2012, sem resultados concretos até ao momento.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Até quando poderão ainda ser utilizadas as verbas em falta do Fundo de Coesão? Existe a possibilidade de essas verbas se perderem caso não sejam utilizadas até essa data?

2. Até quando poderá ser plenamente aproveitada a linha de financiamento do BEI, mantendo-se as condições de financiamento definidas?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

Em dezembro de 2012, o Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional português foi reprogramado, em particular o programa «Valorização do Território», com uma dotação financeira para a Madeira de 276 470 588 euros que inclui a contribuição do Fundo de Coesão de 235 milhões de euros. As despesas relativas a estes recursos financeiros da UE são elegíveis até dezembro de 2015.

Em novembro de 2010, o BEI aprovou um empréstimo-quadro multissetorial de 250 milhões de euros para a reparação dos danos e reconstrução das infraestruturas públicas da Madeira atingidas pelas inundações. No mesmo ano, foi atribuído e pago a Portugal um primeiro empréstimo de 62,5 milhões de euros. O saldo de 187,5 milhões de euros do empréstimo aprovado permanece disponível.

A 15 de março de 2013, o Governo Regional da Região Autónoma da Madeira solicitou ao BEI a extensão do período de implementação do projeto para 2010-2015, dadas as dificuldades financeiras a que Portugal em geral e a região em particular estão atualmente sujeitos. O BEI está correntemente a analisar o pedido.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002269/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Increase in Cohesion Funds and the EIB loan for the Autonomous Region of Madeira

In the wake of the natural disaster of 20 February in the Autonomous Region of Madeira (*RAM*), a financial package was established for the 2010-2013 four-year period to help pay for the work that needs to be carried out to rebuild the affected infrastructure. This package, provided for in the '*Lei de Meios*' [Finance Law], includes an additional Cohesion Fund allocation of EUR 265 million for the four-year period, through the reprogramming of operational programmes, and the guarantee of a special credit line with the European Investment Bank (EIB) of EUR 250 million (EUR 62.5 million per year).

In practice, however, the *Lei de Meios* has provided less than was budgeted for. In relation to the Cohesion Fund, the RAM is so far only scheduled to receive EUR 135 million up to the end of 2013. Furthermore, the EIB funding line was not finalised in 2011 and was delayed until 2012, with no concrete progress on the matter having been made to date.

I would therefore like to ask the Commission the following:

1. Until when can the remaining monies from the Cohesion Fund be used? Is there any danger that these funds will be lost if they are not used by that date?

2. Until when can full use be made of the EIB credit line under its current funding conditions?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

In December 2012, the Portuguese National Strategic Reference Framework was reprogrammed, in particular the programme 'Valorização do Território', with a financial allocation for the specific priority for Madeira of EUR 276 470 588, which includes the contribution from the Cohesion Fund of EUR 235 000 000. Expenses relating to these EU financial resources are eligible until December 2015.

In November 2010, the EIB approved a multi-sector framework loan of EUR 250 million for the repair and reconstruction of the damage to the public infrastructure of Madeira caused by the floods. A first loan of EUR 62.5 million to Portugal was signed and disbursed in the same year. The balance of EUR 187.5 million of the approved loan remains available.

On 15 March 2013, the Government of the Autonomous Region of Madeira asked the EIB to extend the implementation period of the project to 2010-2015, given the financial constraints to which Portugal in general and the region in particular are currently subject. The EIB is currently analysing this request.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002270/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa «Tintas e telhas» — Região Autónoma da Madeira

Na Região Autónoma da Madeira, o Programa «Tintas e telhas», desenvolvido em parceria com a Associação de Desenvolvimento da RAM (Aderam), permitiu melhorar as habitações de famílias com fracos recursos financeiros. No município de Santa Cruz, os munícipes inscritos no programa receberam gratuitamente os materiais para a cobertura das habitações (armação em ferro e telha) e tinta para a pintura das fachadas, ficando a seu cargo a mão de obra. Para além da melhoria das condições de vida destes munícipes, o projeto permitiu ainda dar passos no sentido do incremento da qualidade paisagística do concelho. Todavia, apesar dos resultados positivos e do potencial que revelou, o projeto não teve o necessário desenvolvimento.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre os programas e medidas comunitárias que podem apoiar a continuação do Programa «Tintas e telhas» e sobre quais as condições de cofinanciamento previstas.

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2013)

No contexto da execução do Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional de 2007-2013, a identificação, seleção, implementação e o acompanhamento de projetos individuais é da responsabilidade das autoridades nacionais e regionais pertinentes.

Por forma a obter mais informações relevantes no que diz respeito às prioridades nos termos do programa para a Região Autónoma da Madeira, a Comissão recomenda o seguinte contacto com a autoridade de gestão do programa:

Instituto de Desenvolvimento Regional da Região Autónoma da Madeira (IDR-RAM)
Travessa do Cabido, 16
Funchal (Madeira)
Tel. (00 351) 291.214.000/000
Correio eletrónico: idr-srpf@gov-madeira.pt
www.idr.gov-madeira.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002270/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The 'Paints and tiles' Programme — Autonomous Region of Madeira

In the Autonomous Region of Madeira, the *Tintas e Telhas* or 'Paints and tiles' programme, which was set up in partnership with the Autonomous Region of Madeira Development Association (ADERAM), has provided home improvements for families with limited financial resources. In the municipality of Santa Cruz, residents registered on the programme receive free materials to cover their roofs (iron cladding and tiles) and paint for painting the outer walls, with the residents providing the labour themselves. As well as improving residents' living conditions, the project has also started to improve the quality of the area's surroundings. However, despite its positive results and the potential it has shown, the project has not been expanded on in the way it deserves.

Can the Commission provide information on any Community programmes or measures that could help extend the 'Paints and tiles' programme and on the envisaged co-financing conditions?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

In the context of the implementation of the 2007-2013 Portuguese National Strategic Reference Framework, the identification, selection, implementation and follow-up of individual projects is the responsibility of the relevant regional and national authorities.

In order to have more substantial information on the priorities supported under the current programmes for the Autonomous Region of Madeira, the Commission recommends the following contact with the managing authority of the programme:

Instituto de Desenvolvimento Regional da Região Autónoma da Madeira (IDR-RAM)
Travessa do Cabido, 16
Funchal — Madeira
Tel. (00.351) 291 214 000
Email: idr-srpf@gov-madeira.pt
www.idr.gov-madeira.pt

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-002271/13
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(27 februari 2013)

Angående: Om förslaget till nytt tobaksdirektiv och det svenska snuset

Det förslag till tobaksdirektiv som EU-kommissionen lagt fram innebär att en betydande andel av det svenska snuset riskerar att förbjudas också i Sverige.

Detta bekräftades av kommissionär Borg vid utfrågningen i utskottet för miljö, folkhälsa och livsmedelssäkerhet den 25 februari där ni menade att 10 procent av det snus som i dag säljs i Sverige skulle omfattas av det förbud ni föreslår.

Det svenska undantaget är inte formulerat som att det gäller t.ex. 90 procent av det svenska snuset, utan allt svenskt snus, vilket kommissionär Borg också själv redogjorde för på utskottets sammanträde. Detta måste respekteras fullt ut.

— Varför respekterar inte kommissionen det undantag för snus som Sverige har, i det förslag till tobaksdirektiv som kommissionen lagt fram? Genom att föreslå att vissa smaktillsatser förbjuds också i snus förbjuder ni ju bakvägen en stor del av det som är svenskt snus.

— Hur avser kommissionen att säkerställa att det undantag Sverige har för snus respekteras fullt ut när det nya tobaksdirektivet nu ska antas av de lagstiftande institutionerna?

— Vore det inte bäst att helt undanta snus från tobaksdirektivet eftersom det är en produkt som enbart säljs i Sverige och därmed saknar europeisk dimension?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(26 mars 2013)

Sveriges undantag i anslutningsfördraget avser bara utsläppande på marknaden av snus. Det undantar inte på något sätt snus från skyldigheterna i direktivet om tobaksvaror. Därför är alla övriga bestämmelser i det nuvarande direktivet tillämpliga för snus. Snusprodukter måste därmed följa de gällande bestämmelserna om märkning (varning för hälsorisker) samt angivande av ingredienser. Samma princip gäller för det föreslagna direktivet, t.ex. för förbudet mot produkter med karakteristisk smak. Detta förbud är helt förenligt med anslutningsfördraget.

Kommissionen förväntar sig att förslaget framför allt kommer att leda till att antalet unga människor som börjar använda snus minskar. Det är troligt att de som redan använder snus och är nikotinberoende kommer att fortsätta använda snus utan karakteristisk smak eller byta till sådana snusprodukter. Inverkan på den befintliga konsumtionen kommer därför att vara begränsad.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002271/13
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The proposal for a new tobacco directive and Swedish *snus*

As a result of the proposal for a directive on tobacco which the Commission has submitted, a significant proportion of Swedish *snus* is liable to be banned, even in Sweden.

Commissioner Borg confirmed this when asked about it at a meeting with the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on 25 February, where he expressed the expectation that 10% of the *snus* currently sold in Sweden would be covered by the ban which the Commission was proposing.

Sweden's derogation is not formulated in such a way as to apply, for example, to 90% of Swedish *snus*: it applies to all Swedish *snus*, as Commissioner Borg himself stated at the committee meeting. This must be fully respected.

— Why does the Commission not respect Sweden's derogation for *snus* in the proposal for a directive on tobacco which it has submitted? By proposing that certain flavourings should be banned, including in *snus*, the Commission is, through the back door, banning a major element in what makes Swedish *snus* what it is.

— How will the Commission ensure that Sweden's derogation for *snus* is fully respected when the new tobacco directive is adopted by the legislative institutions?

— Would it not be best to exempt *snus* from the tobacco directive altogether, as it is a product which is only sold in Sweden and hence possesses no European dimension?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

The Swedish exemption as set out in its Accession Treaty relates only to the placing on the market of oral tobacco. It does not in any way provide a derogation for oral tobacco from the obligations of the Tobacco Products Directive. Therefore, all other provisions of the current Directive apply to oral tobacco. Thus, oral tobacco must comply with existing provisions on labelling (health warnings) and ingredients reporting. The same principle applies for the proposed Directive, e.g. regarding the prohibition of products with characterising flavours. This approach is fully compatible with the Accession Treaty.

The Commission foresees that the greatest impact of the proposal will be on limiting the number of young people who start using snus. Existing snus users with a nicotine addiction are likely to continue to consume snus without characterising flavours or to switch to such products without characterising flavours. The impact on existing consumption will therefore be limited.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002272/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(27 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Programele de protecție a martorilor (PPM)

Întrucât investigarea și urmărirea în justiție a infracțiunilor într-un mod eficient nu sunt posibile fără depozițiile martorilor, utilizarea acestui tip de probe este câteodată foarte dificilă deoarece mulți martori sunt intimidați și amenințați de către cei împotriva cărora sunt chemați să depună mărturie.

Unele state membre au reacționat la această problemă oferind martorilor diferite forme de protecție, câteodată ajungându-se până la schimbarea domiciliului acestora și oferirea unei noi identități prin participarea la programe de protecție a martorilor.

Numărul din ce în ce mai mare al PPM în unele state membre din ultimii ani are legătură și cu impactul tot mai accentuat al infracționalității organizate și al grupărilor teroriste. Cu toate acestea, aceste programe nu sunt armonizate la nivelul UE. Diferențele dintre metode de la o țară la alta au fost asociate cu diversitatea sistemelor juridice și a experienței în ceea ce privește activitățile de infracționalitate organizată.

În 2007, Comisia a evaluat fezabilitatea legislației UE în domeniul protecției martorilor și a colaboratorilor justiției și a propus „suspendarea temporară a oricărei inițiative legislative în domeniul protecției martorilor, urmând să aibă în vedere fezabilitatea unei acțiuni la nivelul UE într-o perspectivă pe timp mediu (4-5 ani)".

În plus, recent adoptata Directivă privind protecția victimelor criminalității nu specifică nimic referitor la PPM.

1. Consideră Comisia că armonizarea legislației UE în ceea ce privește PPM reprezintă o prioritate în contextul accentuării infracționalității organizate?

2. Dacă nu, intenționează Comisia să ofere sprijin, inclusiv asistență financiară, pentru cooperarea regională în domeniul schimbării domiciliului martorilor?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(16 aprilie 2013)

Comisia recunoaște importanța protecției martorilor în lupta împotriva criminalității organizate. Aceasta rămâne una dintre prioritățile de finanțare ale programului ISEC.

Posibilele inițiative viitoare în acest sens se vor baza pe rezultatele unui studiu al Comisiei în curs de desfășurare. Obiectivul general al studiului este acela de a măsura eficacitatea instrumentelor utilizate în procesul de combatere a criminalității organizate, atât la nivel național cât și la nivelul UE. Una dintre măsurile care vor fi evaluate în cadrul studiului este protecția martorilor, în special în ceea ce privește posibila valoare adăugată a acțiunii UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002272/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Witness protection programmes (WPPs)

Whereas effective investigation and prosecution of crime is not possible without witness testimony, using such evidence is sometimes very difficult because many witnesses are intimidated and threatened by those against whom they are called to testify.

Some Member States have responded to this by granting witnesses various forms of protection, sometimes going as far as to relocate them and give them a new identity through participation in witness protection programmes.

The growing number of WPPs in some EU Member States in recent years also correlates with the increasing impact of organised crime and terrorist groups. However, these programmes are not harmonised at EU level. The differences between these methods from country to country have been linked to the diversity of legal systems and experiences with organised criminal activities.

In 2007, the Commission assessed the feasibility of EU legislation in the area of protection of witnesses and collaborators with justice, and suggested 'putting on hold legislative activity in the area of witness protection for the time being while looking at the feasibility of EU level action, in the mid-term (4-5 years) period'.

Furthermore, the recently adopted Commission Directive on protection of victims of crime does not specify anything as regards WPPs.

1. Does the Commission consider it a priority to harmonise EU legislation regarding WPPs in the context of increased organised crime?

2. If not, does the Commission intend to provide support, including financial assistance, for regional cooperation on the relocation of witnesses?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The Commission acknowledges the role of witness protection in the fight against organised crime. It remains one of the funding priorities of the ISECProgramme.

Possible future initiatives will be based on the findings of a study currently being carried out by the Commission. The general objective of the study is to measure effectiveness of tools used at the EU and national level to fight organised crime. Witness protection is one of the measures to be assessed in the course of the study, especially with regard to the possible added value of the EU action.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002273/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Communication between EU executive agencies

EU executive agencies are costing the EU taxpayer EUR 3 billion a year. The European Court of Auditors has found errors in the way that a number of agencies account for their budgets. In light of this financial mismanagement, I am now concerned that EU agencies are not communicating sufficiently with one another.

1. Is the Commission aware that the airline industry is obliged to use chemicals in order to fulfil stringent aviation safety requirements specified by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)?

2. Is the Commission also aware that the current approach to the registration of chemicals with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) under the REACH regulation has a negative impact on downstream users of chemicals such as the airline industry?

3. Will the Commission please guarantee that these two agencies communicate adequately with one another and that they, together with the Commission, seek a sensible solution to this problem? Can the Commission please ensure that the airline industry is not unnecessarily penalised by the conflicting demands of two EU executive agencies?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

EASA ([1]) and ECHA ([2]) are regulatory not executive agencies. Contribution from the Community budget to all regulatory agencies amounted in 2012 to EUR 727.5 million. Many of these finance themselves partly through fees and charges imposed on users for the service provided. Significant savings are made through the creation of an agency at EU level if the respective national agencies can be abolished or reduced in size.

The Commission is aware that the aviation industry may have to use chemical substances including those subject to the authorisation requirement under the REACH Regulation ([3]) in order to fulfil stringent aviation safety requirements specified by the EASA. It is also aware of the impact the implementation of REACH may have on downstream users of chemical substances. In this context, the Commission services are closely working together and, with the involvement of downstream users' industry representatives, are trying to identify the possible challenges these users may be facing.

The communication between EASA and ECHA is now well established. On 23 January 2013, EASA and ECHA have jointly organised a first workshop to discuss with stakeholders. It helped to better understand the interplay of the REACH Regulation and the Airworthiness Regulation ([4]) and to see what practical steps may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of the REACH authorisation process in view of the specific needs of the aviation industry. Cooperation will continue to enable the industry to get prepared for taking a timely action that would prevent supply chain disruptions for products in production of which no alternatives to chemicals subject to the REACH authorisation requirement are currently available and streamline the authorisation application process.

([1]) European Aviation Safety Agency.
([2]) European Chemicals Agency.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency.
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency, OJ L 79, 19.3.2008, pp. 1-49.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002274/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Diplomatic privileges of agency staff

I have learnt that in some executive agencies of the European Union, some agency staff are being granted the privileges and immunities of diplomats. Can the Commission please answer the following questions relating to the diplomatic privileges of agency staff:

1. Which EU agency host countries grant agency staff the privileges and immunities of diplomats?

2. How many staff per agency are granted such privileges? Please provide details for each executive agency.

3. Is a host country's offer to grant diplomatic privileges and immunities taken into consideration when deciding the location of the EU agency?

4. Does the Commission agree that, as agency staff are not located outside the EU, they, like other European citizens, should be obliged to pay local dues, taxes and custom duties? If the Commission does not agree, can it please justify why it believes that agency staff should be accorded the privileges and immunities of diplomats?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

There are six executive agencies who have their seat as a matter of principle either in Brussels or in Luxembourg. The reply refers to those agencies.

Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 laying down the statute of the executive agencies foresees that Protocol (No 7) on the privileges and immunities of the European Union annexed to the Treaty on European Union, the TFEU and the Euratom Treaty is applicable to staff employed by the executive agencies insofar as it is subject to the Staff Regulations. Such staff does not benefit from diplomatic status. They are exempt from national taxes on salaries, wages and emoluments paid by the Union for which they pay taxes directly to the EU. They are not exempt from local duties, taxes and custom duties.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-002275/13
za Komisijo
Milan Zver (PPE)
(27. februar 2013)

Zadeva: Višina kazni za kršitve Uredbe (ES) št. 1/2005 o zaščiti živali med prevozom (dodatno vprašanje v zvezi z vprašanjem za pisni odgovor E-000372/13)

Člen 25 Uredbe Sveta (ES) št. 1/2005 o zaščiti živali med prevozom navaja, da morajo države članice določiti predpise o kaznih, ki se uporabljajo za kršitve določb te uredbe, in da morajo sprejeti vse potrebne ukrepe za zagotovitev njihovega izvajanja. Člen 25 določa tudi, da morajo biti predpisane kazni učinkovite, sorazmerne in odvračilne in da morajo države članice o teh določbah obvestiti Komisijo.

Komisija je v odgovoru na moje vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-000372/13 izjavila, da so države članice Komisiji predložile zgolj splošne informacije o kaznih, niso pa navedle natančnih informacij o tem, katere sankcije se izrečejo za posamezne kršitve ali kazniva dejanja. Komisija je poudarila, da države članice dejansko niso obvezane predložiti teh informacij. Zapisala je, da zato ne more odgovoriti na moja vprašanja o višini denarnih kazni, ki jih države članice izrečejo za posamezne kršitve Uredbe (ES) št. 1/2005 o zaščiti živali med prevozom.

Če Komisija nima informacij o višini kazni, ki jih države članice izrečejo za posamezne kršitve Uredbe (ES) št. 1/2005, kako lahko ugotovi, ali so učinkovite, sorazmerne in odvračilne, kot določa člen 25, in posledično, ali se zakonodaja EU pravilno izvaja?

Odgovor g. Borga v imenu Komisije
(16. april 2013)

Komisija želi poslance in poslanke napotiti na odgovor na pisno vprašanje g. Cramerja E-006833/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002275/13
to the Commission
Milan Zver (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Size of fines for infringements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport (follow-up question to Written Question E-000372/13)

Article 25 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport states that the Member States must lay down the rules for penalties applicable to infringements of the provisions of the regulation and must take all measures necessary to ensure that they are implemented. Furthermore, Article 25 stipulates that the penalties provided for must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive, and requires the Member States to notify those provisions to the Commission.

In its answer to my Written Question E-000372/13, the Commission stated that Member States had provided only very general information on penalties, but had not provided precise information to the Commission on how the different infringements or offences are sanctioned. The Commission emphasised that the Member States are, in fact, not obliged to provide such information. It stated that, as a consequence, it is unable to answer my questions regarding the size of fines imposed by the Member States for specific infringements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.

Given that the Commission does not have information on the size of fines imposed by the Member States for specific violations of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, how can it know whether the penalties provided for by the Member States are effective, proportionate and dissuasive, as required by Article 25, and, consequently, whether EC law is being implemented properly?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006833/2012 by Mr Cramer ([1]).

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

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002276/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 93. pontjának kérdésköre a látássérült személyek akadályainak tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, az Európai Parlament 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékossággal élő személyek társadalmi befogadásáról és mobilitásáról és az EU Fogyatékosságügyi Stratégia 2010–2020-ról szóló jelentése (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy a látássérült személyek akadályokba ütköznek üzleti és pénzügyeik intézése során (93. pont). Mit kíván tenni az Európai Bizottság, hogy a látássérült személyek pénzügyi tranzakcióikat akadálymentesebben végezhessék el?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 18.)

A Bizottság folytatja az európai akadálymentesítési intézkedéscsomag kidolgozását. Az intézkedéscsomag célja az EU-n belüli kereskedelmet nehezítő akadályok felszámolása és az újabb akadályok keletkezésének kiküszöbölése, és ezáltal a hozzáférhető alapvető termékek és szolgáltatások – így például a pénzügyi szolgáltatások – nyújtásának megkönnyítése. Ily módon orvosolni fogja a fogyasztók részéről egyre inkább megnyilvánuló, az elérhető áruk és szolgáltatások iránti igényt is, és megkönnyíti a fogyatékos személyek társadalmi részvételét és integrációját. Még tart a javaslatba belefoglalandó konkrét áruk és szolgáltatások alapos vizsgálata.

Az intézkedéscsomag – más kezdeményezésekkel együtt – szerepel majd a 2010–2020. évi európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégia végrehajtásának első éveiről szóló bizottsági jelentésben is, amelynek előkészítése folyamatban van, és közzététele idén várható.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002276/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 93 of the INI report in relation to the obstacles encountered by visually impaired people

As you know, the Parliament report adopted October 2011 on the social inclusion and mobility of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that visually impaired people encounter obstacles when carrying out business and financial transactions (point 93). What action does the Commission intend to take to enable visually impaired people to carry out financial transactions encountering fewer obstacles?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission continues to work on the European Accessibility Act (EAA). The Act aims to tackle existing barriers to intra-EU trade and to prevent the creation of new ones, thus facilitating the provision of accessible mainstream goods and services, like for example financial services. In this way, it will also address the growing demand of consumers for such accessible goods and services, facilitating the participation and integration of persons with disabilities in society. The specific goods and services to be included in the proposal are still under thorough examination.

This Act will be listed among other initiatives in the Commission's report on the first years of the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, that is under preparation for publication later this year.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002277/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 80. pontjának kérdésköre a ritka betegségek elleni küzdelem vonatkozásában

Mint ismeretes, az Európai Parlament 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékossággal élő személyek társadalmi befogadásáról és mobilitásáról és az EU Fogyatékosságügyi Stratégia 2010–2020-ról szóló jelentése (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy a ritka betegségek elleni küzdelem különösen fontos, mert csak európai együttműködésben érhető el hatékonyabb segítség (80. pont). Mit tett eddig és mit kíván tenni a Bizottság, hogy a 80. pontban előírt, hatékonyabb lépések megtörténjenek, illetve milyen más, ezt a célt szolgáló egyéb intézkedésben gondolkodnak a tagállamok?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 25.)

A ritka betegségekre vonatkozó uniós együttműködés tekintetében a Bizottság válaszában hivatkozni kíván az ugyanezen témára vonatkozó, a következő számokon iktatott, illetve az alábbi linkeken olvasható írásbeli kérdésekre: E-010728-12, E-006307/2012 és E-009253-12 ([1]).

A Bizottság az elmúlt hat évben (2007–2013) a hetedik kutatási keretprogram egészségügyi tematikáján belül mintegy 100, a ritka betegségekre vonatkozó kutatási együttműködésen alapuló projekt számára nyújtott támogatást. E projektek értéke összesen csaknem 500 millió eurónyi uniós beruházást jelent.

Ezen túlmenően a ritka betegségek gyógyszereiről szóló, 1999-ben elfogadott uniós rendelet célja, hogy támogassa a gyógyszerfejlesztést a ritka betegségek területén, ahol kielégítetlen egészségügyi szükségletek merültek fel. Ezt azáltal valósítja meg, hogy a vállalatoknak ösztönzőket kínál az ilyen kezelések fejlesztésére. Az intézkedéseknek köszönhetően eddig 1 065 terméket soroltak be ritka betegségek gyógyszereként, és 75 termék kapott uniós forgalombahozatali engedélyt.

A Bizottság emellett a klinikai vizsgálatokról szóló rendeletre irányuló javaslatot ([2]) terjesztett elő, amely elősegíti majd, hogy a ritka betegségek vonatkozásában páneurópai klinikai vizsgálatokat végezzenek.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/hu/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012) 369 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002277/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 80 of the INI resolution regarding combating rare diseases

Parliament's resolution on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) adopted in October 2011 states that combating rare diseases is especially important because more effective help can only be obtained through European cooperation (point 80). What action has the Commission taken so far and what action does it intend to take to ensure that the more effective steps specified in point 80 are implemented, and what other measures to this end are the Member States thinking of taking?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

Regarding EU level cooperation on rare diseases, the Commission would refer to its answer to Written Questions E-010728-12, E-006307/2012 and E-009253-12 ([1]) on the same subject.

The Commission has supported close to 100 collaborative research projects related to rare diseases under the Health Theme of the 7th Framework Programme for Research over the last six years (2007-2013). Altogether such projects represent an investment of almost 500 million euro from the EU.

Moreover, the EU Regulation on Orphan Medicinal Products adopted in 1999 aims to support the development of medicinal products to meet unmet medical needs in the area of rare diseases by offering incentives for companies developing such treatments. So far, these measures allowed 1 065 products to be designated as orphan medicines and 75 products have been authorised to be placed on the EU market.

In addition, the Commission proposal for a 'Clinical Trials Regulation' ([2]) will facilitate the pan-European conduct of clinical trials on rare diseases.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012)369 final.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002278/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 69. pontjának kérdésköre az önfoglalkoztatásra vonatkozóan

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékossággal élő személyek mobilitásáról és társadalmi befogadásáról és a 2010–2020 közötti időszakra vonatkozó európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégiáról szóló európai parlamenti jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy az önfoglalkoztatás lehetséges eszköz lehet a fogyatékossággal élők foglalkoztatása során (69. pont). Milyen gyakorlatok állnak rendelkezésre a tagállamokban, illetve milyen forrásokkal és szabályozással biztosítható a hatékonyabb támogatás ezen a téren?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. május 3.)

A 2010–2020 közötti időszakra szóló európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégia ([1]) 2010–2015-re vonatkozó fellépéseinek listájával ([2]) összhangban a Bizottság „az európai eszközök (mikrofinanszírozási eszköz, Európai Szociális Alap, stb.) keretében kívánja támogatni a fogyatékos személyek önfoglalkoztatási lehetőségeit”.

Az önfoglalkoztatás terén érdekelt állampolgárok közvetlen gyakorlati támogatása és tájékoztatása az illetékes tagállami hatóságok feladata. Az Európai Unió az anyagi támogatást a strukturális alapoknak a tagállamokkal közösen kezelt programjai, illetve egyéb alapok programjai – többek között a Progress mikrofinanszírozási eszköz – keretében nyújtja.

Az e területen végrehajtott kapcsolódó uniós szintű fellépéseket, más kezdeményezésekkel együtt, tovább részletezi majd az európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégia 2010–2020 végrehajtásának első éveiről szóló bizottsági jelentés, amelynek előkészítése folyamatban van, és közzététele még idén várható.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:hu:NOT
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:HU:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002278/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 69 of the INI report in relation to self-employment

As you know, the Parliament report adopted in October 2011 on the mobility and social inclusion of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that self-employment may be a potential option as part of providing employment to people with disabilities (point 69). What practices are currently in use in Member States and what resources and rules can be used to provide more effective support in this area?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

As indicated in the list of actions for 2010-2015 ([1]) of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([2]) the Commission undertakes to 'Foster possibilities for self-employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the context of European Instruments (e.g. Microfinance Facility, European Social Fund)'.

The competent Member State authorities are the main actors in giving direct practical support and information to their citizens interested in self-employment. The EU supports their efforts financially through the jointly managed programmes of the Structural Funds and programmes of other funds, such as the PROGRESS Microfinance Facility.

The relevant EU level action in this area will be referred to among other initiatives in the Commission's report on the first years of the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, that is under preparation for publication later this year.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:EN:NOT.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002279/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 60. pontjának kérdésköre a korai fejlesztés tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékossággal élő személyek mobilitásáról és társadalmi befogadásáról és a 2010–2020 közötti időszakra vonatkozó európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégiáról szóló európai parlamenti jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy a korai fejlesztés a fogyatékos gyermekek esetében nemcsak hasznos, hanem egyúttal megtérülő befektetés (60. pont) is. Mit kíván tenni a Bizottság, illetve a tagállamok annak érdekében, hogy a 60. pontban lévő elemek elterjedjenek a tagállamokban? Egyúttal felkérem a tagállamokat, hogy a 60. pontban szereplő, meglévő szolgáltatásokat mutassák be a saját országukra vonatkozóan.

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 24.)

A Bizottság – a Szerződés által ráruházott hatáskör keretein belül eljárva – kidolgozta saját megközelítési módját a támogató inkluzív oktatás és a személyre szabott tanulás, valamint a speciális szükségletek korai felismerése vonatkozásában, különösen a 2010–2020 közötti időszakra vonatkozó európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégia ([1]) részeként meghatározott oktatási és egészségügyi tematikus területeken. További konkrét részletek kapcsán a Bizottság felhívja a tisztelt képviselő figyelmét a Bizottságnak az E-008633/2012 írásbeli kérdésre adott válaszára.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002279/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 60 of the INI report in relation to early support

Parliament's report on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) adopted in October 2011 states that early support is not only beneficial for children with disabilities but is also a worthwhile investment (point 60). What action do the Commission and the Member States intend to take to ensure that the aspects specified in point 60 are applied throughout the Member States? I also call on the Member States to report on their provision of the services featuring in point 60.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

Acting within the limits of competence conferred to it by the Treaty, the Commission has laid out its approach to supporting inclusive education and personalised learning, and early identification of special needs, particularly in the thematic areas of Education and Health, in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]). For more specific details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008633/2012.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002280/13
a Tanács számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 58. pontjának kérdésköre az oktatási képzési rendszer tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékos emberek társadalmi befogadásáról és mobilitásáról és az EU Fogyatékosságügyi Stratégia 2010–2020-ról szóló EP jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy a jelenlegi oktatási képzési rendszerek nem alkalmasak arra, hogy a fogyatékos diákok és felnőttek lemorzsolódását megszüntessék (58. pont). Mit kíván tenni a Tanács, összhangban annak 2010. május 11-ei következtetéseivel, hogy megfelelő és képzett pedagógusi kar álljon rendelkezésre, amely felkészült az integrált oktatási feltételek biztosítására, összhangban az említett jelentés 58. pontjában leírtakkal?

Válasz
(2013. június 17.)

Az EUMSZ 165. cikke szerint az Unió a tagállamok közötti együttműködés ösztönzésével és szükség esetén tevékenységük támogatásával és kiegészítésével hozzájárul a minőségi oktatás fejlesztéséhez, ugyanakkor teljes mértékben tiszteletben tartja a tagállamoknak az oktatás tartalmára és szervezeti felépítésére vonatkozó hatáskörét, valamint kulturális és nyelvi sokszínűségüket. A 165. cikkben említett célkitűzések megvalósítása érdekében az Európai Parlament és a Tanács a Bizottság javaslatára ösztönző intézkedéseket fogadhat el. A Tanács továbbá a Bizottság javaslata alapján ajánlásokat fogadhat el. E tárgyban azonban a Bizottság nem nyújtott be javaslatot.

A Tanács jelenleg vizsgálja a személyek közötti, vallásra vagy meggyőződésre, fogyatékosságra, életkorra vagy szexuális irányultságra való tekintet nélküli egyenlő bánásmód elvének alkalmazásáról szóló tanácsi irányelvre irányuló bizottsági javaslatot ([1]). Ez a javaslat többek között megtiltaná a fogyatékosság alapján történő diszkriminációt számos területen. Az irányelvnek az oktatási rendszerekre vonatkozó hatálya e tekintetben a jelenleg folyó megbeszélések részét képezi. A javaslat elfogadásához egyhangú döntésre lesz szükség, és a Tanács jelenleg nem tudja előre jelezni a folyamatban lévő tárgyalások kimenetelét vagy időtartamát.

([1]) 11531/08.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002280/13
to the Council
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 58 of the INI report in relation to the education and training systems

As you know, the Parliament report adopted in October 2011 on the social inclusion and mobility of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that the current education and training systems are not adequate to stop schoolchildren and adults with disabilities from dropping out (point 58). What action does the Council intend to take based on its conclusions of 11 May 2010, whereby appropriate, qualified teaching staff should be available who are trained to ensure integrated education conditions are provided, in keeping with what is described in point 58 of this report?

Reply
(17 June 2013)

Pursuant to Article 165 TFEU the Union contributes to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity. To achieve the objectives referred to in Article 165, the European Parliament and the Council may, on a proposal from the Commission, adopt incentive measures. The Council, on a proposal from the Commission, may adopt recommendations. No such Commission proposals were tabled to that end.

The Council is currently examining the Commission's proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation ([1]). This proposal would, *inter alia*, prohibit discrimination on the grounds of disability in various fields. The scope of the directive vis-á-vis education systems forms part of the ongoing discussions in this regard. Unanimity between the Member States will be required before the directive can be adopted, and the Council is not in a position to anticipate the outcome or the duration of the ongoing negotiations.

([1]) 11531/08.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002281/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(27 februari 2013)

Betreft: CO_2-taks voor luchtvaart volledig afschaffen

De Milieucommissie (ENVI) van het Europees Parlement heeft dinsdag 26 februari jl. het Commissievoorstel goedgekeurd om intercontinentale vluchten een jaar lang niet deel te laten nemen aan de CO_2-taks (ETS) voor de luchtvaart. De PVV pleit al jaren voor de afschaffing van de CO_2-taks en hoopt dat dit uitstel uiteindelijk resulteert in afstel, en ETS aldus in zijn geheel wordt afgeschaft.

1. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het een heugelijk feit is dat ETS voor intercontinentale vluchten op de lange baan is geschoven? Zo neen, waarom niet?

2. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het uitstel van ETS voor intercontinentale vluchten bevestigt dat het EU-klimaatbeleid een zinloze exercitie is? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat dit een uitstekend moment is om door te pakken, d.w.z. om ETS ook voor vluchten binnen Europa op de schop te nemen en af te schaffen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(9 april 2013)

1-3. Neen.

Het besluit „Stopping of the clock" is bedoeld om een weg te banen voor politieke onderhandelingen in het kader van de ICAO teneinde overeenstemming over doeltreffende internationale maatregelen te bereiken. Deze tijdelijke ontheffing moet het makkelijker maken op de 38e vergadering van de ICAO een besluit te nemen over een realistisch tijdschema voor de ontwikkeling van een mondiale marktgebaseerde maatregel (MBM) en over een kader voor toepassing van nationale en regionale marktgebaseerde maatregelen op de internationale luchtvaart, in afwachting van de toepassing van de mondiale MBM.

Wanneer op de vergadering van de ICAO geen vooruitgang wordt geboekt, vindt de EU-ETS-wetgeving met ingang van 2013 weer volledig toepassing. De Commissie heeft geen plannen om de EU-ETS af te schaffen, gezien de snel toenemende emissies van de internationale luchtvaart. Zij is ervan overtuigd dat alle sectoren van de economie hun steentje moeten bijdragen aan de vermindering van de CO_2-uitstoot.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002281/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Complete abolition of the CO_2 tax on air transport

On 26 February 2013 the European Parliament's Environment Committee approved the Commission proposal to exempt intercontinental flights, for one year, from the CO_2 tax (ETS) on air transport. The PVV has been advocating abolition of the CO_2 tax for years and trusts that this deferment will ultimately become permanent and that, accordingly, the entire ETS will be abolished.

1. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is good news that the ETS has been shelved for intercontinental flights? If not, why not?

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that suspending the ETS for intercontinental flights confirms that EU climate policy is futile? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that this is the ideal time to take firm action, i.e. to rethink and abolish the ETS in respect of flights within Europe too? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

1–3. No.

The 'Stopping of the clock' decision is designed to create space for the political negotiations in ICAO to agree on meaningful international action. This temporary derogation should facilitate an agreement at the 38th ICAO Assembly on a realistic timetable for the development of a global market-based measure (MBM) and on a framework for enabling implementation and uptake of national and regional MBMs to international aviation, pending the application of the global MBM.

If the ICAO Assembly fails to move forward, the EU ETS legislation would be applied in full again from 2013 onwards. The Commission does not plan to abolish the EU ETS with regard to the fast-growing emissions from international aviation. The Commission is convinced that all sectors of the economy need to contribute to the reduction of CO_2 emissions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002282/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo sobre la reforma de los organismos reguladores en España

El Gobierno español ha intentado recuperar algunas de las facultades que ejercían diversos órganos de regulación de mercados estratégicos, agrupándolos en una sola entidad y adjudicando sus competencias más importantes al Ministerio de Industria. Las propuestas y el primer texto articulado para proceder a esta reforma incluían algunas previsiones claramente opuestas a la normativa comunitaria.

La prensa española se hace eco hoy del resultado de una reunión mantenida entre la Comisaria Neelie Kroes y el Ministro español de Industria, José Manuel Soria. Los medios citados destacan que existe un acuerdo de fondo entre ambas partes en torno al mencionado proyecto de ley. El proceso ha sido objeto de seguimiento por nuestra parte, a través de varias preguntas parlamentarias: (E-008576/2012, E-004856/2012, E-010523/2012 y E-003083/2012). Por ello, nos gustaría saber:

1. ¿En qué términos se produjo la negociación sobre este asunto entre la Comisaria Kroes y el Ministro Soria?

2. ¿Cuáles son los aspectos más destacados del acuerdo alcanzado?

3. ¿En qué plazo podrá comprobarse que los acuerdos alcanzados se plasman en una nueva propuesta?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de abril de 2013)

Tal como se indica en respuestas anteriores, la Comisión ha seguido de cerca esta evolución legislativa en España en relación con la adopción de la ley por la que se crea la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC). El proyecto de ley se está debatiendo actualmente en el Congreso de los Diputados.

Aunque el proceso legislativo sigue aún en curso en el Congreso de los Diputados, la Comisión mantiene contactos periódicos con las autoridades españolas en relación con este proyecto de ley y ha expresado su preocupación acerca de varios aspectos tales como la independencia de la dirección de la CNMC, el régimen de financiación y la transferencia de competencias a las autoridades ministeriales.

La Comisión se ha reunido con el Ministro español de Industria en Barcelona y ha recibido garantías del Gobierno español de que el texto definitivo de la ley por la que se crea la CNMC aún pendiente de adopción se ajustará plenamente a los objetivos políticos, los principios reglamentarios y los requisitos legales que figuran en el marco regulador de la UE aplicable a las comunicaciones electrónicas.

Las autoridades españolas han declarado que comparten el punto de vista de la Comisión por lo que respecta a la importancia de una autoridad reguladora nacional independiente que cuente con las competencias necesarias para llevar a cabo su cometido. A este respecto, la Comisión ha recibido garantías de que se van a adoptar las enmiendas al proyecto de ley relativo a la CNMC necesarias a tal fin y que la futura CNMC contará con las competencias necesarias para llevar a cabo su cometido dentro del marco regulador de la UE aplicable a las comunicaciones electrónicas.

La Comisión seguirá en contacto con las autoridades españolas en relación con esta propuesta legislativa y examinará el texto definitivo de la ley que vaya a adoptar el Congreso de los Diputados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002282/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Agreement on the reform of regulatory bodies in Spain

The Spanish Government has attempted to claw back some of the powers exercised by various market regulators, by merging them into a single regulatory body and assigning their key responsibilities to the Ministry of Industry. The proposals and the initial draft law aimed at bringing about this reform included plans that were clearly inconsistent with EC laws.

The result of the meeting between Commissioner Neelie Kroes and Spain's Minister for Industry, José Manuel Soria has been covered by the Spanish press. The media has emphasised that both sides reached a substantive agreement concerning the draft law on merging the regulatory bodies. We have also been actively monitoring the process by submitting several written questions (E-008576/2012, E-004856/2012, E-010523/2012 and E-003083/2012).

1. On what terms did the negotiations on the proposed merger take place betweenCommissioner Kroes and Mr Soria?

2. What are the most salient features of the agreement?

3. How long will it take before the agreements made are reflected in a new proposal?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

As indicated in previous replies, the Commission has been closely monitoring these legislative developments in Spain regarding the adoption of the law creating the National Commission for Markets and Competition (CNMC). The draft law is currently under discussion in the Spanish Parliament.

Although the legislative process in the Parliament is still ongoing, the Commission has been in regular contacts with the Spanish authorities as regards this draft law, and has raised concerns regarding several aspects, such as the independence of the CNMC management, the financing regime, and the transfer of competences to ministerial authorities.

The Commission had the opportunity to meet the Spanish Minister of Industry in Barcelona and has received the assurance from the Spanish Government that the final law creating the CNMC that is still to be adopted will be fully in line with the policy objectives, regulatory principles, and legal requirements under the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications.

The Spanish authorities have expressed that they share the views of the Commission as regards the importance of an independent national regulatory authority with consistent attribution of competences to carry out its tasks. In this regard, the Commission has been reassured that the necessary amendments in the draft CNMC law would be adopted to this end and that the future CNMC would have the necessary competences to carry out its tasks under the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications.

The Commission will continue its contacts with the Spanish authorities as regards this legislative proposal and will analyse the final law to be adopted by the Spanish Parliament.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002283/13
a Tanács számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 54. pontjának kérdésköre a közbeszerzési szabályok tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékossággal élő személyek mobilitásáról és befogadásáról, valamint a 2010–2020 közötti időszakra vonatkozó európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégiáról szóló EP-jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy a közbeszerzési szabályok hozzájárulhatnak a fogyatékos emberek társadalmi befogadásához (54. pont).

A közbeszerzésre vonatkozó szabályok felülvizsgálata jelenleg is tart. Mit kíván tenni a Tanács, hogy a közbeszerzéseknél (1) a kiválasztási szempontoknál hangsúlyosabban jelenjen meg a fogyatékos emberek hozzáférhetősége, illetve (2) olyan termékek is élvezzenek előnyt, amelyek európai fogyatékossággal élő emberek állítanak elő?

Válasz
(2013. május 28.)

Amint azt a tisztelt képviselő bizonyára tudja, a Tanács tárgyalásokat folytat az Európai Parlamenttel a közbeszerzési csomagban foglalt mindhárom irányelvjavaslatról: a közbeszerzésről szóló európai parlamenti és tanácsi irányelvjavaslatról ([1]); a vízügyi, energiaipari, közlekedési és postai szolgáltatási ágazatban működő ajánlatkérők beszerzéseiről szóló európai parlamenti és tanácsi irányelvjavaslatról ([2]); és a koncessziós szerződésekről szóló európai parlamenti és tanácsi irányelvjavaslatról ([3]).

A Tanács e javaslatokra vonatkozó általános megközelítései, melyeket 2012 decemberében fogadott el ([4]), több rendelkezést is tartalmaznak egyrészt a fogyatékossággal élők számára biztosított hozzáférhetőségre, másrészt a szociális vállalkozásokra, és ennek keretében a fogyatékossággal élő személyek foglalkoztatására vonatkozóan.

A Tanács azonban jelenleg nem tudja előre jelezni a folyamatban lévő tárgyalások kimenetelét.

([1]) 18966/11 MAP 10 MI 686 + ADD 1 + ADD 2
([2]) 18964/11 MAP 9 MI 685 + ADD 1 + ADD 2
([3]) 18960/11 MAP 8 MI 684 + ADD 1 + ADD 2
([4]) 16725/1/12 REV 1, 18011/12 és 18007/12

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002283/13
to the Council
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 54 of the INI report in relation to public procurement regulations

As you know, the Parliament report adopted in October 2011 on the mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that public procurement regulations can contribute to the social inclusion of people with disabilities (point 54).

The public procurement regulations are also currently being reviewed. What action does the Council intend to take so that, when it comes to public procurement, (1) more emphasis is placed on accessibility for people with disabilities as part of the selection criteria, and (2) priority is also given to products manufactured by people with disabilities in Europe?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

As the Honourable Member is certainly aware, the Council is in the process of negotiating with the European Parliament on all three proposals for Directives of the public procurement package: the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on public procurement ([1]); the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors ([2]); and the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the award of concession contracts ([3]).

The Council's general approaches on these proposals, adopted in December 2012 ([4]), contain several provisions concerning accessibility for people with disabilities and measures for support for social businesses, including the employment of disabled people.

However, the Council is not in a position to anticipate the outcome of the ongoing negotiations.

([1]) 18966/11 MAP 10 MI 686 + ADD 1 + ADD 2.
([2]) 18964/11 MAP 9 MI 685 + ADD 1 + ADD 2.
([3]) 18960/12 MAP 8 MI 684 + ADD 1 + ADD 2.
([4]) 16725/1/12 REV 1, 18011/12 and 18007/12.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002284/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: Az INI jelentés 53. pontjának kérdésköre a hátrányos megkülönböztetés tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékos emberek társadalmi befogadásáról és mobilitásáról és az EU Fogyatékosságügyi Stratégia 2010–2020-ról szóló EP jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy az Európai Tanács előtt fekvő ún. általános anti-diszkriminációs irányelv-tervezet kapcsán a tagállamoknak minél előbb meg kell egyezniük (53. pont). Kérem, hogy a Bizottság fejtse ki, hogy a fogyatékos emberekkel szembeni hátrányos megkülönböztetés mennyiben azonos a szexuális irányultság vagy a vallás miatt érő hátrányos megkülönböztetéssel.

Másképpen: a fogyatékos emberekkel szembeni hátrányos megkülönböztetés megszüntetése elérhető-e csupán szemléletváltással vagy a javaslatban szereplő többi, célzott csoporthoz képest további, vagy elsősorban a fizikai és épített környezetben található akadályt kell lebontani az ő társadalmi befogadásukhoz, ami még inkább indokolja az akadálymentesítési intézkedéscsomag (European Accessibility Act) mihamarabbi elfogadását?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 30.)

A tisztelt képviselő a Bizottság személyek közötti, vallásra vagy meggyőződésre, fogyatékosságra, életkorra vagy szexuális irányultságra való tekintet nélküli egyenlő bánásmód elvének alkalmazásáról szóló irányelvjavaslatára ([1]) utal. Ennek célja kiterjeszteni a 2000/78/EK ([2]) irányelvben biztosított, foglalkoztatáshoz kapcsolódó megkülönböztetés elleni védelmet más területekre, például a szociális védelemre, beleértve a társadalombiztosítást és az egészségügyet, továbbá az oktatásra és a nyilvánosság számára hozzáférhető áruk és egyéb szolgáltatások igénybevételére, ami által a megkülönböztetés elleni uniós szintű védelem fontos hiányosságát orvosolnák.

A javaslat a különböző alapon történő megkülönböztetések jellegzetességeit figyelembe véve adott esetben külön szabályokat is előír. Az irányelv ezen kívül további jogokat biztosít a fogyatékossággal élő emberek érdekében. A javaslat alkalmazási körében kötelező a hatékony, megkülönböztetés nélküli, előzetes akadálymentesség biztosítása, valamint az ésszerű intézkedések bevezetése – kivéve, ha ezek a kötelezettségek aránytalanul nagy terhet jelentenének az adott eset körülményeit figyelembe véve.

Az európai akadálymentesítési intézkedéscsomagra vonatkozó javaslat célja az volna, hogy elősegítse bizonyos akadálymentes áruk és szolgáltatások belső piacának megfelelő működését a gyártók, illetve szolgáltatók előtt álló nehézségek felszámolása által.

A két eszköz kiegészítené egymást, és mindkettő hozzájárulna a fogyatékossággal élő emberek megkülönböztetése elleni hatékony védelemhez, valamint a fogyatékossággal élők árukhoz és szolgáltatásokhoz való, másokkal egyenlő hozzáférésének biztosításához.

([1]) COM(2008) 426 végleges, 2008.7.2.
([2]) A Tanács 2000. november 27-i 2000/78/EK irányelve a foglalkoztatás és a munkavégzés során alkalmazott egyenlő bánásmód általános kereteinek létrehozásáról (HL L 303., 2000.12.2., 16. o.)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002284/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 53 of the INI report in relation to discrimination

As you know, the Parliament's Report adopted in October 2011 on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that Member States must reach agreement as soon as possible on the draft general anti-discrimination directive which is before the Council (point 53). I call on the Commission to explain the extent to which discrimination against people with disabilities is identical with discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or religion.

In other words, is it possible to put an end to discrimination against people with disabilities simply by a paradigm shift, or, compared with other targeted groups featuring in the proposal, is it necessary to dismantle further barriers, or primarily those encountered in the physical and built-up environment in order to achieve their social inclusion, which further justifies the earliest possible adoption of the European Accessibility Act?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Honourable Member refers to the Commission's proposal for a directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation ([1]). Its objective is to extend the existing protection of discrimination in employment, provided for by Directive 2000/78 ([2]), to other areas, such as social protection, including social security and healthcare, education and access to goods and other services which are available to the public, thereby filling an important gap in the protection of discrimination at EU level.

The proposal takes into account the specificity of each ground of discrimination by including special rules when that is appropriate. In addition, the directive provides for new rights in favour of persons with disabilities. Within the scope of the proposal, (i) effective non-discriminatory access has to be provided in an anticipatory manner and (ii) reasonable accommodation has to be ensured — except if these obligations would entail a disproportionate burden, considering each concrete situation.

A proposal for a European Accessibility Act as under consideration, would aim at improving the proper functioning of the internal market for specific accessible goods and services, by eliminating barriers for manufacturers and service providers.

The two instruments would be of a complementary nature and they would both contribute to effectively protect disabled people from discrimination and to ensure that they have access to goods and services on an equal basis with others.

([1]) COM(2008) 0426 of 2.7.2008.
([2]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16).

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002285/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: Az INI jelentés 50. pontjának kérdésköre védett munkahelyek tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékossággal élő személyek mobilitásáról és befogadásáról, valamint a 2010–2020 közötti időszakra vonatkozó európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégiáról szóló európai parlamenti jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy az ún. védett munkahelyekre is szükség van a fogyatékos emberek foglalkoztatása terén.

Figyelemmel a jelentés 50. pontjára, hogyan kívánja az Európai Bizottság érvényesíteni azt a szempontot, miszerint az ésszerű alkalmazkodás biztosításának elmulasztása önmagában megalapozza a hátrányos megkülönböztetést, különösen azokban a tagállamokban, ahol a kvótarendszernek nincsenek hagyományai?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 10.)

A Tanács 2000. november 27-i 2000/78/EK irányelve, amely biztosítja a fogyatékossággal élők védelmét a foglalkoztatás és a munkavégzés során alkalmazott hátrányos megkülönböztetés ellen, a fogyatékos személyek érdekében hozott megfelelő intézkedések bevezetésére kötelezi a munkáltatót. A munkáltatónak tehát szükség esetén megfelelő intézkedéseket kell bevezetnie, hogy a fogyatékossággal élő személynek lehetősége legyen hozzáférni, részt venni és előrejutni a foglalkoztatásban vagy továbbképeznie magát, mindaddig, amíg az ilyen intézkedések nem rónak aránytalanul nagy terhet a munkáltatóra. A teher nem tekintendő aránytalannak, ha az érintett tagállam fogyatékosságügyi szakpolitikájának meglévő intézkedései képesek azt ellensúlyozni.

Valamennyi tagállam átültette az irányelvet a nemzeti jogba, és felelős annak alkalmazásáért.

A 2000/78/EK irányelv végrehajtásáról szóló bizottsági jelentés elkészítése folyamatban van, és a jelentést a tervek szerint még idén közzéteszik.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002285/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 50 of the INI report in relation to sheltered employment

As you know, the Parliament report adopted in October 2011 on the mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that sheltered employment is also needed when it comes to employing people with disabilities.

Taking into account point 50 of the report, how does the Commission intend to enforce the view that failure to provide reasonable accommodation constitutes in itself discrimination, especially in Member States where there is no tradition of the quota system?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 providing protection against discrimination of persons with disabilities in employment and occupation contains a duty for the employer to provide reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities. This means that employers shall take appropriate measures, where needed in a particular case, to enable a person with a disability to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, or to undergo training, unless such measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer. This burden shall not be disproportionate when it is sufficiently remedied by measures existing within the framework of the disability policy of the Member State concerned.

All the Member States have transposed the directive into national law and are responsible for its application.

A Commission report on the implementation of Directive 2000/78/EC is under preparation and is planned to be published still this year.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002286/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 41. pontjának kérdésköre a kulturális infrastruktúra tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékossággal élő személyek mobilitásáról és befogadásáról, valamint a 2010–2020 közötti időszakra vonatkozó európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégiáról szóló EP-jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy a fogyatékossággal élők kulturális infrastruktúrához és kulturális tevékenységekhez való hozzáféréséről szóló, 2003. május 6-i tanácsi állásfoglalással (2003/C 134/05) összhangban erősíteni kell a hozzáférhetőséget a sport, szabadidős és kulturális létesítményekhez (41. pont).

Mit tett és kíván tenni a Bizottság ezen a területen?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. május 27.)

Az akadálymentesítés a 2010–2020 közötti időszakra szóló európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégia egyik kulcsfontosságú célkitűzése. Az európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégia értelmében a Bizottság a) politikákat és fellépéseket hajt végre és ezen belül európai szintű jogalkotási kezdeményezéseket terjeszt elő, valamint b) támogatja azokat a nemzeti törekvéseket, amelyek célja a fogyatékos személyek befogadásának és teljes körű részvételének előmozdítása az élet minden területén.

A sport-, szabadidős és kulturális stb. létesítmények akadálymentesítése a fogyatékossággal élő személyek jogairól szóló ENSZ-egyezmény által előírt kötelezettség, amely részes félként az EU-ra nézve is kötelező. Ez a kötelezettség progresszív jellegű, a prioritások meghatározása az egyezmény egyes részes államainak a feladata.

Az uniós jogi keretet illetően folyamatban van az európai akadálymentesítési intézkedéscsomag végrehajtása. A Bizottság számos lehetőséget vizsgál mind a különböző érdekeltek – köztük a vállalkozások, fogyatékos személyek és közigazgatási szervek – hozzáférhetőségi követelményei, mind a rendelkezésére álló jogi eszközök szempontjából. A strukturális alapokon (különösen az Európai Regionális Fejlesztési Alapon, ERFA-n) belül lehetőség van akadálymentesítésre, az uniós kohéziós politika pedig a 2014–2020 közötti időszakra szóló kohéziós politikára vonatkozó jogalkotási javaslat értelmében szerepet játszhat a szociális befogadás előmozdításában. A programozásra, a végrehajtásra és a nyomon követésre vonatkozó cikkek magukban foglalják a fogyatékos személyek számára biztosított akadálymentesítést.

Az ERFA 9. tematikus célkitűzésének (a társadalmi befogadás előmozdítása és a szegénység elleni küzdelem) beruházási prioritásai mentén számos intézkedést létre lehet hozni a fogyatékos személyek befogadásának javítására és így az épített környezet akadálymentesítésének előmozdítására.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002286/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 41 of the INI report regarding cultural infrastructure

Parliament's resolution on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) adopted in October 2011 states that, in accordance with the Council Resolution of 6 May 2003 on accessibility of cultural infrastructure and cultural activities for people with disabilities (2003/C 134/05), improved access must be provided to sports, leisure and cultural facilities (point 41).

What action has the Commission taken and what action does it intend to take in this area?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Improving accessibility is one of the key objectives of the European Disability Strategy (EDS) 2010-2020. As set out in the EDS, the Commission a) carries out policies and actions including legislative initiatives at European level and b) supports national efforts to promote the inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life.

The removal of barriers for accessibility *inter alia* in sports, leisure and cultural facilities is an obligation under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to which the EU is a party. This obligation is of progressive nature. Priority setting is a matter for each State party to the Convention.

As regards the EU legislative framework, the work for the European Accessibility Act is progressing. The Commission is examining a range of options in view of both the accessibility requirements of different stakeholders, including businesses, persons with disabilities and public authorities and of the legal instruments at its disposal. Structural Funds (in particular the European Regional Development Fund) are available for improving accessibility. EU Cohesion Policy can play a role in promoting social inclusion as reflected in the legislative proposals on Cohesion policy 2014-2020. Accessibility for disabled persons is embedded in the articles on programming, implementation and monitoring.

In the investment priorities for the ERDF under Thematic objective 9 'promoting social inclusion and combating poverty' several measures can be designed in order to improve the inclusion of disabled persons, such as improving the accessibility of the built environment.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002287/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 37. és 40. pontjának kérdésköre az online és akadálymentes tartalmak vonatkozásában

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékos emberek társadalmi befogadásáról és mobilitásáról és az EU Fogyatékosságügyi Stratégia 2010–2020-ról szóló EP jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy az innovatív és tudásalapú gazdaság elképzelhetetlen megfelelő online és akadálymentes tartalmak nélkül (37. és 40. pont).

Mit tett és kíván tenni az Európai Bizottság a hozzáférhetőbb honlapok és infokommunikációs alkalmazások megjelenése és elterjesztése érdekében?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 10.)

Az elmúlt év végén a Bizottság irányelvjavaslatot tett közzé a közigazgatási szervek honlapjainak akadálymentességéről. A javaslat arra kötelezi a tagállami kormányokat, hogy összehangolt szabályrendszer mentén akadálymentesítsék bizonyos közigazgatási szervek honlapját. A javaslat által a Bizottság külső segítség igénybevétele nélkül igyekszik fejleszteni a weben keresztül elérhető áruk és szolgáltatások európai szintű, akadálymentes piacát, amely jelenleg még töredezett. A kezdeményezés továbbgyűrűző hatása a várakozások szerint más nyilvános honlapokra is ki fog terjedni. A javaslatot jelenleg együttdöntési eljárás keretében tárgyalják.

Ezzel párhuzamosan, a korábbi bejelentésnek megfelelően, a Bizottság folytatja az európai akadálymentesítési intézkedéscsomag kidolgozását, és javaslatát előreláthatólag 2013 nyarán mutatja be. Az intézkedéscsomag célja, hogy elősegítse az akadálymentes áruk és szolgáltatások belső piacának helyes működését. A Bizottság jogalkotási és egyéb eszközök – például szabványosítás – együttes alkalmazása révén kívánja elérni az épített környezet, a közlekedés, valamint az információs és kommunikációs technológiák akadálymentességének optimális mértékét.

Ezeket az intézkedéseket, más kezdeményezésekkel együtt, tovább részletezi majd az európai fogyatékosságügyi stratégia (2010–2020) végrehajtásának első éveiről szóló átfogó jelentés, amelynek előkészítése folyamatban van, és közzététele idén várható.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002287/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of points 37 and 40 of the INI report in relation to online and accessible content

As you know, the Parliament report adopted in October 2011 on the social inclusion and mobility of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that the innovative and knowledge-based economy is inconceivable without appropriate online and accessible content (points 37 and 40).

What action has the Commission taken and does it intend to take to provide more accessible websites and ICT applications and make them widely available?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

At the end of last year, the Commission has presented a proposal for a directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites. It establishes obligations for Member States' governments to make the specified public bodies' websites accessible by following a harmonised set of specifications. With this proposal the Commission aims to bootstrap the currently fragmented European market for web-accessibility goods and services. It is expected that this initiative will trigger spillovers to other types of public websites. The proposal is currently in co-decision process.

In parallel and as previously announced, the Commission continues to work on the European Accessibility Act and plans to present its proposal in summer 2013. The Act aims at improving the proper functioning of the internal market for accessible goods and services. By combining legislative and other instruments, such as standardisation, the Commission intends to optimise the accessibility of the built environment, transport and ICT.

These actions will be further presented among other initiatives in the overall report on the first years of the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, that is under preparation for publication later this year.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002288/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 32. pontjának kérdésköre a határon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátás tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékos emberek társadalmi befogadásáról és mobilitásáról és az EU Fogyatékosságügyi Stratégia 2010–2020-ról szóló EP jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy a fogyatékossággal élő személyek a határon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátásra vonatkozó betegjogok érvényesítéséről szóló irányelv (2011/24/EU) szerint határokon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátásra jogosultak, és számukra lehetővé kell tenni az egészségügyi ellátáshoz való egyenlő hozzáférést minden más uniós tagállamban, kiváltképpen amikor erősen speciális szakgondozásra van szükségük (32. pont).

Mit tett eddig és mit kíván tenni az Európai Bizottság ezen a téren?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 22.)

A tagállamok által 2013. október 25-ig átültetendő, a határon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátásra vonatkozó betegjogok érvényesítéséről szóló 2011/24/EU irányelv ([1]) meghatározza a biztonságos és magas színvonalú, a határokon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátáshoz való hozzáférés szabályait. A 7. cikk (1) bekezdése alapján a biztosítás helye szerinti tagállam gondoskodik a határokon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátást igénybe vevő biztosított személyek költségeinek visszatérítéséről, ha a szóban forgó egészségügyi ellátás olyan ellátás, amelyre a biztosított személy jogosult a biztosítás helye szerinti tagállamban.

A 7. cikk (4) bekezdése szerint a költségek a biztosítás helye szerinti tagállamban igénybe vehető kezelés költségének mértékéig visszatérítendők, az igénybe vett egészségügyi ellátás tényleges költségeinek meghaladása nélkül. Amennyiben a határokon átnyúló egészségügyi ellátás teljes költsége több, mint amennyibe az adott ellátás a saját területén került volna, a biztosítás helye szerinti tagállam dönthet úgy, hogy a teljes költséget visszatéríti.

A biztosítás helye szerinti tagállam a nemzeti jogszabályokkal összhangban és a költségek megfelelő dokumentálása esetén dönthet úgy is, hogy egyéb kapcsolódó költségeket is visszatérít, például szállás- és utazási költségeket vagy a fogyatékossággal élő személyek számára a határokon átnyúló ellátás igénybevételekor az egy vagy több fogyatékosság miatt felmerülő esetleges többletköltségeket.

A 2011/24/EU irányelv 8. cikkének (2) bekezdése alapján azonban bizonyos kezelések esetén, például amely a beteg éjszakai kórházi tartózkodását teszi szükségessé, vagy kiemelten speciális és költséges orvosi infrastruktúra vagy orvosi felszerelés alkalmazását kívánja meg, a biztosítás helye szerinti tagállam előzetes engedélyhez kötheti a beteg külföldi ellátását. Ezért a fogyatékossággal élő személyeknek kiemelten speciális kezelések esetén előzetes engedélyeztetésre lehet szükségük.

([1]) HL L 88., 2011.4. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002288/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 32 of the INI report in relation to cross-border healthcare

As you know, the Parliament report adopted in October 2011 on the social inclusion and mobility of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that, according to the directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare (2011/24/EU), people with disabilities are entitled to cross-border healthcare, and it must be possible to provide them with equal access to healthcare in any other Member State, particularly if they need highly specialised care (point 32).

What action has the Commission taken so far and what action does it intend to take in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare ([1]), due to be transposed by Member States by 25 October 2013, provides rules for facilitating the access to safe and high-quality cross-border healthcare. According to Article 7(1), the Member State of affiliation shall insure the costs incurred by an insured person who receives cross-border healthcare are reimbursed, if the healthcare in question is among the benefits to which the insured person is entitled in the Member State of affiliation

According to Article 7(4), the costs shall be reimbursed up to the level of costs of that treatment in the Member State of affiliation, without exceeding the actual costs of healthcare received. Where the full costs of cross-border healthcare exceeds the level of costs the Member State of affiliation may nevertheless decide to reimburse the full cost.

The Member State of affiliation may decide to reimburse other related costs, such as accommodation and travel costs, or extra costs which persons with disabilities might incur due to one or more disabilities when receiving cross-border healthcare, in accordance with national legislation and on the condition that there be sufficient documentation setting out these costs.

However, according to Article 8(2) of Directive 2011/24/EU, for certain treatments such as those involving overnight hospital accommodation of the patient or highly specialised and cost-intensive medical infrastructure or medical equipment, the Member State of affiliation may require patients to seek prior authorisation before going abroad for treatment. Therefore, people with disabilities might need to ask for prior authorisation before receiving highly specialised care.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002289/13
a Bizottság számára
Kósa Ádám (PPE)
(2013. február 27.)

Tárgy: INI jelentés 29. pontjának kérdésköre az akadálymentes közlekedés tekintetében

Mint ismeretes, a 2011 októberében elfogadott, a fogyatékos emberek társadalmi befogadásáról és mobilitásáról és az EU Fogyatékosságügyi Stratégia 2010–2020-ról szóló EP jelentés (P7_TA(2011)0453) rögzíti, hogy az akadálymentes közösségi és távolsági közlekedés nélkülözhetetlen a fogyatékos emberek esetében (29. pont).

Mit tett és kíván tenni a Bizottság a hozzáférhetőbb közlekedés elérése érdekében?

Milyen konkrét fejlesztési szempontokat érvényesít és elképzelésekkel rendelkezik a közlekedésfejlesztésnél az Európai Bizottság?

Hogyan kívánja megelőzni a fogyatékos embereket érintő visszaéléseket (lásd: 42. pont)?

Siim Kallas válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. április 16.)

Az utasok jogaira vonatkozó uniós jogszabályok ([1]) bizonyos követelményeket írnak elő annak érdekében, hogy a személyszállítási ágazat a fogyatékossággal élő, illetve csökkent mozgásképességű személyek számára az utazás tekintetében biztosítsa az esélyegyenlőséget. Ide sorolható többek között a hozzáférhető információkhoz való jog és a díjmentes segítségnyújtás biztosítása az ilyen utasok számára.

A fent említett jogszabályok végrehajtásáért a tagállamok felelősek. Az egyes tagállamokban kijelölt hatóságoknak ([2]) feladata az utasoktól érkező panaszok kivizsgálása, amennyiben az utasok jogait nem tartották tiszteletben.

Ami a vasúti közlekedést illeti, a Bizottság az újonnan épülő, fejlesztésre vagy felújításra kerülő vasúti infrastruktúra és járművek tekintetében nemrégiben alapkövetelménnyé tette az akadálymentességet ([3]), az idei év végén pedig a vasúti rendszerhez való hozzáférésre vonatkozóan felülvizsgált és szigorúbb műszaki előírásokat ([4]) fog elfogadni.

A légi közlekedés tekintetében a Bizottság most fogadott el egy javaslatot a légi utasok jogaira vonatkozó 261/2004/EK rendelet ([5]) módosításáról: a rendeletjavaslat egy új kötelezettséget róna a légi fuvarozókra, amely megkönnyítené az elvesztett vagy megrongálódott mozgássegítő eszközök visszatérítését ([6]). A Bizottság 2012 júniusában iránymutatásokat ([7]) adott ki azzal a céllal, hogy megkönnyítse és hatékonyabbá tegye a légi járműveken utazó fogyatékkal élő, illetve csökkent mozgásképességű személyek jogairól szóló 1107/2006/EK rendelet alkalmazását.

A Bizottság a transzeurópai közlekedési hálózat fejlesztésére vonatkozó uniós iránymutatásokról szóló rendeletre irányuló javaslatban ([8]) az ilyen személyek vonatkozásában célként és prioritásként határozta meg a közlekedési infrastruktúrához való akadálymentes hozzáférés biztosítását.

A Bizottság jelenleg az európai akadálymentesítési intézkedéscsomag előkészítésén dolgozik annak érdekében, hogy a hozzáférhető áruk és szolgáltatások tekintetében hatékonyabbá tegye a belső piac működését. Ebben az összefüggésben a Bizottság megvizsgálja a közlekedési szolgáltatások piacát.

([1]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2006. július 5-i 1107/2006/EK rendelete a légi járműveken utazó fogyatékkal élő, illetve csökkent mozgásképességű személyek jogairól (HL L 204., 2006. 7. 26.); az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2007. október 23-i 1371/2007/EK rendelete a vasúti személyszállítást igénybe vevő utasok jogairól és kötelezettségeiről (HL L 315., 2007. 12. 3.); az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2010. november 24-i 1177/2010/EC rendelete a tengeri és belvízi közlekedést igénybe vevő utasok jogairól (HL L 334., 2010. 12. 17.); az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2011. február 16-i 181/2011/EK rendelete az autóbusszal közlekedő utasok jogairól (HL L 55., 2011. 2. 28.)

([2]) Nemzeti végrehajtó szervek

([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-212_hu.htm

([4]) A mozgáskorlátozott személyekre vonatkozó átjárhatósági műszaki előírások (ÁME): a hagyományos és nagy sebességű transzeurópai vasúti rendszerben a mozgáskorlátozott személyekkel kapcsolatos kölcsönös átjárhatóság műszaki előírásai

([5]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2004. február 11-i 261/2004/EK rendelete a visszautasított beszállás és légijáratok törlése vagy hosszú késése esetén az utasoknak nyújtandó kártalanítás és segítség közös szabályainak megállapításáról (HL L 46., 2004. 2. 17.)

([6]) COM(2013) 130 final, 2013. 3. 13.

([7]) SWD(2012) 171 végleges: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf

([8]) COM(2011) 650

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002289/13
to the Commission
Ádám Kósa (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: The subject matter of point 29 of the INI report in relation to accessible transport

As you know, the Parliament report adopted in October 2011 on the social inclusion and mobility of people with disabilities and on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (P7_TA(2011)0453) states that accessible public and long-distance transport is an absolute necessity for people with disabilities (point 29).

What action has the Commission taken and does it intend to take to make transport more accessible?

What practical development considerations does the Commission endorse and what ideas does it have with regard to transport development?

How does it intend to prevent the abuses suffered by people with disabilities (see: point 42)?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

EU passenger rights legislation ([1]) imposes certain requirements on the passenger transport industry to offer equal travel opportunities to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility. These include the right to accessible information and free of charge assistance for these passengers.

MS are responsible for the enforcement of the abovementioned Regulations. Designated authorities in each MS (NEBs ([2])) must handle complaints from passengers if their rights have not been respected.

Regarding rail transport, the Commission recently made accessibility an essential requirement for rail infrastructure and rolling stock when newly built, upgraded or renewed ([3]) and at the end of this year, will adopt a revised and strengthened set of technical specifications relating to accessibility of the rail system ([4]).

Regarding air transport, the Commission just adopted a proposal to modify Regulation 261/2004 on air passenger rights ([5]) imposing a new obligation on air carriers, which facilitates the full reimbursement of lost or damaged mobility equipment ([6]). In June 2012, the Commission published guidelines to facilitate and improve the application of Regulation 1107/2006 on the rights of disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility when travelling by air ([7]).

The Commission established accessibility of transport infrastructure for these categories of persons as an objective and priority in its proposal for a regulation on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network ([8]).

The Commission is currently preparing the European Accessibility Act with a view to improve the functioning of the internal market for accessible goods and services. In that context the market of transport services is being examined.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air, OJ L 204, 26.7.2006; 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; Regulation (EC) No 1177/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 concerning the rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway, OJ L 334, 17.12.2010; Regulation (EC) No 181/2011of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011.

([2]) National enforcement bodies.

([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-212_en.htm

([4]) PRM TSI: Technical specification of interoperability relating to persons with reduced mobility in the trans-European conventional and high-speed rail system.

([5]) Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights, OJ L 46, 17.2.2004.

([6]) COM(2013) 130 final of 13.3.2013.

([7]) SWD (2012) 171 final; http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf

([8]) COM(2011) 650.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002290/13
aan de Commissie
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(27 februari 2013)

Betreft: Problemen EU-studenten in Nederland

EU-studenten blijven op grond van artikel 11, lid 1, onder b), sub IV van Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 ([1]) sociaal verzekerd in de lidstaat die hun studie financiert. EU-studenten die in Nederland studeren worden als inwoner ingeschreven door de Nederlandse bevolkingsadministratie. Nederland controleert niet hoe deze studenten sociaal verzekerd zijn (o.a. ziektekosten) zijn. Op grond van deze inschrijving worden EU-studenten in Nederland als „onverzekerde inwoners" geregistreerd. Het gevolg is dat 15 000 EU-studenten een brief kregen om zich onmiddellijk in Nederland te verzekeren tegen ziektekosten op straffe van een boete van 350 euro.

1. Kan of moet de Nederlandse bevolkingsadministratie controleren of EU-studenten in een andere lidstaat verzekerd zijn op grond van artikel 11, lid 1, onder b), sub IV van Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 (overleggen van EHIC)? Is dit EHIC wel toegestaan als studenten langdurig (4 jaar) in een lidstaat studeren en daar wonen?

2. Kunnen studenten gelijktijdig in twee lidstaten wonen? Moeten EU-studenten die langdurig (4 jaar) in Nederland studeren, zich uitschrijven als inwoner in het land van herkomst, waar zij sociaal verzekerd zijn?

3. EU-studenten moeten om in aanmerking te komen voor het lage i.p.v. het hoge collegegeld daadwerkelijk in Nederland of de nabije grensregio's wonen. Dit woonplaatsvereiste is wellicht in strijd met het Gemeenschapsrecht. Loopt er ondertussen een inbreukprocedure tegen Nederland?

4. Is het niet zinvol om voor grensoverschrijdende studenten een aparte aanwijsregel te formuleren? En zou het dan niet nuttig zijn dat de lidstaat van herkomst een bewijs van „toepasselijke wetgeving" afgeeft?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(26 april 2013)

1. Overeenkomstig artikel 11, lid 3, onder e), van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 ([2]) geldt voor „inactieve" personen zoals studenten de wetgeving van de lidstaat van hun woonplaats. De „woonplaats" verwijst naar de plaats waar een persoon pleegt te wonen ([3]). Om te bepalen of een persoon wel of niet in Nederland pleegt te wonen, dient de bevoegde instantie een algehele beoordeling uit te voeren. De inkomstenbron van een student, waarnaar in artikel 11, lid 1, onder b), iv), van Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 ([4]) wordt verwezen, is slechts één factor bij de bepaling van de woonplaats. Het feit dat de inkomstenbron van een student in een andere lidstaat is, betekent niet automatisch dat zijn of haar „woonplaats" in dat geval buiten Nederland ligt. Eveneens betekent het feit dat een student een vierjarige studie volgt in Nederland niet automatisch dat zijn of haar „woonplaats" in dat geval in Nederland ligt.

Een Europese ziekteverzekeringskaart (EHIC) kan worden gebruikt wanneer de betrokken persoon in andere lidstaat dan de bevoegde lidstaat verblijft ([5]), waarbij „verblijf" verwijst naar een „tijdelijke verblijfplaats" ([6]). Studenten in Nederland kunnen de EHIC daarom alleen gebruiken als zij daar „verblijven".

2. Krachtens Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 kan een persoon op een gegeven moment slechts één „woonplaats" hebben. Registratie in een inwonersregister, als dat slechts een formaliteit is, is niet doorslaggevend bij de bepaling van iemands gewone verblijfplaats.

3. De diensten van de Commissie zijn niet op de hoogte van deze voorwaarde en zullen de verenigbaarheid ervan met de EU-wetgeving onderzoeken.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad tot vaststelling van de wijze van toepassing van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 betreffende de coördinatie van de socialezekerheidsstelsels.
([2]) Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 29 april 2004 betreffende de coördinatie van de socialezekerheidsstelsels, PB L 166, 30.4.2004, blz. 1.
([3]) Artikel 1, onder j), van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 en Zaak C-90/97 Swaddling [1999] Jurispr. blz. I-1075, punten 29 en 30, en de aangehaalde rechtspraak.
([4]) Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 16 september 2009 tot vaststelling van de wijze van toepassing van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 betreffende de coördinatie van de socialezekerheidsstelsels, PB L 284 van 30.10.2009, blz. 1.
([5]) Artikel 19, lid 1, van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004.
([6]) Artikel 1, onder k), van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004.

4. De wetgever beoogde een vereenvoudiging van de regels inzake geldende wetgeving in Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 door beperking van het aantal uitzonderingen op de regel van de *lex loci laboris*. Het was een bewuste keuze om geen specifieke regels op te nemen voor categorieën als studenten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002290/13
to the Commission
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(27 February 2013)

Subject: Problems faced by EU students in the Netherlands

Pursuant to Article 11(1)(b)(IV) of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 ([1]), EU students continue to be covered by social insurance in the Member State which finances their studies. EU students studying in the Netherlands are registered as residents by the Dutch population registry. The Netherlands does not check what social insurance cover these students have (*inter alia* to cover medical expenses). On the basis of this registration, EU students are registered in the Netherlands as 'uninsured residents'. Consequently, 15 000 EU students have received letters instructing them to take out health insurance policies in the Netherlands immediately, upon pain of a fine of EUR 350.

1. Can or must the Dutch population registry check whether EU students are insured in another Member State pursuant to Article 11(1)(b)(IV) of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 (submission of an EHIC)? Is the EHIC actually permitted if students are studying and residing in a Member State long-term (for 4 years)?

2. Can students reside in two Member States simultaneously? Must EU students who are studying in the Netherlands long-term (for 4 years) cease to be registered as residents of their country of origin, where they have social insurance cover?

3. In order to be eligible to pay tuition fees at the lower rather than the higher rate, EU students must actually be resident in the Netherlands or nearby border regions. This residence requirement may be contrary to Community law. Are infringement proceedings now pending against the Netherlands?

4. Would it not be worthwhile to formulate a separate designation rule for cross-border students? And would it then not be helpful if the Member State of origin issued a certificate of 'legislation applicable'?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

1. According to Article 11(3)(e) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 ([2]), 'inactive' persons such as students are subject to the legislation of the Member State of residence. The place of 'residence' refers to the habitual centre of interests of a person ([3]). To decide whether or not a person is 'habitually resident' in the Netherlands, the competent institution needs to carry out an overall assessment. The source of a student's income, as referred to in Article 11(1)(b)(iv) of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 ([4]), is only one factor in determining residence. The fact that a student's source of income is in another Member State does not in itself rule out his or her place of 'residence' being in the Netherlands. Equally, the fact that a student is following a four-year course of study in the Netherlands does not in itself lead to the conclusion that he or she 'resides' there.

A European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) can be used in cases where the person concerned is staying outside the competent Member State ([5]), where 'stay' refers to 'temporary residence' ([6]). Students in the Netherlands can therefore only use the EHIC if they are 'staying' there.

2. Under Regulation (EC) No 883/2004, a person can have only one place of 'residence' at a given time. Registration in a register of residents as a mere formality is only of minor importance in assessing a person's place of habitual residence.

3. The Commission services are not aware of this requirement and will investigate its compatibility with EC law.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([3]) Article 1(j) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and Case C-90/97 Swaddling [1999] ECR I-1075, paragraphs 29 and 30, and the case-law cited therein.
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 284, 30.10.2009, p. 1..
([5]) Article 19(1) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.
([6]) Article 1(k) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

4. The legislator considered simplifying the rules on applicable legislation in Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 by limiting the number of exceptions to the *lex loci laboris* rule. A deliberate choice was made not to introduce specific rules for such categories as students.

EUR-Lex (http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu) giver direkte og gratis adgang til EU-retten. Via dette netsted kan man konsultere *Den Europæiske Unions Tidende*, og netstedet indeholder endvidere traktaterne, retsforskrifter, retspraksis og forberedende retsakter.

Yderligere oplysninger om Den Europæiske Union findes på: http://europa.eu

Den Europæiske Unions Publikationskontor
2985 Luxembourg
LUXEMBOURG

DA