IV

(Informationen)

INFORMATIONEN DER ORGANE, EINRICHTUNGEN UND SONSTIGEN STELLEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN UNION

EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT

ANFRAGEN ZUR SCHRIFTLICHEN BEANTWORTUNG MIT ANTWORT

Anfragen der Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments zur schriftlichen Beantwortung und die entsprechenden Antworten eines Organs der Europäischen Union

(2013/C 111 E/01)

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(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002312/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(29 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Dati e misure sul lavoro fittizio

Durante una verifica fiscale che ha permesso di recuperare anche ricavi non dichiarati per 4,2 milioni, IVA non versata per oltre 400 mila euro e un giro di fatture false per un milione circa, la Guardia di Finanza italiana ha scoperto 467 falsi braccianti che lavoravano fittiziamente per una società e che hanno truffato l'INPS per 1,2 milioni.

La verifica è stata compiuta presso un'impresa la cui sede era costituita da un capannone, apparentemente abbandonato, tra le campagne di Noicattaro e Torre a Mare, nel barese. La società dichiarava formalmente di avere centinaia di lavoratori dipendenti, per i quali avrebbe dovuto disporre di uffici e di strutture adeguate. Al termine dei controlli sono state denunciate alla procura di Bari per truffa aggravata ai danni dello Stato 469 persone, due delle quali anche per reati tributari.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è informata sul blitz della Finanza in provincia di Bari;

2. se può fare un quadro generale, con statistiche e dati aggiornati, sulle truffe di lavori fittizi nei confronti degli enti previdenziali nei vari Stati membri;

3. come intende contrastare a livello europeo il fenomeno delle truffe riguardanti IVA non versata, fatture false e lavori fittizi.

Risposta data da Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2012)

1. In materia di IVA, le competenze sono ripartite tra la Commissione e gli Stati membri. Il ruolo della Commissione consiste nel garantire l'esistenza di un quadro giuridico per un sistema comune dell'IVA nel mercato interno e per una cooperazione amministrativa tra gli Stati membri, nonché del quadro organizzativo necessario affinché tale cooperazione abbia luogo. La gestione del sistema fiscale spetta principalmente agli Stati membri. La valutazione, la raccolta, la verifica e il recupero dell'IVA rientrano nelle competenze degli Stati membri. La Commissione non è quindi a conoscenza del controllo effettuato dalla Guardia di Finanza cui si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare.

2. La Commissione non ha alcuna competenza su questioni relative all'occupazione fittizia, né dispone di statistiche o dati aggiornati al riguardo.

3. La Commissione ha recentemente adottato nuove misure per migliorare la capacità degli Stati membri di lottare contro le frodi in materia di IVA. Sono stati ridotti i tempi di presentazione dell'elenco riepilogativo, è stata approvata la base giuridica per garantire l'accesso automatizzato a determinate informazioni contenute nelle banche dati di altri Stati membri da parte di funzionari del fisco ed è stata istituita Eurofisc, una rete per lo scambio multilaterale di informazioni mirate. L'uso combinato di tali strumenti permetterà alle amministrazioni fiscali di effettuare scambi e controlli incrociati di dati per scoprire eventuali truffe commesse utilizzando documenti falsi, tra cui fatture false.

Nella strategia Europa 2020 si sottolinea la necessità di prevenire e combattere il lavoro non dichiarato. Una raccomandazione specifica per paese è stata inviata all'Italia. La Commissione sta valutando la possibilità di istituire una piattaforma a livello europeo per rafforzare la cooperazione e lo scambio di buone pratiche tra gli ispettorati del lavoro e altri organismi incaricati di far rispettare la legge.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002312/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Data and measures on fictitious jobs

In the course of a tax inspection that led to the recovery of EUR 4.2 million in undeclared revenues, over EUR 400 000 in unpaid VAT and false invoices amounting to approximately EUR 1 million, the Italian Guardia di Finanza (financial police) discovered that there were 467 fictitious employees on the books of a company that has defrauded the Italian national social welfare institution of EUR 1.2 million.

The audit was carried out at a firm whose registered office was in an — apparently abandoned — warehouse in the countryside between Noicattaro and Torre a Mare, in the province of Bari. The company formally declared hundreds of employees, for whom it should have had suitable facilities and offices in place. Upon completion of the inspection, the public prosecutor's office in Bari charged 469 people with aggravated fraud against the State, two of whom have also been charged with tax crimes.

In view of these facts,

1. Is the Commission aware of the crackdown by the Guardia di Finanza in the province of Bari?

2. Can the Commission provide a general overview, with up-to-date data and statistics, of fraud against the social security authorities of the various Member States involving fictitious jobs?

3. What action does the Commission intend to take at European level to tackle the phenomenon of fraud involving unpaid VAT, false invoices and fictitious jobs?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

1. In the area of VAT, responsibilities are divided between the Commission and Member States. The role of the Commission is to ensure that there is a legal framework for a common VAT system in the internal market and for administrative cooperation between Member States, and that the necessary organisational framework enabling such cooperation is in place. The management of tax systems is primarily the responsibility of Member States. The assessment, collection, auditing, and the recovery of VAT fall under the responsibility of Member States. Therefore, the Commission is not aware of the control carried out by Guardia di Finanza.

2. The Commission has no responsibility for matters relating to fictitious employment. It does not dispose of any statistics or up-to-date data on fictitious jobs.

3. The Commission has recently adopted new measures to enhance Member States' ability to combat VAT fraud. The timeframe for submitting VAT recapitulative statement has been shortened, the legal basis to grant automated access for authorised tax officials to certain data contained in other Member States' databases has been approved. Eurofisc, a network for the multilateral exchange of targeted information has been set up. The combined use of these tools allows tax administrations to exchange and cross-check data in order to discover frauds carried out through the use of fake documents, including false invoices.

The need to prevent and fight undeclared work was highlighted in the Europe 2020 strategy. A Country-Specific Recommendation was sent to Italy. The Commission is examining the feasibility of a European level platform to strengthen the cooperation and exchange good practices among labour inspectorates and other enforcement bodies.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002313/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(29 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Pesci a rischio di estinzione

Con il mare più caldo alcuni pesci rischiano l'estinzione. Il 90 % dei pesci dell'Oceano meridionale, quello che circonda l'Antartide, appartengono a un gruppo così ben adattato alle sue acque gelide che se la temperatura del mare salisse solo di pochi gradi rischierebbero l'estinzione. Lo sostiene uno studio dell'Università di Padova.

La quasi totalità dell'ittiofauna antartica rischierebbe dunque di sparire con conseguenze che si ripercuoterebbero su tutta la catena alimentare visto che questi pesci rappresentano la principale fonte di cibo per i predatori quali pinguini, foche e balene.

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

1. se è informata sullo studio dell'Università di Padova;

2. se può fornire un quadro generale sullo stato dei mari e dell'ittiofauna nei mari che interessano l'Europa;

3. come intende contrastare i rischi di estinzione di numerose specie di pesci?

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

1. La Commissione è al corrente di vari studi relativi a specie ittiche delle acque atlantiche, minacciate dal cambiamento climatico, ai quali l'università di Padova ha apportato un significativo contributo.

2. Tracciare un quadro generale dello stato dei mari europei è uno dei principali obiettivi nell'ambito della direttiva quadro per la strategia sull'ambiente marino ([1]), onde per cui gli Stati membri dell'UE dovranno trasmettere alla Commissione — entro il 15 ottobre 2012 — una prima valutazione delle loro acque marine, tenendo conto dei dati esistenti, ove disponibili. Nel 2013 la Commissione presenterà quindi un'analisi delle relazioni degli Stati membri.

3. La Commissione è impegnata nella lotta all'estinzione non soltanto delle specie ittiche bensì di qualsiasi altra specie in pericolo, sia essa vegetale sia essa animale, come prevede la Strategia per la biodiversità 2020 ([2]) conformemente alla Convenzione sugli impegni relativi alla diversità biologica (Nagoya 2012). Inoltre, la proposta riforma della politica comune della pesca rafforzerà il legame fra la pesca ed il suo impatto sugli ecosistemi marini sensibili cercando di evitare qualsiasi ripercussione negativa delle attività umane sui medesimi.

([1]) Direttiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 17 giugno 2008 , che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria nel campo della politica per l'ambiente marino, GU L 164 del 25.6.2008.
([2]) COM(2011)244 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002313/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Fish species at risk of extinction

Some fish species are at risk of extinction owing to rising sea temperatures. According to a study conducted by Padua University, 90 % of the fish in the Southern Ocean surrounding the Antarctic belong to a group that are so well adapted to its freezing waters that if the temperature of the sea were to rise by just a few degrees, they would be at risk of extinction.

Almost all the fish species in the Antarctic are therefore potentially at risk of disappearing, which would have repercussions right along the food chain, given that these fish are the main source of food for predators such as penguins, seals and whales.

In view of this, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the study conducted by Padua University;

2. whether it can provide an overview of the state of the seas and the fish in waters of interest to Europe;

3. how it intends to combat the risk of extinction of numerous species of fish?

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

1. The Commission is aware of a number of publications related to fish in Antarctic waters threatened by climate change to which the University of Padova has significantly contributed.

2. An overview of the state of the European seas is one of the main exercises within the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([1]) whereby EU Member States will need to report to the Commission, by 15 October 2012, an initial assessment of their marine waters, taking account of existing data where available. The Commission will present an analysis of the Member States' reports in 2013.

3. The Commission is committed to combat the extinction not only of fish species but also any other endangered species, being plant or animal as set out in the Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 ([2]) in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity engagements (Nagoya 2012). Moreover, the proposed reform of the common fisheries policy will strengthen the link between fishery and its impact on sensible marine ecosystems trying to avoid any severe adverse human activities.

([1]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([2]) COM(2011) 244 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002314/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(29 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Stipendi medi in Europa

In Italia — secondo gli ultimi dati Eurostat — gli stipendi medi sono tra i più bassi dell'eurozona. Dalle statistiche emerge che in media un lavoratore italiano ha guadagnato nell'anno di riferimento 23 406 euro lordi: circa la metà che in Lussemburgo (48 914), Olanda (44 412) o Germania (41 100). Seguono Irlanda (39 858), Finlandia (39 197), Francia (33 574) e Austria (33 384) . Ma più sorprendente risulta il livello più elevato di due paesi in grave difficoltà economica come la Grecia (29 160) e la Spagna (26 316), a cui fa seguito Cipro (24 775).

Eurostat riporta l'elenco delle paghe lorde medie annue dei paesi dell'Unione europea anche per gli anni precedenti all'ultimo aggiornamento (2009), così da poter anche osservare la crescita delle retribuzioni. L'avanzamento per l'Italia risulta tra i più ridotti: in quattro anni (dal 2005) il rialzo è stato del 3,3 %, molto distante dal +29,4 % della Spagna e dal +22 % del Portogallo. E anche i paesi che partivano da livelli già alti hanno messo a segno rialzi rilevanti: Lussemburgo (+16,1 %), Olanda (+14,7 %), Belgio (+11,0 %), Francia (+10,0 %) e Germania (+6,2 %).

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei dati Eurostat sugli stipendi nei Paesi dell'Unione europea;

2. come intende favorire l'economia europea, incentivare la spesa delle famiglie e far aumentare il potere di acquisto e il valore nominale degli stipendi;

3. se intende introdurre sistemi di reddito minimo in tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione per combattere la povertà;

4. se sono attive o se s'intendano avviare politiche finalizzate all'armonizzazione degli stipendi in base al potere di acquisto in eurozona.

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

1. Eurostat è l'ufficio statistico dell'Unione europea ed è anche una direzione generale della Commissione. La Commissione è a conoscenza delle statistiche pubblicate da Eurostat. La Commissione desidera attirare l'attenzione dell'onorevole deputato sul fatto che la cifra relativa ai guadagni annui citata per l'Italia si riferisce all'anno 2006 mentre i dati relativi agli altri paesi riguardano il 2009 (2008 per la Francia e 2007 per l'Irlanda). Le corrispondenti cifre per il 2009 sono 27.419 euro (Italia), 35.530 (Francia) e 45.207 (Irlanda).

2. Il potere d'acquisto dei nuclei familiari e la domanda aggregata sono fattori importanti nel contesto degli obiettivi occupazionali e di riduzione della povertà della strategia Europa 2020. Nel contempo è importante assicurare che l'aumento dei salari rispecchi gli sviluppi in tema di produttività. Nella Analisi annuale della crescita 2012 la Commissione ha ribadito la necessità che gli Stati membri affrontino il problema della disoccupazione e le conseguenze sociali della crisi. La Commissione riesaminerà i progressi compiuti dai vari Stati membri e i loro programmi nazionali di riforma e proporrà raccomandazioni specifiche per paese da adottarsi a cura del Consiglio.

3. L'introduzione e la gestione di sistemi di reddito minimo al fine di lottare contro la povertà rientra nelle competenze degli Stati membri e si basa spesso sul dialogo con le parti sociali. La Commissione segue le discussioni politiche in corso negli Stati membri. Per un'analisi del ruolo che i sistemi di reddito minimo svolgono nell'affrontare la piaga della povertà in Europa si rinvia, ad esempio, alla rassegna Occupazione e sviluppi sociali in Europa 2011.

4. La Commissione non prevede di avviare politiche volte ad armonizzare i salari sulla base del potere d'acquisto nella zona dell'euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002314/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Average salaries in Europe

According to the latest Eurostat data, average salaries in Italy are among the lowest in the euro area. Statistics show that, on average, an Italian worker's gross annual earnings amounted to EUR 23 406 in the reference year, approximately half the level of mean gross annual earnings in Luxembourg (EUR 48 914), the Netherlands (EUR 44 412) or Germany EUR (41 100). Ireland (EUR 39 858), Finland (EUR 39 197), France (EUR 33 574) and Austria (EUR 33 384) came next in the ranking. More surprising, however, is the fact that the average level was higher in two countries known to be in serious economic difficulty, namely Greece (EUR 29 160) and Spain (EUR 26 316), followed by Cyprus (EUR 24 775).

Eurostat also lists the mean gross annual earnings in European Union Member States for the years prior to the last update (2009), thus enabling salary growth to be observed. The rate of increase in Italy is among the slowest: the rise was 3.3 % in the four years since 2005, a far cry from the + 29.4 % of Spain and the + 22 % of Portugal. Even countries starting with high salary levels managed significant growth: Luxembourg (+ 16.1 %), the Netherlands (+ 14.7 %), Belgium (+ 11.0 %), France (+ 10.0 %) and Germany (+ 6.2 %).

In view of the above,

1. Is the Commission aware of the Eurostat data on salaries in European Union Member States?

2. How does the Commission intend to boost the European economy, encourage families to spend and increase purchasing power and the nominal value of salaries?

3. Does the Commission intend to introduce minimum income systems in all European Union Member States to combat poverty?

4. Can the Commission state whether any policies are in place, or planned, with a view to harmonising salaries on the basis of purchasing power in the euro area?

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

1. Eurostat is the Statistical Office of the European Union and is also a Directorate General of the Commission. The Commission is well aware of the statistics published by Eurostat. The Commission would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that the annual earnings figure cited for Italy refers to the year 2006 while the data for the other countries refer to 2009 (2008 for France and 2007 for Ireland). The corresponding 2009 figures are EUR 27 419 (Italy), EUR 35 530 (France), and EUR 45 207 (Ireland).

2. Purchasing power of households and aggregate demand are important factors in the context of the Europe 2020 employment and poverty reduction targets. At the same time, it is important to ensure that wage growth reflect developments in productivity. In the Annual Growth Survey 2012 the Commission has underlined the need for Member States to address unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis. The Commission will review the progress made by each Member State and their National Reform Programmes and will propose country-specific recommendations to be adopted by the Council.

3. The introduction and operation of minimum income schemes with the aim to combat poverty is within the competence of Member States and is often based on dialogue with social partners. The Commission is following the ongoing policy discussions in Member States. For an analysis of the role of minimum income schemes to tackle poverty across Europe, please refer, for example, to the Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2011 review.

4. The Commission is not planning to launch policies to harmonise salaries on the basis of purchasing power in the euro area.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002315/12
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(29 februari 2012)

Betreft: Bijdrage veevoeder aan klimaatverandering

Het broeikasgas methaan (CH_4) komt in grote hoeveelheden vrij in de melkveehouderij bij de spijsvertering van rundvee. De landbouw draagt daarmee in belangrijke mate bij aan de klimaatverandering. Er zijn verschillende initiatieven op het gebied van de ontwikkeling van veevoeder, waarbij enzymen worden toegevoegd aan het veevoer van rundvee zodat er uiteindelijk minder methaan wordt uitgestoten. Daardoor wordt er een bijdrage geleverd aan de strijd tegen klimaatverandering. Toch lijken er weinig gecoördineerde acties te zijn op Europees en mondiaal vlak om ook de veeteelt een rol te geven bij de aanpak van de uitstoot van broeikasgassen bij de landbouw, met name rundvee.

1. Wat weerhoudt de Commissie ervan om boeren te verplichten een bijdrage te leveren tot een vermindering van broeikasgassen zoals methaan door middel van bijvoorbeeld het aanpassen van veevoeder?

2. Welke maatregelen neemt de Commissie om de ontwikkeling en vermarkting van veevoeder, hetgeen bijdraagt aan vermindering van broeikasgassen zoals methaan, en daarmee het aanpakken van klimaatverandering, te stimuleren?

3. Welke aandacht besteedt de Commissie aan dierenwelzijn bij het aanpassen van veevoer?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(18 april 2012)

Zowel in het Kyotoprotocol als in de beschikking inzake de verdeling van de inspanningen is bepaald dat de emissies van broeikasgassen afkomstig van vee in de wettelijk bindende doelstellingen van de partijen of de lidstaten worden opgenomen. Daardoor hebben de lidstaten de uitstoot uit de landbouw tussen 1990 en 2009 met 22 % teruggebracht. De Commissie is zich ervan bewust dat er in de veehouderij verdere mogelijkheden tot beperking van de uitstoot bestaan, maar de kosteneffectiviteit en de efficiëntie daarvan zijn waarschijnlijk afhankelijk van de specifieke situatie per land. De lidstaten zijn derhalve vrij in hun keuze van de sectoren waarvoor zij willen investeren in maatregelen ter beperking van de uitstoot om hun reductiedoelstellingen op een kosteneffectieve manier te bereiken.

De EU-wetgeving op het gebied van veevoeder biedt een kader voor veehouders om hun voedersystemen te optimaliseren, wat zowel de uitstoot van broeikasgassen als het dierenwelzijn betreft. Ook wordt door deze wetgeving de transparantie ten aanzien van de verschillende voedermiddelen verbeterd, waardoor de producenten in staat worden gesteld de optimale voeding samen te stellen. De verordening betreffende toevoegingsmiddelen voor diervoeding biedt de mogelijkheid om een vergunning te geven voor toevoegingsmiddelen die positieve effecten hebben op het milieu, bijvoorbeeld doordat ze de uitstoot van methaan verminderen. Hoewel tot nu toe nog geen vergunningsaanvragen voor toevoegingsmiddelen zijn ontvangen die specifiek tot doel hebben de uitstoot van methaan te verminderen, zijn wel veel vergunningen voor toevoegingsmiddelen voor diervoeders afgegeven ter verbetering van zoötechnische parameters. Een verbetering van zoötechnische parameters zoals de omzettingscoëfficiënt voor diervoeder betekent tegelijkertijd een vermindering van de uitstoot van CO_2-equivalenten.

Tot slot kunnen de lidstaten innovatieve diervoedersystemen ondersteunen door middel van steunmaatregelen in het kader van de tweede pijler van het GLB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002315/12
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Cattle feed contributes to climate change

Methane (CH_4), a greenhouse gas, is emitted in large quantities on dairy farms as a by-product of digestion in cattle. Thus, agriculture contributes significantly to climate change. There are various initiatives in the field of fodder development, involving adding enzymes to cattle feed to reduce the eventual emission of methane. This helps to combat climate change. Nevertheless, there seems to be few coordinated actions on the European and global level that also give the cattle breeding sector a role to play in reducing the emission of greenhouse gases in agriculture, in particular by cattle.

1. What is preventing the Commission from making it mandatory for farmers to contribute to reducing the emission of greenhouse gases, such as methane, by for example adapting cattle feed?

2. What measures is the Commission taking to stimulate the development and marketing of cattle feed, which helps to reduce greenhouse gases, such as methane, and thus combats climate change?

3. What consideration does the Commission give to animal welfare in the adjustment of cattle feed?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The Kyoto Protocol and the Effort Sharing Decision both set out that emissions of greenhouse gasses from livestock are included in Parties or Member States legally binding reduction targets. Thus Member States have reduced emissions from agriculture by 22 % from 1990 to 2009. The Commission is aware of further mitigation options in the livestock sector, however, their cost-effectiveness and efficiency may depend on the country-specific situation. Therefore, the Member States are free to choose the sectors in which to invest into mitigation activities to meet their reduction targets in a cost-effective way.

The EU feed legislation creates the framework for livestock farmers to optimise their feeding systems, both in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and to respect animal welfare needs. It also improves transparency on the various feed materials enabling farmers to compose the optimal diet. The Feed Additive Regulation gives the possibility to authorise feed additives which have a beneficial effect on the environment, e.g. reduction of methane production. Although, no applications for the approval of feed additives have so far been received with the specific objective of reducing methane emissions, many feed additives have been authorised for the improvement of zootechnical parameters. An improvement of zootechnical parameters such as feed conversion ratio implies simultaneously a reduction in emissions of CO_2-equivalents.

Finally, innovative livestock feed systems can be supported by Member States through support measures under in the second Pillar of the CAP.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002316/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(29 februari 2012)

Betreft: (Im)migrant?

De Europese Commissie heeft een mededeling ingediend over de instelling van een Europees grensbewakingssysteem, genaamd Eurosur. Als een van de voornaamste doelen van Eurosur noemt de Commissie „de vermindering van de tol aan mensenlevens door het redden van meer illegale immigranten op zee". In haar persbericht staat: „Talrijke illegale immigranten en personen die behoefte hebben aan internationale bescherming reizen in extreem moeilijke omstandigheden en nemen grote persoonlijke risico's bij hun pogingen om de EU illegaal binnen te komen, verborgen in voertuigen, vrachtschepen enz. Vooral de recente manier van reizen aan boord van niet-zeewaardige en overvolle boten heeft geleid tot een toename van het aantal onfortuinlijke migranten en vluchtelingen dat de verdrinkingsdood vindt in de Atlantische Oceaan tussen Afrika en de Canarische Eilanden en in de Middellandse Zee."

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Onderzoek naar de mogelijkheden tot instelling van een Europees grensbewakingssysteem (Eurosur)" ([1])?

2. Kan de Commissie haar definitie geven van de term „(im)migrant"?

3. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat de hier bedoelde personen, die zich op bootjes in de Atlantische Oceaan tussen Afrika en de Canarische Eilanden en in de Middellandse Zee bevinden, vanuit EU-perspectief géén (im)migranten zijn? Zo neen, kan de Commissie dan aangeven bij welk EU-land — -gebied de betreffende wateren horen?

4. Kan de Commissie verklaren waarom zij personen op bootjes, die zich (nog) niet op EU-grondgebied bevinden, alvast „(im)migranten" noemt? Noemt zij personen die op andere wijze voornemens zijn de EU binnen te komen, zoals per trein, vliegtuig of te voet, óók bij voorbaat al „(im)migranten"?

5. Eigen verantwoordelijkheid is een uitgangspunt van de vrije markteconomie die de EU voorstaat. Waarom kiest de Commissie niet voor het uitgangspunt eigen verantwoordelijkheid waar het personen betreft die voornemens zijn zich, al dan niet illegaal, naar de EU te begeven?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(19 april 2012)

1. Op 13 februari 2008 heeft de Commissie haar goedkeuring gehecht aan de mededeling waar het geachte Parlementslid naar verwijst. Op 12 december 2011 is het voorstel van de Commissie voor een verordening tot oprichting van een Europees grensbewakingssysteem (Eurosur) aangenomen ([2]).

2. Er bestaat geen officiële definitie voor de term „migrant" in het EU-acquis. Wel wordt in Verordening (EG) nr. 862/2007 de term „immigrant" gedefinieerd voor statistische doeleinden.

3 & 4. In een bredere context wordt met de term „migrant" een persoon aangeduid die een bepaald land of een bepaalde regio verlaat om zich in een ander land of een andere regio te vestigen ([3]). Los van de behoefte aan internationale bescherming kan er, zodra iemand een land verlaat om zich elders te vestigen, van worden uitgegaan dat er sprake is van migratie, ongeacht de manier waarop de betrokkene zich verplaatst (per boot, trein, vliegtuig of te voet). Het verschil tussen territoriale en internationale wateren is vastgelegd in het internationaal recht.

5. Migratie is een vrije en individuele keuze. De Commissie heeft zich nooit tegen dit recht gekant. Wel wil de Commissie maatregelen bevorderen om illegale migratie tegen te gaan en legale migratiekanalen te stimuleren, en zij herinnert eraan dat de lidstaten zelf de voorwaarden voor en de omvang van de migratie uit derde landen naar hun grondgebied bepalen.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/08/86&format=HTML&aged=1&language=NL&guiLanguage=en.
([2]) COM(2011) 873 definitief.
([3]) Een verklarende woordenlijst van het Europees migratienetwerk (EMN) is beschikbaar op www.emn.europa.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002316/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: (Im)migrant?

The European Commission has presented a communication about creating a European border surveillance system: Eurosur. The Commission states that 'reduc[ing] the death toll of illegal immigrants by rescuing more lives at sea' is one of Eurosur's main goals. Its press release says, 'Many illegal immigrants and persons in need of international protection are travelling in conditions of extreme hardship and are taking great personal risks in their attempts to enter the EU illegally by hiding in vehicles, on cargo vessels, etc. The recent practice of travelling on board of unseaworthy and overcrowded boats has multiplied the number of unfortunate migrants who continue to lose their lives by drowning in the Atlantic Ocean between Africa and the Canary Islands and in the Mediterranean Sea.'

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'Examining the Creation of a European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur)'? ([1])

2. Can the Commission provide its definition of the term '(im)migrant'?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the persons referred to here, travelling on small boats in the Atlantic Ocean between Africa and the Canary Islands and in the Mediterranean Sea, are not (im)migrants from an EU perspective? If not, can the Commission specify to which EU country/area the waters in question belong?

4. Can the Commission explain why it calls people on small boats, who have not (yet) entered the EU territory, '(im)migrants'? Does the Commission also describe people who intend to enter the EU in a different manner, for example, by train or plane or on foot, as '(im)migrants'?

5. Individual responsibility is a basic principle of the free market economy advocated by the EU. Why does the Commission not choose individual responsibility as the basic principle when it comes to persons who intend to enter the EU, illegally or not?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

1. The Commission adopted the communication to which the Honourable Member refers on 13 February 2008. The Commission proposal for a regulation establishing the European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur) was adopted on 12 December 2011 ([2]).

2. There is no formal definition for 'migrant' in the EU *acquis*, whilst, for statistical purposes, an 'immigrant' is defined in Regulation (EC) 862/2007.

3 and 4. In a broader context, a migrant can be understood to refer to a person who leaves one country or region to settle in another ([3]). Without prejudice to any needs of international protection, once a person leaves the territory of a country, with the objective of settling elsewhere, they could be understood as undertaking a migration independent of the means used (e.g. by boat, train, plane or foot). The issue of whether part of the sea is considered to be territorial or international waters is established by international law.

5. It is a freedom and an individual decision by each person whether or not to undertake a migration. The Commission does not, and never has, opposed this right. It does, however, wish to promote measures to reduce irregular migration and promote legal channels of entry into the EU, noting that it is for each Member State to decide on the conditions and volume of admissions of third-country nationals to its territory.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/08/86&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.
([2]) COM(2011) 873 final.
([3]) EMN Glossary available at: www.emn.europa.eu.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002317/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(29 februari 2012)

Betreft: Grensoverschrijdende misdaad

De georganiseerde criminaliteit stijgt in West-Europa en daalt fors in Midden- en Oost-Europa. Die trend is zichtbaar sinds de verruiming van het interne Europese handelsverkeer en de uitbreiding van de Europese Unie. „We exporteren niet alleen goederen, maar ook onze misdaad", zegt Agata Tonder-Nowak, hoofdonderzoekster georganiseerde misdaad van de landelijke politie in Warschau ([1]).

1. Beschikt de Commissie over cijfers met betrekking tot grensoverschrijdende misdaad binnen de EU van meerdere jaren en de verschuiving daarin per lidstaat? Zo ja, is de Commissie ertoe bereid deze te verstrekken? Zo neen, kan de Commissie deze verzamelen?

2. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat Polen, en andere Midden- en Oost-Europese landen, hun misdaad exporteren?

3. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat Europese politici bewust de aard en de omvang van de Oost-Europese misdaad hebben verzwegen in de aanloop naar de toetreding van Oost-Europese landen tot de EU ([2])?

4. Trekt de Commissie conclusies uit voornoemde feiten? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(3 april 2012)

De Commissie verwijst naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-000186/2012 ([3]). De meest recente statistieken over misdaad kan u vinden in de Eurostat-publicatie „Statistics in focus" ([4]). De statistische gegevens, verstrekt door de nationale politiediensten, maken het mogelijk om verschillende landen en soorten criminaliteit te vergelijken in de periode 2002 tot en met 2008.

Deze informatie laat de Commissie niet toe om de veronderstellingen van het geachte Parlementslid te bevestigen.

De Commissie verbindt zich ertoe de lidstaten te helpen bij de aanpak van grensoverschrijdende georganiseerde misdaad door middel van concrete maatregelen, zoals die in de mededeling van de Commissie „De EU-interneveiligheidsstrategie in actie". De uiteindelijke verantwoordelijkheid voor de preventie van criminaliteit en wetshandhavingsmaatregelen blijft echter bij de respectieve lidstaten van de EU.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3077381/2011/12/15/Mobiele-bendes-Oost-Europa-massaal-richting-westen.dhtml.
([2]) http://www.elsevier.nl/web/Nieuws/Nederland/332049/Politici-verzwegen-bewust-omvang-OostEuropese-misdaad.htm
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-10-058/EN/KS-SF-10-058-EN. PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002317/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Cross-border crime

Organised crime is increasing in western Europe and decreasing sharply in central and eastern Europe. This trend has become apparent following the increase in internal European trade and the enlargement of the European Union. 'We export not only goods, but also crime,' says Agata Tonder-Nowak, the Chief Investigator, Organised Crime, for the national police in Warsaw ([1]).

1. Does the Commission have figures on cross-border crime in the EU over the last few years and on patterns in each Member State? If so, is the Commission prepared to provide them? If not, does the Commission plan to compile such figures?

2. Can the Commission confirm that Poland, and other central and eastern European countries, are exporting their crime?

3. Can the Commission confirm that European politicians deliberately concealed the nature and the extent of crime in eastern Europe in the run-up to the accession of eastern European countries to the EU ([2])?

4. Can the Commission draw any conclusions from the facts outlined above? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission would like to refer to its reply to Written Question E-000186/2012 ([3]). The most recent crime statistics available can be found in the Eurostat publication 'Statistics in Focus' ([4]). Statistics were provided by national police forces and allow for comparison of countries and types of crime over the period from 2002 to 2008.

On the basis of these data, the Commission is not in a position to confirm the assumptions made by the Honourable Member.

The Commission is committed to assist EU Member States in addressing cross-border organised crime through concrete measures such as those listed in the Commission communication on the Internal Security Strategy in Action. The ultimate responsibility for both crime prevention and law enforcement actions remains, however, with the respective EU Member States.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3077381/2011/12/15/Mobiele-bendes-Oost-Europa-massaal-richting-westen.dhtml.
([2]) http://www.elsevier.nl/web/Nieuws/Nederland/332049/Politici-verzwegen-bewust-omvang-OostEuropese-misdaad.htm
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-10-058/EN/KS-SF-10-058-EN.PDF

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002319/12
aan de Commissie
Barry Madlener (NI)
(29 februari 2012)

Betreft: EU financiert meest corrupte land ter wereld: Somalië

In Londen hebben internationale leiders de toekomst van Somalië besproken. Namens de EU waren Catherine Ashton (hoge vertegenwoordiger voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid) en Andris Piebalgs (eurocommissaris voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking) aanwezig. Voor hen blijven EU-investeringen in het meest corrupte land ter wereld een topprioriteit.

In 2011 alleen al ontving Somalië maar liefst 280 miljoen euro aan ontwikkelingsgeld van de EU. Daarmee is de EU de grootste sponsor van het land. Maar let op: Somalië is het meest corrupte land ter wereld. In de corruptie-index van Transparency International, waarin 182 landen worden genoemd, staat Somalië helemaal onderaan. Het land scoort, op een schaal van 1 tot 10, slechts een 1; lager kan niet. De corruptie viert er hoogtij, medegefinancierd door de EU.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de bijeenkomst van internationale leiders in Londen over de toekomst van Somalië ([1]), het feit dat Somalië in 2011 280 miljoen euro van de EU heeft gekregen ([2]), en de corruptie-index van Transparency Internationaal waarin Somalië met een score van 1 op de laagste plaats staat ([3])?

2. Kan de Commissie concreet aangeven wat er in 2011 met de 280 miljoen euro van de EU in Somalië is gebeurd? Kan de Commissie aangeven hoeveel EU-geld er in verkeerde handen is beland, zoals bij de islamitische terreurorganisatie al-Shabaab die er mogelijk wapens mee heeft gekocht?

3. Kan de Commissie garanderen dat er niet ook indirect EU-geld bij al-Shabaab terecht komt, bijvoorbeeld in de vorm van een „belasting" die ngo's hebben moeten betalen om in Somalië te mogen opereren?

4. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat het volstrekt ongepast is om ontwikkelingshulp te geven aan Somalië, gezien de extreme corruptie en de verwerpelijke recente ontwikkelingen in dit land? Zo neen, waarom niet?

5. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid onmiddellijk alle ontwikkelingshulp aan Somalië te stoppen? Zo neen, hoe kan de Commissie verzekeren dat het EU-geld goed terecht komt?

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(3 mei 2012)

1. De Commissie heeft actief deelgenomen aan de conferentie in Londen op 23 februari 2011.

2-3. In 2011 alleen al heeft de EU (d.m.v. de EU-begroting en bilaterale bijdragen van lidstaten) de humanitaire hulp van de EU in Somalië met meer dan 280 miljoen euro gefinancierd. Deze hulp was bestemd voor de meest kwetsbare bevolkingsgroepen die waren getroffen door het conflict en natuurrampen zoals droogte (met de nadruk op voedselhulp, water, rioolwaterzuivering, gezondheidszorg en voeding, onderdak, in eigen land ontheemde bevolkingsgroepen en vluchtelingen). De Commissie heeft geen aanwijzingen of bewijs dat er steun in verkeerde handen zou zijn beland.

4. Nee. De Commissie is van mening dat Somalië als kwetsbaar land, waar plaatselijke conflicten en conflicten onder clans al meer dan 20 jaar woeden, op korte termijn steun nodig heeft om het hoofd te bieden aan de humanitaire crisis, maar ook behoefte heeft aan duurzame oplossingen voor de endemische politieke, veiligheids- en sociaaleconomische problemen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/headlines/news/2012/02/20120223_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/press_room/press_packs/somalia/index_en.htm
([3]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/.

5. Nee. Hoewel de onveiligheid nog steeds het grootste gevaar in Somalië is, dient ook de ernst van de corruptie niet te worden onderschat. Om dit probleem aan te pakken, tracht de EU de kanalen voor steun te diversifiëren en samen te werken met meer flexibele partners die een grotere geografische toegang hebben. De EU-steun gaat gepaard met een versterkte politieke dialoog met de hoogste autoriteiten, die helpt om de risico's van mogelijke corruptie te verminderen. Bovendien behoren een degelijke risicoanalyse en degelijke risicobeperkende maatregelen steeds tot de vaste procedures voor EU-projecten. Tijdens de tenuitvoerlegging van een project wordt er toezicht uitgeoefend en worden er regelmatig beoordelingen uitgevoerd door middel van bezoeken ter plaatse, tussentijdse evaluaties en evaluaties achteraf. Overigens is het door de voortdurende conflicten en de onveiligheid in bepaalde streken van Somalië soms vrijwel onmogelijk voor donors om bepaalde projecten van nabij te volgen of er zelfs maar toegang toe te hebben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002319/12
to the Commission
Barry Madlener (NI)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: EU funds the most corrupt country in the world: Somalia

In London, international leaders have discussed the future of Somalia. The EU was represented by Baroness Catherine Ashton (high representative for foreign affairs and security policy) and Andris Piebalgs (EU commissioner for development cooperation). For them, EU investments in the world's most corrupt country remains a top priority.

In 2011 alone, Somalia received no less than EUR 280 million of development funds from the EU. This makes the EU the country's largest sponsor. But note: Somalia is the most corrupt country in the world. Transparency International's corruption index, which includes 182 countries, lists Somalia right at the bottom. On a scale of 1 to 10, the country scores just 1: the lowest score possible. Corruption reigns supreme there, financed in part by the EU.

1. Does the Commission know about the meeting of international leaders in London on the future of Somalia ([1]), the fact that Somalia received EUR 280 million from the EU in 2011 ([2]), and Transparency International's corruption index, which lists Somalia, with a score of 1, in the lowest position ([3])?

2. Can the Commission specify concretely what happened with the EUR 280 million from the EU in Somalia in 2011? Can the Commission specify how much EU money has ended up in the wrong hands, for example, in the hands of the Islamic terror organisation, al-Shabaab, which may have bought weapons with it?

3. Can the Commission guarantee that no EU money also reaches al-Shabaab indirectly, for example, in the form of a 'tax' that NGOs have had to pay in order to be allowed to work in Somalia?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is absolutely inappropriate to provide development aid to Somalia, given the extreme corruption and the recent reprehensible developments in that country? If not, why not?

5. Is the Commission prepared to immediately stop all development aid to Somalia? If not, how can the Commission ensure that the EU money reaches the right destination?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2012)

1. The Commission participated actively in the London Conference on 23 February 2011.

2-3. In 2011 alone, the EU (EU budget and Member States' bilateral contributions) financed more than EUR 280 million in EU humanitarian aid in Somalia, targeting the most vulnerable population affected by both the conflict and natural hazards such as droughts (focus on food aid, water, sanitation, health/nutrition, shelter, internally displaced populations and refugees). The Commission has no reports or evidence of assistance ending up in the wrong hands.

4. No. The Commission is of the opinion that Somalia as a fragile country with over 20 years of local and clan conflicts needs support to face the humanitarian crisis in the short term, but also needs sustainable solutions to its endemic political, security and socioeconomic problems.

5. No. The major risk in Somalia remains insecurity but corruption is also a risk. To address this, the EU tries to diversify the channels of its aid by working with more flexible partners with greater geographical access. EU assistance is accompanied by a strengthened high-level political dialogue with the authorities which also helps to reduce any risk of possible corruption. Moreover, EU project procedures include serious risk analysis and risk mitigation measures for each project. During the project implementation, regular monitoring and evaluations are carried out through field visits and mid-term and end-term evaluations. It is, however, important to stress that the ongoing conflict and the insecurity in certain areas of Somalia can jeopardise the capacity of donors to access and monitor projects.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/headlines/news/2012/02/20120223_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/press_room/press_packs/somalia/index_en.htm
([3]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002320/12
aan de Commissie
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE), Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D), Ivo Belet (PPE) en Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(29 februari 2012)

Betreft: Maritieme veiligheid van nucleaire transporten

In de Europese wateren vindt veel transport van radioactief materiaal via schepen plaats. Naargelang het type van materiaal gebeurt dit met hiervoor speciaal uitgeruste schepen (hoog radioactief materiaal) of maakt het nucleair materiaal deel uit van meer conventionele vaarten (o.a. veerboten).

1. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de veiligheidsvoorwaarden waaraan in de EU het transport van radioactieve ladingen via de zee moet voldoen?

2. Zijn er bijzondere voorwaarden voor de schepen die daarvoor worden ingezet (zoals bijvoorbeeld. dubbelwandigheid)?

3. Op welke manier worden de controles op deze veiligheidsvoorwaarden georganiseerd? Wie is daarvoor bevoegd?

4. Beschikt de Commissie over cijfergegevens van het aantal controles dat op dit gebied plaats vindt in de landen van Unie?

5. Beschikt de Commissie over cijfergegevens van het aantal controles waarbij inbreuken op de veiligheidsvoorwaarden voor het transport van radioactief materiaal over zee werden vastgesteld?

6. Heeft de Commissies beleidsvoornemens op het vlak van het transport van radioactief materiaal over zee? Zo ja, welke en wat is daarbij de geplande timing?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(17 april 2012)

1, 2 en 6. De veiligheids- en beveiligingsnormen voor het vervoer van radioactief materiaal zijn vastgesteld bij internationale instrumenten. De relevante regelgeving van de Internationale Organisatie voor Atoomenergie omvat regels betreffende de verpakking van radioactief materiaal teneinde de veiligheid van mensen en het milieu te waarborgen in extreme gevallen van ongevallen, ongeacht de wijze van vervoer. De gebruikte vaten/houders en schepen voor het vervoer over zee, alsook de organisatie van het vervoer zelf, moeten tevens voldoen aan de laatste veiligheidseisen die voortvloeien uit de verdragen van de Internationale Maritieme Organisatie ([1]). Op EU-niveau wordt toegezien op de naleving van deze verdragen en codes door de vlaggenstaat, overeenkomstig Richtlijn 2009/21/EG, en wat de havenstaatcontrole betreft, overeenkomstig Richtlijn 2009/16/EG.

Krachtens Richtlijn 2002/59/EG moet de exploitant van een schip dat op weg is naar een haven in een EU-lidstaat bepaalde informatie mededelen, onder meer met betrekking tot gevaarlijke of verontreinigende goederen aan boord van het schip. Overeenkomstig Richtlijn 2006/117/Euratom moeten de lidstaten van bestemming of van doorvoer bovendien geïnformeerd worden over de grensoverschrijdende verscheping van radioactieve afvalstoffen of verbruikte splijtstof naar of door hun land en moeten zij de gelegenheid hebben zich daartegen te verzetten of bepaalde voorwaarden op te leggen.

Momenteel is de Commissie niet van plan om op dit gebied verdere beleidsvoorstellen vast te stellen.

3., 4. en 5. Het is de verantwoordelijkheid van de nationale autoriteiten om toe te zien op de naleving van de hierboven bedoelde internationale normen. Dit gebeurt door de vlaggenstaat wat schepen betreft die geregistreerd zijn in een lidstaat en de vlag van dat land voeren, en door middel van de havenstaatcontrole wat schepen betreft die de vlag van een derde land voeren en de haven van een lidstaat aandoen.

Er worden geen afzonderlijke gegevens bijgehouden wat de inspecties betreft van schepen die radioactief materiaal vervoeren.

([1]) Het Internationaal Verdrag voor de beveiliging van mensenlevens op zee bevat een Code met betrekking tot de wijze waarop schepen moeten zijn gebouwd voordat daarmee bestraalde splijtstof mag worden vervoerd. De Internationale Code voor het vervoer van gevaarlijke stoffen over zee omvat een hoofdstuk betreffende radioactieve lading die wordt vervoerd met schepen die niet speciaal voor het vervoer van dergelijke lading zijn gebouwd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002320/12
to the Commission
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE), Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D), Ivo Belet (PPE) and Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Maritime safety of nuclear shipments

Much radioactive material is transported by ships in European waters. Depending on the type of material, specially-equipped ships are used (for highly radioactive material) or the nuclear material is shipped by more conventional vessels (including ferries).

1. Can the Commission provide an overview of the safety requirements that must be complied with when shipping radioactive cargoes by sea in the EU?

2. Are there special requirements for ships used for this purpose (such as double-hull construction, for example)?

3. How are checks on these safety requirements organised? Who is authorised to carry out the checks?

4. Does the Commission have figures on the number of inspections carried out in this area in EU Member States?

5. Does the Commission have figures on the number of inspections that found violations of these safety requirements?

6. Does the Commission have any policy proposals for the shipment of radioactive material by sea? If so, what proposals and what is the planned timing?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

1, 2 and 6. Safety and security standards for the transport of radioactive materials have been set by international instruments. Relevant International Atomic Energy Agency regulations include rules on packaging for the safety of people and the environment in extreme cases of accidents, regardless of the mode of transport. The casks and the sea transport vessels used, as well as the organisation of transport, should also meet the latest safety requirements deriving from the International Maritime Organisation conventions ([1]). At EU level these conventions and codes are enforced at the level of flag State by Directive 2009/21/EC and with regard to Port State Control (PSC) by Directive 2009/16/EC.

Directive 2002/59/EC provides for the notification of certain information by the operator of a ship bound for a port of an EU country, including notification of dangerous or polluting goods on board ships. In addition, Directive 2006/117/Euratom provides that the Member States of destination and of transit are informed about transboundary shipments of radioactive waste or spent fuel to or through their country and have an opportunity to object to them, or impose conditions.

The Commission does not plan at this stage to adopt policy proposals in this area.

3, 4 and 5. It is the responsibility of national authorities to ensure compliance with the abovementioned international standards. This is done by the flag state with regard to vessels registered in a Member State and flying its flag, and by means of PSC for foreign flagged vessels calling at their ports.

No separate records are kept for inspections of vessels carrying radioactive material.

([1]) The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea contains a Code on how vessels have to be constructed before they can be allowed to carry irradiated nuclear fuel. The International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code includes a chapter related to radioactive cargo carried on vessels which are not specially constructed for such cargoes.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002322/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(29 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Areszt dla białoruskiego opozycjonisty

22 lutego działacz białoruskiej kampanii opozycyjnej „Mów Prawdę!", były więzień polityczny Pawał Winahradau został skazany na 10 dni aresztu. Sąd uznał, że uczestniczył on w nielegalnej demonstracji –„wiecu zabawek", który odbył się 10 lutego przy wejściu do siedziby władz miejskich na Placu Niepodległości w Mińsku. Organizatorzy akcji wystawili tego dnia pluszowe zabawki z transparentami.

Fala represji białoruskich władz wobec działaczy społecznych i przedstawicieli opozycji narasta. Obywatelom odmawia się prawa do manifestowania swoich poglądów i udziału w pokojowych akcjach protestu. W związku z tym, pragnę zapytać Komisję, czy ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie aresztowania działacza białoruskiej organizacji „Mów Prawdę!" i wyrazić stanowczy sprzeciw wobec represjonowaniu opozycjonistów w tym kraju?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(21 maja 2012 r.)

Komisja wyraża zaniepokojenie utrzymującym się brakiem poszanowania praw człowieka, demokracji i praworządności na Białorusi i ubolewa, że nadal podejmowane są represyjne środki wobec przedstawicieli społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i opozycji politycznej. W tym kontekście Komisji znany jest przypadek „wiecu zabawek", do którego odnosi się Szanowny Pan Poseł, jak również znane są inne próby wyrażania poglądów i opinii przez przedstawicieli społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i opozycji politycznej, które władza często tłumi przy użyciu siły.

Komisja będzie nadal na różnych forach publicznie potępiać trwające prześladowania przedstawicieli opozycji i społeczeństwa obywatelskiego. Jak to również wyraźnie stwierdzono w konkluzjach Rady do Spraw Zagranicznych z dnia 23 marca 2012 r., środki ograniczające stosowane przez UE podlegają stałemu przeglądowi i Rada zastrzega sobie prawo do dodania do wykazu na zbliżających się posiedzeniach Rady kolejnych przedsiębiorców i przedsiębiorstw czerpiących korzyści z reżimu lub ten reżim wspierających, jeżeli wszyscy białoruscy więźniowie polityczni nie zostaną uwolnieni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002322/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Detention of a Belarusian opposition activist

On 22 February 2012, Paval Vinahradau, an activist with the Belarusian opposition campaign 'Tell the Truth!' and a former political prisoner, was sentenced to 10 days' imprisonment. The court found that the 'toy rally' of 10 February 2012, which was held by the entrance to the local authority offices in Independence Square in Minsk, and in which he took part, was illegal. On that day, the event's organisers left a collection of stuffed toys and banners on display.

We are seeing a growing wave of repression by the Belarusian authorities against social activists and opposition representatives. Citizens are refused the right to express their views and to participate in peaceful protests. In this connection, I would like to ask the Commission if it intends to intervene in the aforementioned arrest, and if it will voice its staunch opposition to the repression of opposition activists in Belarus?

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

The Commission is concerned about the continued lack of respect for human rights, democracy and rule of law in Belarus, and regret that further repressive measures are taking place against representatives of civil society and the political opposition. In this context, the Commission is aware of the 'toy rally' referred to by the Honourable Member, as well as of other attempts of representatives of civil society and the political opposition to express their views and opinions and which frequently have been met with heavy handed intervention by the authorities.

The Commission will continue to publicly denounce in different fora the ongoing repression of representatives of the opposition and civil society. As also made clear in the conclusions of the 23 March 2012 Foreign Affairs Council, the EU's restrictive measures remain under constant review and the Council reserves the right to designate further businessmen and companies benefitting from or supporting the regime at upcoming Council meetings if all Belarusian political prisoners are not released.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002323/12
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD) oraz Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(29 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Groźby Komisji Europejskiej wobec Węgier

Ze zdziwieniem i oburzeniem przyjęliśmy informację, że Komisja Europejska planuje zamrozić środki na fundusz spójności na rok 2013 dla Węgier. Ma być to kara za niespełnienie wymogów dotyczących procedury nadmiernego deficytu budżetowego. Co ciekawe, aktualnie Węgry wymóg ten spełniają. Według Komisji ich działania są jednak zbyt płytkie i nie gwarantują utrzymania tego stanu w 2013 r.

1. W jaki sposób Komisja Europejska oraz Europejski Trybunał Obrachunkowy ocenili perspektywy co do węgierskiego deficytu w 2013 r.?

2. Czy podobne środki Komisja zamierza zastosować wobec innych państw, np. Polski, Belgii czy Cypru, objętych procedurą nadmiernego deficytu lub krajów, których gospodarki są w stanie kryzysu, np. Grecji, Portugali czy Hiszpanii, a które w 2013 r. przekroczą 3 % deficytu budżetowego?

3. Skutki zamrożenia środków polityki spójności na rok 2013 będą odczuwalne z opóźnieniem, powodując jeszcze większy deficyt. Jak według Komisji ewentualne zamrożenie środków wpłynie na sytuację gospodarczą Węgier?

4. Polityka spójności została powołana, aby zapewniać równe możliwości rozwoju regionom biedniejszym oraz równomiernego wzrostu gospodarczego w Europie. Czy zamrożenie jej środków nie będzie sprzeczne z jej założeniami, które miały się opierać decyzjom politycznym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

1. Według zaktualizowanej prognozy Komisji deficyt budżetowy Węgier w roku 2013 ma wynieść 3,6 % PKB. Szczegółowe informacje stanowiące podstawę tej prognozy zawiera dokument roboczy służb Komisji z dnia 6 marca 2012 r. uzupełniający skierowane do Węgier zalecenie Komisji mające na celu skorygowanie nadmiernego deficytu w tym kraju.

2. Komisja stosuje przepisy regulujące procedurę nadmiernego deficytu w sposób jednolity w odniesieniu do wszystkich państw członkowskich. Pozostałe cztery państwa członkowskie objęte procedurą nadmiernego deficytu, w przypadku których po przedstawieniu jesiennej prognozy z 2011 r. stwierdzono konieczność ściślejszego nadzoru, podjęły do początku stycznia 2012 r. środki wystarczające, by uniknąć stwierdzenia przez Komisję, że nie podjęły one skutecznych działań. Komisja będzie w dalszym ciągu odgrywać aktywną rolę w nadzorze budżetowym nad wszystkimi państwami członkowskimi, zwłaszcza w kontekście publikacji najnowszej wiosennej prognozy.

3. Węgry mają szansę poprawy sytuacji przez podjęcie działań koniecznych do skorygowania nadmiernego deficytu zanim zamrożenie środków zacznie obowiązywać w 2013 r. Tymczasem płatności wynikające z uprzednio podjętych zobowiązań w ramach Funduszu Spójności mogą być kontynuowane. Do utraty środków dojdzie tylko w przypadku, gdy władze węgierskie nie podejmą skutecznych działań do końca 2015 r.

4. Polityka spójności, mająca charakter polityki inwestycyjnej o perspektywie średnio– do długoterminowej, jest powiązana z solidną polityką budżetową i gospodarczą, zgodnie z art. 4 rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1084/2006. Solidna polityka budżetowa i gospodarcza stanowi niezbędny warunek wstępny osiągnięcia zamierzonych celów w kategoriach rozwoju. Zamrożenie środków należy zatem postrzegać jako silną zachętę do podjęcia niezbędnych kroków w tym kierunku.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002323/12
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD) and Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Threats made by the Commission towards Hungary

We were shocked and outraged to discover that the Commission is planning to freeze cohesion funds for Hungary in 2013. This is intended as a punishment for non-compliance with requirements under the excessive budget deficit procedure. It is interesting to note that Hungary is currently complying with the requirement. According to the Commission, however, the steps taken by Hungary are not far-reaching enough, and provide no guarantee that compliance will be maintained in 2013.

1. How did the Commission and the European Court of Auditors assess the likely development of the Hungarian deficit in 2013?

2. Does the Commission plan to implement similar measures with regard to other Member States, for example Poland, Belgium or Cyprus, which are also subject to the excessive budget deficit procedure, or Member States whose economies are in crisis, for example Greece, Portugal or Spain, and which will have a budget deficit in excess of 3 % in 2013?

3. The effects of freezing funding for cohesion policy in 2013 will have a delayed impact, giving rise to an even greater deficit. In the opinion of the Commission, what effect will any funding freeze have on Hungary's economic situation?

4. Cohesion policy was established to ensure equal opportunities for the development of less-wealthy regions and uniform economic growth across Europe. Will a funding freeze for this policy not run counter to its underlying principles, which were supposed to be immune to political decisions?

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

1. The Commission updated forecast for Hungary's 2013 budget deficit is 3.6 % of GDP. The details underpinning this assessment are set out in the staff working document of 6 March 2012 accompanying the Commission recommendation asking Hungary to correct its excessive deficit.

2. The Commission applies excessive deficit procedure rules in a consistent way across Member States (MS). The other four MS in excessive deficit procedure found to be deserving closer scrutiny after the 2011 Autumn Forecast took enough measures by early January 2012 to avoid an assessment of no effective action. The Commission will continue to play an active role in budgetary surveillance for all MS, notably in the context of the upcoming spring forecast exercise.

3. Hungary is given the chance to redress the situation by taking the necessary action to correct the excessive deficit before the suspension takes effect in 2013. Meanwhile, payments resulting from previous commitments under the Cohesion Fund can continue. The funds would only be lost if no effective action is taken by the Hungarian authorities until the end of 2015.

4. As a medium- to long-term investment policy, Cohesion Policy is linked to sound economic and budgetary policies as reflected in Article 4 of Council Regulation No 1084/2006. These constitute necessary preconditions for achieving the desired development objectives. The suspension should be seen as a strong incentive to take the necessary steps in this direction.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002325/12
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(29 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja węgorza europejskiego

W ciągu ostatnich dwudziestu lat odnotowany został spadek połowów węgorza europejskiego (*Anguilla anguilla*), szacowany na około 70 % w latach 1989-2009 (FAO 2012), który jest wynikiem dramatycznie zmniejszającej się liczebności tego gatunku. W związku z tym mamy do czynienia z negatywnymi skutkami dla sektora przetwórstwa rybnego i konsumentów.

Niezbędne jest więc podjęcie działań w ramach Unii Europejskiej, które, poprzez zmniejszenie lub eliminację zagrożeń dla węgorza europejskiego, doprowadzą do odbudowy populacji tego gatunku.

Jednym z negatywnych czynników, obok nadmiernego odłowu i słabego zarybiania, jest fakt bardzo częstego występowania pasożytów, które znacznie osłabiają organizm gospodarza. Efektem tego jest częste niedocieranie chorych osobników na tarło w morzu Sargasowym i spadek liczby larw węgorza.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się do Komisji Europejskiej z pytaniem o podjęte i planowane działania oraz przyjętą strategię zmierzające do zwiększenia populacji węgorza europejskiego.

Równocześnie chciałbym wiedzieć, czy istnieje w związku z tym problemem wieloletni plan, który umożliwia prowadzenie spójnej polityki działania w ramach całej Wspólnoty. Celem tego działania powinna być ochrona węgorza, niegdyś bardzo licznego i przynoszącego znaczne dochody rybakom, a obecnie będącego w stanie silnego zagrożenia.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Marię Damanaki w imieniu Komisji
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Biorąc pod uwagę stosowną opinię naukową, Komisja przedstawiła wniosek dotyczący rozporządzenia w sprawie odbudowy populacji węgorza. W 2007 r. Rada przyjęła plan odtworzenia zasobów węgorza ([1]).

Rozporządzenie ustanawia wspólny cel, który ma zostać osiągnięty na poziomie UE: 40 % dorosłych węgorzy musi spływać do morza na tarło (tj. 40 % takiego stada, jakie spływałoby do morza, gdyby nie podlegało wpływowi działalności człowieka). Aby osiągnąć ten cel, państwa członkowskie wdrożyły różne środki za pomocą planów gospodarowania zasobami węgorza. Plany te obejmują rozmaite środki w dziedzinie rybołówstwa (np. skracanie okresów połowów, redukcję kwot połowowych, minimalne i maksymalne wielkości wyładunku, ograniczenie wydawania licencji połowowych itp.), jak również środki niezwiązane z rybołówstwem, takie jak zarybianie, modyfikację lub usuwanie przeszkód, zatrzymywanie turbin elektrowni wodnych, programy wyłapywania i przenoszenia węgorzy, poprawę jakości wody itp. Plany zostały sfinalizowane z uwzględnieniem oceny technicznej przeprowadzonej przez Międzynarodową Radę Badań Morza (ICES). Państwa członkowskie muszą powiadomić Komisję o poczynionych postępach do 1 lipca 2012 r. Na podstawie tych informacji Komisja przygotuje sprawozdanie dla Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady do 31 grudnia 2013 r.

Węgorz europejski jest wymieniony w załączniku II do Konwencji o międzynarodowym handlu dzikimi zwierzętami i roślinami gatunków zagrożonych wyginięciem (CITES). W opinii Grupy ds. Przeglądu Naukowego CITES, w której skład wchodzą ograny z państw członkowskich UE, wywóz z UE lub przywóz do UE węgorzy europejskich nie powinien mieć miejsca. Co najmniej do końca 2012 r. obowiązuje również zakaz handlu węgorzem.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1100/2007 z dnia 18 września 2007 r. ustanawiające środki służące odbudowie zasobów węgorza (Dz.U. L 248 z 22.9.2007, s. 17-23).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002325/12
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Situation for European eels.

Over the past 20 years, a fall in European eel *(Anguilla anguilla)* catches — estimated at about 70 % from 1989 to 2009 (FAO 2012) — has been recorded. This is a consequence of the dramatical fall in this species' numbers. The fish processing industry and consumers are now facing the negative consequences of these developments.

Measures must now be taken at EU level to bring about a recovery in the stock by reducing or eliminating hazards facing the European eel.

Apart from excessive catches and poor restocking, one problem is the frequent occurrence of parasites that significantly weaken the host organism. This results in sickly eels which may not reach the spawning area in the Sargasso Sea, and a decrease in the number of elvers.

Can the Commission describe any actions that have been taken or are planned in this area, as well as the strategy adopted in order to increase the European eel stock?

Does a multi-annual plan exist that would enable consistent policy measures to be taken throughout the European Union? The aim of such measures should be to protect the eel, which was once present in great numbers and a source of considerable income for fishermen, and which today is at a great risk.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The Commission, taking into account the relevant scientific advice, made a proposal for a regulation for the recovery of the eel stock. The Council adopted the Eel Recovery Plan ([1]) in 2007.

The regulation sets a common target to be achieved at EU level: 40 % of the adult eels must escape towards the sea to spawn (i.e. 40 % of the biomass that would have escaped in the absence of human activities). Member States have implemented various measures via Eel Management Plans in order to achieve this target. The plans contain various fisheries measures (e.g. shortened seasons, reduced quotas, minimum and maximum landing sizes, limitation of licenses etc.), as well as non-fisheries measures such as restocking, obstacle modification or removal, stopping hydroelectric turbines, trap and transport schemes, water quality improvement etc. These plans were finalised taking into account the technical evaluation by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES). The Member States have to report to the Commission on the progress achieved by 1 July 2012, on the basis of which the Commission will prepare the report to European Parliament and Council by 31 December 2013.

European eel is listed in Annex II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). The Scientific Review Group of CITES, comprising authorities of the EU Member States, considers that export from or import into the EU of European eels should not take place. A trade ban is currently in place, at least until the end of 2012.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 of 18 September 2007 establishing measures for the recovery of the stock of European eel, OJ L 248, 22.9.2007, p. 17-23.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002327/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(29 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Pacote legislativo com medidas de incentivo ao crescimento económico, à competitividade nos Estados-Membros da UE e ao financiamento das PME

Considerando que:

A União Europeia atravessa uma fase de grandes e sérias dificuldades ao nível económico e financeiro, com alguns Estados-Membros a aplicarem severas medidas de austeridade para o equilíbrio e saneamento das contas públicas e cumprimento das metas dos sucessivos Pactos de Estabilidade e Crescimento;

Nos últimos tempos, várias iniciativas foram tomadas, de entre as quais são de destacar a criação do semestre europeu, os sucessivos Pactos de Estabilidade e Crescimento, o Mecanismo Europeu para a Estabilidade Financeira e o Fundo Europeu para a Estabilidade Financeira e o pacote legislativo com regras para o controlo dos défices excessivos e para a prevenção dos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos bem como os recentes Tratados, o Tratado sobre a Estabilidade, Coordenação e Governação e o Tratado que cria o Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade;

Uma política de austeridade é necessária para o equilíbrio das finanças públicas e para o saneamento das suas contas tal como visado pelas iniciativas referidas, mas que a mesma não é suficiente para o relançamento da economia europeia, para a criação de emprego e para o fomento da competitividade interna e externa, nomeadamente através do financiamento das pequenas e médias empresas, e que as políticas de crescimento económico devem, urgentemente, fazer parte integrante da agenda europeia;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Tenciona apresentar uma proposta de pacote legislativo para o incentivo ao crescimento económico, à competitividade nos Estados-Membros da UE e ao financiamento das PME, à imagem do pacote legislativo aprovado quanto à governação económica e às medidas de disciplina orçamental, dada a necessidade imperiosa que tais medidas sejam impulsionadas ao nível europeu?

2. No caso afirmativo, em que constará este pacote de medidas? E para quando está previsto o mesmo?

3. No caso negativo, quais propostas visa apresentar num futuro próximo para promover o crescimento económico, combater o desemprego na União Europeia e contribuir num prazo razoável e de forma urgente para impulsionar a atividade económica europeia de forma a evitar que as políticas de austeridade contribuam para uma maior recessão das economias de alguns Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada pelo Presidente José Manuel Barroso em nome da Comissão
(2 de abril de 2012)

O crescimento e o emprego são objetivos centrais da Estratégia Europa 2020 da UE. No entanto, o crescimento não pode ser decretado e exige políticas sólidas a nível da UE e dos Estados-Membros. A Comissão lançou recentemente uma série de iniciativas específicas em favor dos Estados-Membros que estão em recessão e que registam elevadas taxas de desemprego jovem e condições de financiamento rigorosas. A Comissão criou a *Task Force* para a Grécia, o grupo de apoio a Portugal e equipas de ação para sete outros Estados-Membros para lutar contra o desemprego jovem e melhorar o acesso ao financiamento por parte das PME. A Comissão continuará a acompanhar a situação em todos os Estados-Membros e, se necessário, tomará as medidas adequadas.

Para além destas iniciativas recentes, as políticas para o crescimento económico já são parte integrante da agenda económica europeia. Na sua Análise Anual do Crescimento (AAC) de 2012, a Comissão pôs em destaque as prioridades em matéria de política económica necessárias para a União Europeia restaurar a confiança e a estabilidade face à crise da dívida soberana e para estimular o crescimento e o emprego. Estas prioridades foram amplamente apoiadas, incluindo pelo Parlamento. A AAC definiu ações concretas para promover o crescimento, tais como a utilização do mercado interno como motor de crescimento, a mobilização do orçamento da UE e iniciativas de execução rápida com um impacto elevado no crescimento. A Comissão irá prosseguir a implementação das políticas e iniciativas já em vigor e continuará a adotar novas medidas legislativas, em conformidade com o seu Programa de Trabalho ([1]).

([1]) (http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/index_pt.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002327/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Legislative package with measures to promote economic growth and competitiveness of the EU Member States and the financing of SMEs

The European Union is going through a period of major and serious economic and financial problems, with some Member States having to implement severe austerity measures to balance and consolidate public finances and to meet the targets of successive Stability and Growth Pacts.

Several initiatives have been adopted recently, including in particular the creation of the European Semester, successive Stability and Growth Pacts, the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism and the European Financial Stability Facility, and the legislative package with rules for controlling excessive deficits and for the prevention of macroeconomic imbalances, as well as the recent treaties: the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance and the Treaty establishing the European Stability Mechanism.

An austerity policy is necessary to balance public finances and to consolidate public accounts, which is the aim of the abovementioned initiatives, but it is not enough to revive the European economy, to create jobs and to promote internal and external competitiveness, particularly through the financing of small and medium-sized enterprises, and so economic growth policies must urgently become an integral part of the European agenda.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it intend to present a proposal for a legislative package to encourage economic growth, the competitiveness of the EU Member States and the financing of SMEs, similar to the legislative package approved with regard to economic governance and budgetary discipline measures, in view of the urgent need for such measures to be promoted at European level?

2. If so, what will this package of measures contain? And for when is it planned?

3. If not, what proposals does it intend to present in the near future to promote economic growth, combat unemployment in the European Union and help, within a reasonable period and as a matter of urgency, to promote economic activity in Europe so as to prevent austerity measures from contributing to a deeper recession in the economies of certain Member States?

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

Growth and jobs are central objectives of the EU's Strategy Europe 2020. Growth can however not be decreed but requires instead solid policies at EU and Member State level. The Commission recently launched a number of targeted initiatives for the benefit of Member States that are in recession and feature high youth unemployment as well as tight financing conditions. The Commission set up the Task Force for Greece, the Portugal support group and action teams for another seven Member States to fight youth unemployment and improve access to finance for SMEs. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation in all Member States and will take appropriate steps if needed.

Beyond these recent initiatives, economic growth policies are already an integral part of the European economic agenda. In its 2012 Annual Growth Survey (AGS), the Commission has highlighted the policy priorities the European Union needs to pursue to restore confidence and stability in the face of the sovereign debt crisis and to boost growth and employment. They have been widely endorsed, including by the Parliament. The AGS set out concrete actions to promote growth, such as using the internal market as a growth engine, mobilising the EU budget, and fast-tracking initiatives with a high growth impact. The Commission will pursue the implementation of the policies and initiatives already in place, and continue taking further legislative measures in accordance with its Work Programme ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002328/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Aquisições e fusões no setor da banca na UE e défice de fundos próprios

Na sequência da resposta à pergunta E-010507/2011, sobre falências, aquisições e fusões ocorridas no setor da banca, na União Europeia, desde o início da crise, solicito à Comissão Europeia que me informe sobre:

1. Quais as fusões e aquisições que foram notificadas à Comissão e que foram autorizadas pela mesma, nos últimos quatro anos? Quais não foram autorizadas?

2. Quais os bancos identificados como tendo um défice de fundos próprios, de acordo com a última avaliação efetuada e tendo em conta os rácios de capital estipulados?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(23 de abril de 2012)

1. Relativamente à primeira questão, todas as informações sobre as fusões notificadas à Comissão (independentemente de terem sido ou não autorizadas) podem ser encontradas no registo de processos do Diretor-Geral da Concorrência através da seguinte hiperligação: (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm).

À exceção do processo M.6166 Deutsche Börse/NYSE Euronext, objeto de uma decisão recente, a Comissão não proibiu, desde o início da crise financeira, qualquer fusão notificada no domínio das atividades financeiras e dos seguros.

2. Em janeiro, foram apresentados à Autoridade Bancária Europeia (ABE) os planos de recapitalização dos bancos para os quais tinha sido identificado ([1]) um défice de capital. Posteriormente a ABE anunciou que, globalmente, as medidas propostas pelos bancos resolviam completamente as insuficiências identificadas e criavam até uma margem de segurança adicional de cerca de 26 %. No quadro destes 126 %, de défice de capital identificado, as ações com um impacto direto positivo no capital correspondiam a mais de 96 % do défice. Tal pode ser considerado muito encorajador, dado o receio inicial de que os défices de capital seriam cobertos pela ponderação de risco e por uma desalavancagem excessiva.

Uma análise aprofundada dos planos individuais foi realizada pelas autoridades de supervisão nacionais e pela ABE para avaliar se as medidas propostas respeitam a recomendação da ABE e são viáveis. Embora o acesso à informação sobre os planos de recapitalização individuais se restrinja às respetivas autoridades nacionais de supervisão e à ABE, a referida avaliação global pela ABE sugere que os casos em que os bancos serão incapazes de atingir o rácio de capital estipulado até junho de 2012 deverão ser muito limitados, senão mesmo inexistentes.

([1]) Esta informação está disponível no sítio Web da ABE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002328/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Acquisitions and mergers in the EU banking sector and capital deficit

Further to the answer to Question E-010507/2011 on bankruptcies, acquisitions and mergers in the EU banking sector since the start of the crisis, I would like to ask the European Commission:

1. What mergers and acquisitions have been notified to the Commission and authorised by it in the last four years? Which ones have not been authorised?

2. Which banks have been identified as having a capital deficit, according to the latest assessment made and in view of the stipulated capital ratios?

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

1. As regards the first question, all concentrations which have been notified to the Commission (irrespective of whether they have been authorised or not) can be found in the case register on the Director General for Competition's website via the link: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm

Apart from the recently decided case M.6166 Deutsche Börse/NYSE Euronext the Commission did since the start of the financial crisis not prohibit any notified concentration in the area of financial and insurance activities.

2. The recapitalisation plans of banks for which a capital shortfall has been identified ([1]) have been submitted to the European Banking Authority (EBA) in January. Subsequently the EBA announced that, in aggregate, the measures proposed by the banks address the identified shortfall in full and even create an additional buffer of approximately 26 %. Within this amount of 126 % of the identified capital shortfall, measures with a direct positive impact on capital account for over 96 % of the shortfall. This could be seen as very encouraging, given the initial fears that capital shortfalls would be extinguished by risk weight optimisation and excessive deleveraging.

An in-depth analysis of individual plans has been undertaken by national supervisory authorities and the EBA to evaluate whether the proposed measures comply with the EBA recommendation and are feasible to achieve. While access to the information on individual recapitalisation plans is restricted to respective national supervisory authorities and the EBA, the aforementioned aggregate assessment by the EBA suggests that instances where banks are unable to attain the stipulated capital ratio by June 2012 should be very limited, if any.

([1]) This information is available on the EBA website.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002331/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(29 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Valoarea și utilitatea fondurilor alocate anual pentru promovarea politicilor de toleranță față de popoarele continentului european

Opinia publică din România este îngrijorată de sentimentele anti-europene tot mai adesea exprimate de lideri ai opiniei publice din unele state membre ale Uniunii. Astfel, sunt cunoscute recentele exemple ale site-urilor internet cu caracter xenofob din Olanda și Italia. Zilele acestea, în presa din Olanda a apărut un articol publicat de un fost diplomat și ziarist olandez (Robert van Lanschot în cotidianul Handelsblatt), în care acesta afirmă că est-europenii, majoritatea dintre ei locuitori ai regiunii balcanice, nu au contribuit cu nimic la cultura europeană. Ziaristul olandez afirmă că Europa începe de la mijlocul Podului Vechi de peste râul Neretva, în Mostar (Bosnia-Herțegovina), ceea ce echivalează cu propunerea unei noi cortine de fier. Comisia este rugată să informeze Parlamentul care este valoarea fondurilor alocate anual pentru promovarea politicilor de toleranță față de popoarele continentului european și dacă nu are senzația că aceste fonduri sunt irosite.

Lanschot afirmă că locuitorii din aceasta zonă aparțin mai degrabă unui grup cultural ce este mult mai apropiat de Turcia, pentru că „nimeni din Balcani nu știe ce e un costum Chanel, nu cunoaște arta culinara a lui Bokus, nu știe de Pippi Longstocking, grădinile englezești, eseurile lui Montaigne, jucăriile Lego". Van Lanschot cere stoparea expansiunii UE, afirmând că țările menționate de el „n-au nimic în comun cu Europa". Ar putea Comisia să precizeze dacă intenționează să aloce fonduri pentru a populariza asemenea valori europene importante?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(26 aprilie 2012)

Comisia îl invită pe distinsul membru să consulte răspunsul la întrebarea scrisă E-1835/12, adresată de dl Salavrakos ([1]).

Ca o completare la acest răspuns, Comisia subliniază că bugetul total pentru programul „Europa pentru cetățeni" este de 215 milioane EUR pentru perioada 2007-2013. Pentru Anul european a cetățenilor (2013), Comisia a propus un buget total de 1 750 000 EUR pentru anii 2012 și 2013. În 2012, un buget de 620 000 EUR a fost alocat seminariilor de formare pentru jurnaliști.

În ceea ce privește alte inițiative ale Comisiei care contribuie la promovarea de politici de toleranță, programul „Drepturi fundamentale și cetățenie" are printre obiectivele sale generale „să combată rasismul, xenofobia și antisemitismul și să promoveze o mai mare înțelegere interconfesională și interculturală și o mai mare toleranță pe teritoriul Uniunii Europene". Anual, fondurile sunt cheltuite sub formă de subvenții destinate acțiunilor pentru atingerea acestui obiectiv. Bugetul total al acestui program pentru perioada 2007-2013 este de 97,4 milioane EUR.

În același timp, Comisia își va continua eforturile de a face cunoscuți actualii candidați ai UE și potențialii candidați, cu scopul de a îmbunătăți înțelegerea patrimoniului cultural care este comun pentru aceștia și statele membre actuale ale UE. În acest sens, Facilitatea pentru societatea civilă (FSC) a Comisiei oferă asistență financiară organizațiilor societății civile din regiunea vizată de procesul de extindere, cu obiectivul înrădăcinării valorilor democratice, a drepturilor omului, a incluziunii sociale și a statului de drept, sprijinind astfel procesul de integrare europeană. În perioada 2007 — 2012, FSC a primit aproximativ 133,6 milioane EUR.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002331/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Value and usefulness of funds allocated annually to promote policies of tolerance towards the peoples of Europe

Public opinion in Romania is concerned by anti-European sentiments expressed with increasing frequency by political leaders from certain Member States. Recent examples are well-known xenophobic Internet sites from the Netherlands and Italy. An article was published recently in the Dutch press by a former Dutch diplomat and journalist (Robert van Lanschot, in the daily paper *Handelsblatt*), in which he affirms that Eastern Europeans, the majority from the Balkan region, have not contributed anything to European culture. The Dutch journalist affirms that Europe begins from the middle of the Old Bridge over the Neretva River in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina), which is equivalent to proposing a new Iron Curtain. Can the Commission give its views regarding the value of funds allocated annually to promote policies of tolerance towards the peoples of the European continent, and indicate whether it believes that these funds are being wasted?

Lanschot states that the people living in this area belong to a cultural group that is closer to Turkey because, 'No one from the Balkans knows what a Chanel suit is, or has heard of the culinary art of Bokus, Pippi Longstocking, English gardens, the essays of Montaigne, or Lego toys'. Van Lanschot calls for EU expansion to be halted, stating that the countries mentioned by him 'have nothing in common with Europe'. Can the Commission indicate whether it intends to allocate funds to popularise such fundamental European values?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1835/12 by Mr Salavrakos ([1]).

As a complement to this answer, the Commission points out that the total budget for the 'Europe for Citizens programme' is EUR 215 million for the period 2007-2013. For the European Year of Citizens (2013), the Commission has proposed a total budget of EUR 1 750 000 for the years 2012 and 2013. In 2012, a budget of EUR 620 000 has been allocated to the training seminars for journalists.

As for other Commission's initiatives that contribute to promoting policies of tolerance, the 'Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme' has among its general objectives 'to fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and to promote a better interfaith and intercultural understanding and improved tolerance throughout the European Union'. On an annual basis, funds are spent in the form of action grants for attaining this objective. The total budget of this programme over the period 2007-2013 is EUR 97.4 million.

At the same time, the Commission will continue its efforts to raise awareness about the current EU candidates and potential candidates with the aim of improving understanding of the shared cultural heritage between them and the current EU member states. In line with this, the Commission's 'Civil Society Facility' (CSF) provides financial assistance to civil society organisations in the enlargement region with the objective of anchoring democratic values, human rights, social inclusion and the rule of law, thereby supporting the EU integration process. From 2007-2012 the CSF has received approximately EUR 133.6 million.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002332/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόγραμμα διανομής γάλακτος στα σχολεία στην Ελλάδα

Μέσω του ευρωπαϊκού προγράμματος διανομής γάλακτος στα σχολεία, τα παιδιά μπορούν να λαμβάνουν επιδοτούμενα υγιεινά γαλακτοκομικά προϊόντα, που περιέχουν σημαντικές βιταμίνες και ιχνοστοιχεία. Στο πρόγραμμα έχουν πρόσβαση όλα τα κράτη μέλη σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 657/2008 της Επιτροπής.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποιο βαθμό έχει η Ελλάδα αξιοποιήσει το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα; Έχει χρησιμοποιήσει το σύνολο των επιδοτούμενων χρημάτων από την ΕΕ που είχε στη διάθεση της για αυτόν το σκοπό κατά το 2010 και 2011;

— Καθώς εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης αυξάνονται τα κρούσματα μαθητών που δεν έχουν πρόσβαση σε βασικά διατροφικά αγαθά, μεταξύ των οποίων και το γάλα, είναι στις σκέψεις της Επιτροπής να διευρύνει τη χρηματοδότηση του προγράμματος προς τα κράτη μέλη, και ιδίως προς εκείνα που αντιμετωπίζουν τα μεγαλύτερα προβλήματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Απριλίου 2012)

— Η εφαρμογή του προγράμματος προώθησης της κατανάλωσης γάλακτος στα σχολεία είναι προαιρετική. Δεν αποτελείται από επιμέρους προϋπολογισμούς που χορηγούνται στα κράτη μέλη αλλά βασίζεται στην ποσότητα των γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων που διατίθενται στα σχολεία κατά τη διάρκεια του έτους, στον αριθμό των μαθητών που συμμετέχουν στο πρόγραμμα και στον αριθμό των σχολικών ημερών κατά το συγκεκριμένο σχολικό έτος.

— Στην περίπτωση της κατανάλωσης πλήρους γάλακτος, η ενίσχυση της ΕΕ ανέρχεται σε 18,15 ευρώ/100 kg και χορηγείται για μέγιστη ποσότητα 0,25 λίτρων ισοδυνάμου γάλακτος ανά μαθητή και ανά ημέρα. Η Ελλάδα δεν εφαρμόζει το πρόγραμμα αυτό.

— Το πρόγραμμα θα αποτελέσει αντικείμενο αξιολόγησης στο εγγύς μέλλον. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή δεν σκοπεύει επί του παρόντος να διευρύνει τη χρηματοδότησή του. Στο άρθρο 102 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1234/2007 δεν προβλέπεται διαφοροποιημένη ενίσχυση ανά κράτος μέλος ([1]).

([1]) ΕΕ L 299 της 16.11.2007, σ. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002332/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Milk distribution scheme in Greek schools

Through the European school milk distribution scheme, children are able to obtain subsidised healthy dairy products containing important vitamins and trace elements. All Member States have access to the scheme, under Commission Regulation (EC) No 657/2008.

Can the Commission state:

— To what extent has Greece used this scheme? Did it use all the available EU subsidies for this purpose for the years 2010 and 2011?

— Due to the economic crisis, the number of pupils without access to basic foodstuffs, including milk, is rising. Does it intend to broaden funding arrangements for the scheme in Member States, and particularly in those facing the greatest problems?

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

— The application of the school milk scheme is optional for the Member States. It does not consist of individual budgets allocated to the Member States but it is based on the quantity of dairy products distributed during the school year, the number of pupils participating in the scheme and the number of school days during that school year.

— In the case of whole milk consumption, the Community aid is EUR 18.15/100 kg and it shall be granted on a maximum quantity of 0.25 litre of milk equivalent per pupil and per day. Greece is not applying the scheme.

— The scheme will be submitted to an evaluation in the near future, but the Commission has currently not the intention to broaden the funding arrangements. A differentiated aid rate by Member State is not provided for in Article 102 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([1]).

([1]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002333/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Υλοποίηση δράσης στην Ελλάδα για την παροχή ιατρικής και ψυχολογικής στήριξης στα άτομα που χρειάζονται διεθνή προστασία

Στο πλαίσιο των έκτακτων μέτρων του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Προσφύγων για το 2011, η Ελλάδα προγραμμάτισε την υλοποίηση δράσης, της οποίας το κόστος εκτιμάται σε περίπου 2 εκατ. ευρώ, και περιλαμβάνει την παροχή ιατρικής και ψυχολογικής στήριξης στα άτομα που χρειάζονται διεθνή προστασία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Με βάση τις πληροφορίες και τα στοιχεία που συλλέγει, αξιοποιήθηκαν στο ακέραιο τα 2 εκατομμύρια ευρώ από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για αυτό τον σκοπό;

— Προβλέπεται χρηματοδότηση για την πραγματοποίηση ανάλογης δράσης για την προγραμματική περίοδο 2012;

Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ακόμη σε θέση να αναφέρει το ποσό που χρησιμοποίησε η Ελλάδα από την χρηματοδότηση που έλαβε στο πλαίσιο των μέτρων έκτακτης ανάγκης του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Προσφύγων το 2011. Η υποστήριξη έκτακτης ανάγκης του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Προσφύγων για το 2011 χορηγήθηκε στην Ελλάδα στις 20 Δεκεμβρίου 2011, λίγο μετά την υποβολή της σχετικής αίτησης για χρηματοδότηση από τις ελληνικές αρχές. Από πρόσφατες πληροφορίες που έχει στη διάθεση της η Επιτροπή προκύπτει ότι η εφαρμογή του μέτρου με στόχο την παροχή (μεταξύ άλλων) ιατρικής και ψυχολογικής υποστήριξης σε άτομα που μπορεί να χρειάζονται διεθνή προστασία είναι έτοιμη να αρχίσει.

Η Ελλάδα έχει την υποχρέωση να υποβάλει έκθεση στην Επιτροπή σχετικά με την εφαρμογή του ετήσιου προγράμματος για το 2011, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των μέτρων έκτακτης ανάγκης, μέχρι τις 31 Μαρτίου 2014.

Όπως αναφέρεται στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην κοινοβουλευτική ερώτηση E-8957/2011 ([1]) το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Προσφύγων θα μπορούσε να συνεχίσει να στηρίζει τέτοιου είδους μέτρα. Ενώ τα κράτη μέλη είναι κατά κύριο λόγο υπεύθυνα τόσο για την εφαρμογή των προγραμμάτων τους όσο και για την επιλογή των δράσεων που αναλαμβάνονται στο πλαίσιο αυτών, η Επιτροπή θα παραμείνει σε επιφυλακή ούτως ώστε να εξασφαλίσει ότι οι προτεινόμενες δράσεις ανταποκρίνονται στις ειδικές ανάγκες της Ελλάδας στον τομέα αυτόν.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002333/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Action in Greece to provide medical and psychological support for individuals in need of international protection

As part of the European Refugee Fund's emergency measures for 2011, Greece scheduled action with an estimated cost of approximately EUR 2 million, including medical and psychological support for individuals in need of international protection.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Based on the information and data it gathers, has the entire sum of EUR 2 million been used by the Greek Government for this purpose?

— Is there any provision for funding to carry out similar action in the 2012 programming period?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

The Commission is not yet in a position to report on the amount used by Greece from the emergency funding allocated under the European Refugee Fund (ERF) for 2011. The 2011 ERF emergency support was granted to Greece on 20 December 2011, soon after the submission of the relevant request by the Greek authorities. Current indications available to the Commission are that implementation of the measure aimed at providing (among other things) medical and psychological support to persons who may be in need of international protection is about to begin.

Greece has the obligation to report to the Commission on the implementation of the 2011 annual programme, including emergency measures, by 31 March 2014.

As mentioned in the Commission reply to parliamentary Question E-8957/2011 ([1]) such measures could continue being supported by the European Refugee Fund. While Member States are primarily responsible both for the implementation of their programmes and for the selection of actions within them, the Commission will remain vigilant, so as to ensure that the proposed actions are in line with the specific needs of Greece in this area.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002334/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αξιοποίηση κοινοτικών πόρων για τη διατήρηση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς στην Ελλάδα

Η πολιτική συνοχής μπορεί να υποστηρίξει επενδύσεις σε πολιτιστικές εκδηλώσεις, και ιδίως για την προώθηση βιώσιμου πολιτιστικού τουρισμού. Στο εν λόγω πλαίσιο, για την περίοδο 2007-2013, από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) χορηγήθηκαν στα κράτη μέλη 6 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ για τη γραμμή του προϋπολογισμού «Πολιτισμός», συμπεριλαμβανομένων 3 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ για την προστασία και τη διατήρηση της πολιτισμικής κληρονομιάς.

— Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή για το ύψος των πόρων που μέχρι σήμερα αξιοποίησε η Ελλάδα για τη διατήρηση της πολιτισμικής της κληρονομιάς; Τι ποσοστό αντιπροσωπεύει σε σχέση με το σύνολο των πόρων που η Ελλάδα μπορεί να αξιοποιήσει μέχρι το 2013 για αυτόν τον σκοπό;

— Καθώς στις πρόσφατες ταραχές στην Αθήνα κτήρια μεγάλης πολιτιστικής αξίας υπέστησαν σημαντικές ζημιές, η ανακατασκευή τους μπορεί να είναι επιλέξιμη από το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα; Έχει ήδη καταθέσει κάποια σχετική πρόταση η ελληνική κυβέρνηση;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Απριλίου 2012)

Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία διαθέτουν για παρεμβάσεις στον τομέα του πολιτισμού στην Ελλάδα το ποσό των 483 εκατ. ευρώ (2,4 % της συνολικής χρηματοδότησης για την Ελλάδα), από το οποίο 284 εκατ. ευρώ προορίζονται για την προστασία και τη διατήρηση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, 160 εκατ. ευρώ για την ανάπτυξη πολιτιστικών υποδομών και 39 εκατ. ευρώ για τη βελτίωση των πολιτιστικών υπηρεσιών.

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που έχουν ληφθεί από τις ελληνικές αρχές, ένα ποσό ύψους 35 εκατ. ευρώ έχει χρησιμοποιηθεί μέχρι σήμερα (12 %).

Όσον αφορά την αποκατάσταση κτιρίων μεγάλης πολιτιστικής αξίας που υπέστησαν ζημίες από τις πρόσφατες ταραχές στην Αθήνα, οι ελληνικές αρχές θα πρέπει κατά πρώτον να εξετάσουν αν οι σχετικές δαπάνες καλύπτονται από την ασφάλιση του κάθε κτιρίου που έχει υποστεί ζημίες. Αν οι εν λόγω δαπάνες δεν καλύπτονται, είναι δυνατόν να είναι επιλέξιμες, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι η παρέμβαση εντάσσεται στους στόχους του προγράμματος και ικανοποιεί τις νομικές, διοικητικές και δημοσιονομικές απαιτήσεις, με την εξαίρεση των κτιρίων που εξυπηρετούν σκοπούς στέγασης για τα οποία εφαρμόζονται οι κανόνες επιλεξιμότητας που καθορίζονται στο άρθρο 7 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1080/2006. Σύμφωνα με την αρχή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης που εφαρμόζεται για τη διαχείριση της πολιτικής συνοχής, η πρόταση να υποστηριχθεί η αποκατάσταση κτιρίων δεν θα πρέπει να υποβληθεί στην Επιτροπή, αλλά στην αρμόδια διαχειριστική αρχή που είναι υπεύθυνη για την επιλογή και την εφαρμογή των σχεδίων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002334/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Use of EU resources to preserve Greece's cultural heritage

Cohesion Policy may be used to support investment in cultural events and in particular to promote sustainable cultural tourism. Within this framework, for the 2007-2013 period, Member States have been granted EUR 6 billion from the European Regional Development Fund under the budget line 'Culture', including EUR 3 billion for the protection and preservation of the cultural heritage.

— Can the Commission state what level of resources has been used by Greece so far to preserve its cultural heritage? What percentage does this represent of the total resources available to Greece for this purpose until 2013?

— Given that, in the recent riots in Athens, buildings of great cultural value suffered significant damage, could their rebuilding be eligible for this programme? Has the Greek Government already made a proposal to this effect?

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

EUR 483 million of the Structural Funds has been allocated for cultural interventions in Greece (2.4 % of the total allocation to Greece) and consists of EUR 284 million for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage; EUR 160 million for the development of cultural infrastructure; and EUR 39 million to improve cultural services.

According to information received from the Greek authorities, EUR 35 million has been used so far (12 %).

Concerning the restoration of buildings of great cultural value which suffered damages from the recent riots in Athens, the Greek authorities should first examine if these costs are covered by the insurance policy of each damaged building. If these costs are not covered, the expenditure could be eligible, provided that the intervention is in line with the programme objectives and fulfils the legal, administrative and financial requirements and with the exception of buildings serving housing purposes which are subject to the eligibility rules set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006. In line with the shared management principle used in administering cohesion policy, the proposal to support the restoration of buildings should not be addressed to the Commission but to the competent managing authority responsible for project selection and implementation.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002335/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δίκτυο επιδημιολογικής παρακολούθησης και ελέγχου των μεταδοτικών ασθενειών στην ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με την απόφαση 2119/98/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για τη δημιουργία δικτύου επιδημιολογικής παρακολούθησης και ελέγχου των μεταδοτικών ασθενειών στην Κοινότητα και συστήματος έγκαιρου συναγερμού και αντίδρασης, η πρόληψη και ο έλεγχος των μεταδοτικών ασθενειών αφορά το θέμα της αντιμετώπισης των μεταδοτικών ασθενειών που συνδέονται με τις μεταναστευτικές ροές πληθυσμού.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει τα πιο πρόσφατα συμπεράσματα σχετικά με τη διακύμανση και την τάση των μεταδοτικών ασθενειών που συνδέονται με τις ροές πληθυσμού στην ΕΕ; Σε ποια κράτη μέλη παρουσιάζεται η μεγαλύτερη αύξηση;

— Καθώς τον Δεκέμβριο του 2011 η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε νέα πρόταση νομικού πλαισίου που έχει ως στόχο να βοηθήσει τις κυβερνήσεις των κρατών μελών να καθιερώσουν διαδικασία για την κοινή προμήθεια εμβολίων κατά της πανδημίας και να βελτιώσουν τα επίπεδα ετοιμότητας και συντονισμένης αντίδρασης σε όλα τα είδη σοβαρών διασυνοριακών απειλών κατά της δημόσιας υγείας, είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει για την πρόοδο των κρατών μελών στη καθιέρωση της διαδικασίας αυτής;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Απριλίου 2012)

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο Πρόληψης και Ελέγχου Νόσων δημοσίευσε τεχνική έκθεση σχετικά με την υγεία των μεταναστών το 2009 ([1]) καθώς και εκτίμηση επικινδυνότητας ([2]) όσον αφορά ένα συμβάν που σχετίζεται με την εισροή μεταναστών από τη Βόρεια Αφρική στην Ευρώπη το 2011. Σύμφωνα με τα προαναφερθέντα έγγραφα, οι συνθήκες διαβίωσης των μεταναστών στα κέντρα υποδοχής μπορεί να αυξήσουν τον κίνδυνο κρουσμάτων μεταδοτικών ασθενειών ([3]).

Όσον αφορά την πρόοδο των κρατών μελών για τη θέσπιση διαδικασίας με σκοπό την κοινή προμήθεια ιατρικών αντιμέτρων, η πρόταση της Επιτροπής για την καταπολέμηση σοβαρών διασυνοριακών απειλών για την υγεία συζητάται την παρούσα στιγμή από το Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο. Η πρωτοβουλία αυτή περιλαμβάνει την πιθανή θέσπιση μηχανισμού για την κοινή προμήθεια ιατρικών αντιμέτρων. Είναι ακόμη πολύ νωρίς στο παρόν στάδιο της διαδικασίας για να υπάρξει ενημέρωση σχετικά με το ποια κράτη μέλη θα επιθυμούν να συμμετάσχουν στην εθελοντική διαδικασία κοινής προμήθειας ιατρικών αντιμέτρων.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/0907_TER_Migrant_health_Background_note.pdf
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/110412_RA_North%20Africa_Libya_migration.pdf
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1111_SUR_Annual_Epidemiological_Report_on_Communicable_Diseases_in_Europe.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002335/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the EU

Under Decision No 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community and an early warning and response system, the prevention and control of these diseases involves combating communicable diseases linked to migrating population flows.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Can it give the latest findings regarding the variations and trends of communicable diseases connected with population flows in the EU? In which Member States has there been the greatest increase?

— In December 2011, it adopted a new proposal for a legal framework with the aim of helping the governments of Member States to establish a procedure for the joint procurement of vaccines against pandemics and to improve the levels of preparedness and coordinated action in all cases of serious cross-border threats to public health. Can it provide an update on Member States' progress in establishing this procedure?

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

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control published a technical report on migrant health in 2009 ([1]) and a risk assessment ([2]) on an event related to migrant influx from North Africa to Europe in 2011. These documents state that the living conditions of migrants in the reception centres might enhance the danger of outbreaks of communicable diseases ([3]).

With regard to the progress shown by Member States in establishing the procedure of the joint procurement of medical countermeasures, a Commission proposal to fight serious cross-border threats to health is currently being discussed by the Parliament and the Council. This initiative includes a possible mechanism to operate joint procurement of medical countermeasures. It is too early at this stage in the procedure to inform about which Member States will want to be part of the voluntary joint procurement of medical countermeasures.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/0907_TER_Migrant_health_Background_note.pdf
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/110412_RA_North%20Africa_Libya_migration.pdf
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1111_SUR_Annual_Epidemiological_Report_on_Communicable_Diseases_in_Europe.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002337/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Βία κατά μεταναστών

«Συγγνώμη» από τις οικογένειες των δέκα θυμάτων — μεταξύ των οποίων ένας Έλληνας, ο Θεόδωρος Βουλγαρίδης από το Μόναχο, οκτώ Τούρκοι και μια Γερμανίδα αστυνομικός — της νεοναζιστικής οργάνωσης «Προστασία της πατρίδας» που δολοφονήθηκαν κατά την περίοδο 2000-2007 στη Γερμανία ζήτησε η Καγκελάριος Άγκελα Μέρκελ, σε μια συγκινητική εκδήλωση μνήμης που πραγματοποιήθηκε σήμερα στο Μέγαρο Μουσικής του Βερολίνου.

Η δράση της ομάδας των νεοναζιστών που, με έδρα το κρατίδιο της Θουριγγίας, τρομοκρατούσε και δολοφονούσε μετανάστες ανενόχλητη για μια ολόκληρη δεκαετία και μάλιστα κάτω από τη μύτη των γερμανικών αρχών, αποκαλύφθηκε… τυχαία τον περασμένο Νοέμβριο, παρότι οι αρχές γνώριζαν καλά τους εμπλεκομένους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της για το αυξανόμενο κλίμα επιθέσεων σε μετανάστες σε κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ.

Απάντηση της κας Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση βασίζεται στις αξίες του σεβασμού της ανθρώπινης αξιοπρέπειας, της ισότητας, του κράτους δικαίου και του σεβασμού των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων. Η Επιτροπή καταδικάζει έντονα κάθε εκδήλωση ρατσισμού, ξενοφοβίας, καθώς και συναφών μορφών μισαλλοδοξίας, εφόσον είναι ασύμβατη προς τις αξίες αυτές.

Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει ότι η ΕΕ έχει θεσπίσει ειδική νομοθεσία για την καταπολέμηση της ρατσιστικής και ξενοφοβικής συμπεριφοράς, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της βίας. *Η απόφαση-πλαίσιο 2008/913/ΔΕΥ του Συμβουλίου για την καταπολέμηση ορισμένων μορφών και εκδηλώσεων ρατσισμού και ξενοφοβίας μέσω του ποινικού δικαίου* ([1]), η οποία υποχρεώνει όλα τα κράτη μέλη να καταστήσουν τιμωρητέα τη δημόσια υποκίνηση βίας ή μίσους που στρέφεται κατά ομάδας προσώπων ή μέλους ομάδας, που προσδιορίζεται βάσει της φυλής, του χρώματος, της θρησκείας, των γενεαλογικών καταβολών ή της εθνικής ή εθνοτικής καταγωγής. Τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν επίσης να εξασφαλίσουν ότι τα ρατσιστικά και ξενοφοβικά κίνητρα θεωρούνται επιβαρυντικές περιστάσεις, ή, εναλλακτικά, ότι τα κίνητρα αυτά λαμβάνονται υπόψη από τα δικαστήρια κατά την επιμέτρηση της ποινής.

([1]) Απόφαση-πλαίσιο 2008/913/ΔΕΥ του Συμβουλίου, της 28ης Νοεμβρίου 2008, για την καταπολέμηση ορισμένων μορφών και εκδηλώσεων ρατσισμού και ξενοφοβίας μέσω του ποινικού δικαίου, ΕΕ L 328, σ. 55.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002337/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Violence against immigrants

At a moving memorial event held today in the Konzerthaus in Berlin, German Chancellor Angela Merkel asked forgiveness of the families of the 10 victims — one Greek man, Theodoros Voulgaridis from Munich, eight Turks and one German policewoman — murdered in Germany by the neo-Nazi organisation the National Socialist Underground between 2000 and 2007.

This group of neo-Nazis, which is based in the Thuringia region, terrorised and murdered immigrants with impunity for a whole decade under the very noses of the German authorities; it was discovered by chance last November, even though those involved were well known to the authorities.

Can the Commission give its official position on the worsening climate of violence against immigrants in EU Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The European Union is based on the values of respect for human dignity, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The Commission strongly condemns all manifestations of racism, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance as they are incompatible with these values.

The Commission recalls that EU has adopted specific legislation to fight against racist and xenophobic behaviour, including violence. Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law ([1]) obliges all Member States to make punishable the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such group defined by reference to their race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. The Member States must also ensure that a racist or xenophobic motivation of any other offence is considered an aggravating circumstance or that such motivation may be taken into consideration by the courts in the determination of the penalties.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, p. 55.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002338/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ψηφιακή επανάσταση για την καταπολέμιση της πείνας

Ο ιδρυτής της Microsoft Μπιλ Γκέιτς τάχθηκε σήμερα υπέρ μιας «ψηφιακής επανάστασης» για την καταπολέμηση της πείνας στον κόσμο, ενισχύοντας την παραγωγικότητα των αγροτών και των κτηνοτρόφων με τη βοήθεια των δορυφορικών συστημάτων, της τεχνολογίας των βίντεο ή της επιλογής των σπόρων.

«Πρέπει να σκεφτούμε πολύ σοβαρά τον τρόπο με τον οποίο θα ωφεληθούμε από την ψηφιακή επανάσταση για να καταλήξουμε σε καινοτομίες και στην κτηνοτροφία», δήλωσε ο δισεκατομμυριούχος Μπιλ Γκέιτς στη Ρώμη κατά τη διάρκεια της ετήσιας συνόδου του Διεθνούς Ταμείου για τη Γεωργική Ανάπτυξη (FIDA), που είναι μια εξειδικευμένη υπηρεσία του ΟΗΕ.

«Αν σας απασχολούν οι πιο φτωχοί, θα πρέπει να σας απασχολήσει η γεωργία. Είμαστε πεπεισμένοι ότι είναι δυνατό για τους αγρότες με μικρή παραγωγή να διπλασιάσουν και σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις να τριπλασιάσουν την παραγωγή τους κατά τη διάρκεια των 20 προσεχών ετών, προστατεύοντας ταυτοχρόνως τη γη τους», συνέχισε ο Γκέιτς.

Ο Γκέιτς έφερε ως παράδειγμα για τη χρήση τεχνολογιών της πληροφορικής την ακολουθία του γονιδιώματος της μανιόκας, η οποία επιτρέπει στους αγρότες να προβλέπουν την απόδοση των σπόρων και να μειώνουν το χρόνο για την ανάπτυξη μιας νέας ποικιλίας από 10 χρόνια μόνο σε 2.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν θεωρεί την πρόταση αυτή όντως κερδοφόρα και ελπιδοφόρα για τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ που βρίσκονται στην πρώτη γραμμή της οικονομικής κρίσης.

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Απριλίου 2012)

Η κινητοποίηση των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών μπορεί να διαδραματίσει σημαντικό ρόλο στη βελτίωση της επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο. Συγκεκριμένα, σε συνδυασμό με άλλες προσεγγίσεις, μπορεί να βοηθήσει τους αγρότες στις αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες να γεφυρώσουν το «χάσμα απόδοσης». Επιπρόσθετα, οι τεχνολογίες τηλεπισκόπησης συμβάλλουν στην παρακολούθηση της επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας σε διαφορετικές περιοχές του πλανήτη. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, τις τελευταίες δύο δεκαετίες, έχει αναπτύξει ένα σύστημα πρόβλεψης της συγκομιδής των καλλιεργειών, το οποίο πλέον συμβάλλει στην παρακολούθηση της επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο (μέσω του Παγκόσμιου Συστήματος Πληροφόρησης και Έγκαιρης Προειδοποίησης για τα Τρόφιμα και τη Γεωργία (Global Information and Early Warning System/GIEWS) του Οργανισμού Τροφίμων και Γεωργίας (FAO)).

Οι ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες και οι τεχνολογίες επικοινωνιών προφανώς διαδραματίζουν σημαντικό ρόλο στον γεωργικό τομέα της ΕΕ. Ωστόσο, αυτός ο ρόλος είναι διαφορετικός σε σύγκριση με τις ανασφαλείς, από επισιτιστική άποψη, χώρες, καθώς το πιθανό όφελος από πλευράς αύξησης της απόδοσης είναι πολύ μικρότερο. Εν τούτοις, οι προαναφερόμενες τεχνολογίες χρησιμοποιούνται για την παρακολούθηση της συγκομιδής των καλλιεργειών, τη γεωργία ακριβείας, την κτηνοτροφία κτλ. Η ΕΕ συνεισφέρει ήδη εδώ και χρόνια σε αυτούς τους τομείς, με τη χρηματοδότηση πολλών έργων από το Πρόγραμμα Πλαίσιο Έρευνας, για παράδειγμα, ή με την παροχή υπηρεσιών για τη χρήση των εν λόγω τεχνολογιών: παραδείγματος χάρη, το σύστημα EGNOS λειτουργεί ήδη αρκετά χρόνια δίνοντας τη δυνατότητα χρήσης δορυφορικής πλοήγησης για γεωργία ακριβείας. Δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία ότι οι ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες θα κινητοποιηθούν στον γεωργικό τομέα και το σύνολο της αλυσίδας εφοδιασμού, μέσω της προτεινόμενης ευρωπαϊκής εταιρικής σχέσης καινοτομίας «Παραγωγικότητα και Βιωσιμότητα του Γεωργικού Τομέα» και της πρότασης για το πρόγραμμα-πλαίσιο έρευνας και καινοτομίας «Ορίζων 2020».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002338/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Digital revolution to combat hunger

The founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates, today backed a 'digital revolution' to combat hunger in the world by enhancing agricultural and stockbreeding productivity using satellite systems, video technology and seed selection.

'We have to think hard about how to start taking advantage of the digital revolution that is driving innovation, including in farming,' said billionaire Bill Gates in Rome at the annual conference of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a specialist agency of the UN.

'If you care about the poorest, you care about agriculture. We believe that it's possible for small farmers to double and in some cases even triple their yields in the next 20 years while preserving the land,' continued Mr Gates.

He gave as one example of the use of information technologies the genetic sequencing that allows cassava farmers to predict how individual seedlings will perform, shortening the time it takes to develop a new variety from 10 years to two.

Does the Commission believe that this proposal could be truly profitable and promising for EU Member States on the front line of the economic crisis?

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

The mobilisation of digital technologies can play an important role to improve food security at world level. In particular, together with other approaches, it can help farmers in developing countries to bridge the 'yield gap'. In addition, remote sensing technologies contribute to the monitoring of food security in different regions of the world. The European Commission has developed since the past two decades a system of crop harvest forecasts, which now contributes to food security monitoring at world level (through the FAO Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture, GIEWS).

Digital and communication technologies have obviously a role to play in the EU agricultural sector. Yet, this role is different than in food insecure countries, as the potential benefit in terms of yield gains is much smaller. Yet, these technologies are utilised for crop harvest monitoring, for precision farming, for breeding, etc. The EU has made contributions in these aspects for years already, with many projects funded by the framework Programme for Research for instance, or by providing services for the use of these technologies: for instance EGNOS has been operational already for some years to allow the use of satellite navigation for precision farming. There is no doubt that the digital technologies will be mobilised for the agricultural sector and the whole supply chain through the proposed European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' and the proposal for the framework Programme for Research and Innovation 'Horizon 2020'.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002339/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κατάσταση στη Σομαλία

Την επιβολή κυρώσεων από τη διεθνή κοινότητα σε «αυτούς που θα σταθούν εμπόδιο» στην πολιτική μετάβαση στη Σομαλία, στην οποία μαίνεται εμφύλιος εδώ και περισσότερο από δύο δεκαετίες, ζήτησε σήμερα από το Λονδίνο η υπουργός Εξωτερικών των ΗΠΑ Χίλαρι Κλίντον.

«Η θέση των ΗΠΑ είναι σαφής: οποιαδήποτε απόπειρα παρεμπόδισης της πολιτικής διαδικασίας και διατήρησης του status quo δεν θα γίνει ανεκτή», δήλωσε η Κλίντον κατά τη διεθνή διάσκεψη για τη Σομαλία που διεξάγεται στο Λονδίνο, στη διάρκεια της οποίας ανακοίνωσε επιπρόσθετη αμερικανική βοήθεια 64 εκατομμυρίων δολαρίων (48 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ) για τις χώρες στο Κέρας της Αφρικής.

«Θα ενθαρρύνουμε τη διεθνή κοινότητα να επιβάλει πρόσθετες κυρώσεις, όπως απαγορεύσεις στις μετακινήσεις και πάγωμα περιουσιακών στοιχείων στα πρόσωπα στους κόλπους της σομαλικής μεταβατικής κυβέρνησης ή εκτός αυτής, τα οποία επιζητούν να υπονομεύσουν την ειρήνη και την ασφάλεια στη Σομαλία», σημείωσε.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η μέχρι τώρα οικονομική βοήθεια της ΕΕ προς τη Σομαλία;

2. Έχουμε αποδείξεις για την επένδυση αυτών των χρημάτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Piebalgs εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2012)

Η ΕΕ διέθεσε περίπου 500 εκατομμύρια ευρώ για αναπτυξιακή συνεργασία, πέραν των 567 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ για ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια και για την αποστολή της Αφρικανικής Ένωσης στη Σομαλία (AMISOM) που έχει ως στόχο να βοηθήσει τις αρχές της Σομαλίας να εγγυηθούν την ασφάλεια για τους ανθρώπους και την πρόοδο για την ειρηνευτική διαδικασία. Προτεραιότητες της αναπτυξιακής βοήθειας της ΕΕ είναι η στήριξη της αποτελεσματικής διακυβέρνησης, η εκπαίδευση και η τόνωση της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης. Η στήριξη της ΕΕ στον τομέα της διακυβέρνησης περιλαμβάνει τη στήριξη για την δημιουργία θεσμών, τη συμφιλίωση, το κράτος δικαίου, τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, καθώς και τη στήριξη της κοινωνίας των πολιτών της Σομαλίας. Περιλαμβάνει επίσης επενδύσεις στη γεωργία, στο ζωικό κεφάλαιο, στα βασικά έργα υποδομής, στην επαγγελματική κατάρτιση, στον τομέα της υγείας και στον ιδιωτικό τομέα. Μεγάλο μέρος της αναπτυξιακής βοήθειας χρησιμοποιήθηκε εκεί όπου υπάρχει επαρκής ασφάλεια και διακυβέρνηση, ενώ η ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια συνεχίζει να αντιμετωπίζει τις ανάγκες ευπαθών πληθυσμών στην κεντρική και νότια Σομαλία. Η ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια εστιάζεται στην αντιμετώπιση της έντονης επισιτιστικής ανασφάλειας μέσω επισιτιστικής βοήθειας και χρηματικών πρωτοβουλιών και σε άλλους κρίσιμους τομείς όπως το νερό, η αποχέτευση, η υγιεινή, η υγεία/διατροφή, η στέγη και η συνδρομή των εσωτερικά μετακινηθέντων πληθυσμών, καθώς και η στήριξη των σομαλών προσφύγων στην Κένυα.

Λόγω των ειδικών συνθηκών στη Σομαλία, τα προγράμματα που χρηματοδοτούνται με κονδύλια της ΕΕ εφαρμόζονται κυρίως από διεθνείς μη κυβερνητικούς οργανισμούς (ΜΚΟ) και οργανώσεις των Ηνωμένων Εθνών. Οι συμβάσεις εφαρμογής με αυτούς τους οργανισμούς προβλέπουν τακτική υποβολή τεχνικών και οικονομικών εκθέσεων. Επιπλέον, κατά την εφαρμογή των προγραμμάτων, διεξάγονται τακτικά έλεγχοι και αξιολογήσεις μέσω επιτόπιων επισκέψεων και ενδιάμεσων και τελικών αξιολογήσεων, πράγμα που επιτρέπει στην Επιτροπή να διασφαλίσει την κατάλληλη παρακολούθηση της εφαρμογής τους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002339/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Situation in Somalia

Speaking in London today, Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, demanded the imposition of sanctions by the international community on those who 'seek to…prevent the political transition' in Somalia, where a civil war has been raging for over two decades.

'The position of the United States is straightforward: attempts to obstruct progress and maintain the broken status quo will not be tolerated,' stated Mrs Clinton at the international conference on Somalia held in London, during which she announced additional US aid of USD 64 million (EUR 48 million) for the countries of the Horn of Africa.

'We will encourage the international community to impose further sanctions, including travel bans and asset freezes, on people inside and outside the TFG (Transitional Federal Government) who seek to undermine Somalia's peace and security,' she said.

Will the Commission say:

1. How much financial aid the EU has given to Somalia to date?

2. Is there any evidence of how this money has been invested?

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

The EU has provided around EUR 500 million in development cooperation, on top of the EUR 567 million for humanitarian assistance and for the African Union mission to Somalia (Amisom) which aims to help Somali authorities to bring security to its people and progress in the peace process. Priorities for the EU development aid are supporting effective governance, education and stimulating economic development. EU support for governance includes support for institution building, reconciliation, rule of law, human rights and support to Somali civil society. It also covers investments in agriculture, livestock, basic infrastructure, vocational training, health and the private sector. Much of the development aid is spent where there is adequate security and governance, while humanitarian aid continues in South-Central Somalia to address needs of vulnerable populations. The focus of the humanitarian assistance is to address the severe food insecurity through food aid and cash based initiatives and other key sectors such as water, sanitation, hygiene, health/nutrition, shelter and assistance to internally displaced populations and assistance to Somali refugees in Kenya.

Due to the specific situation in Somalia, the projects funded by EU funds are mainly implemented by international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and United Nations agencies. The implementation contracts with these organisations foresee regular technical and financial reporting. Moreover, during the project implementation, regular monitoring and evaluations are carried out through field visits, mid-term and end-term evaluations, which enables the Commission to ensure proper follow-up.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002340/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Νέος κύκλος εξοπλισμών παγκοσμίως

Ένας νέος κύκλος επανεξοπλισμών φαίνεται να ξεκινάει μετά και τις δηλώσεις του Ρώσου Πρωθυπουργού ότι, εφόσον εκλεγεί στην Προεδρεία της χώρας, θα προχωρήσει σε έναν άνευ προηγουμένου επανεξοπλισμό της χώρας.

Αντίστοιχη φαίνεται να είναι η πολιτική και της Κίνας, ενώ το Ιράν και η Τουρκία αυξάνουν τις δαπάνες για τα εξοπλιστικά τους προγράμματα.

Οι ανατολικές χώρες της ΕΕ είναι φυσικό να αγωνιούν περισσότερο για τις εξελίξεις, οι οποίες πρέπει να αφορούν και την ΕΕ.

Ακόμα και αν «ο απόλυτος πόλεμος θάφτηκε δίπλα στην απόλυτη ειρήνη» με το τέλος του Β' Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου, οι εξοπλιστικές δαπάνες έχουν στοιχίσει εξωπραγματικά ποσά ακόμα και μετά το τέλος του Ψυχρού Πολέμου.

Το περαιτέρω εξοπλιστικό κόστος αποτελεί πολυτέλεια σε περίοδο χρηματοπιστωτικής κρίσης. Άλλωστε είναι κρίμα, χρήματα που θα μπορούσαν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για κοινωνικές παροχές, παιδεία και έρευνα, να αποδίδονται στην πολεμική βιομηχανία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σχεδιάζει να παρέμβει για τη συγκράτηση των εξοπλιστικών δαπανών στην ευρωπαϊκή περιφέρεια και παγκοσμίως για το 2012;

2. Κρίνει χρήσιμη μια έρευνα γύρω από τις αναπτυξιακές δυνατότητες και την αύξηση της ευημερίας που θα επέφερε παγκοσμίως ο αφοπλισμός;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Η ΕΕ δεν έχει άμεση αρμοδιότητα όσον αφορά το επίπεδο των στρατιωτικών δαπανών τρίτων χωρών. Η διεθνής της δράση διέπεται από τη στρατηγική της ΕΕ στον τομέα της ασφάλειας του 2003, η οποία καθορίζει ως στόχο της ΕΕ την «ανάπτυξη μιας ισχυρότερης διεθνούς κοινωνίας, εύρυθμα λειτουργούντων διεθνών θεσμών και μιας διεθνούς τάξης βασισμένης σε κανόνες». Η επίτευξη του στόχου αυτού σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο συνίσταται σε μεγάλο βαθμό στον περιορισμό των κινήτρων για αύξηση των εθνικών στρατιωτικών δυνάμεων.

Η ΕΕ υποστηρίζει σθεναρά τον γενικό αφοπλισμό. Διαθέτει ουσιαστικούς διπλωματικούς και οικονομικούς πόρους για να συνδράμει τρίτες χώρες να προσχωρήσουν σε διεθνείς συνθήκες αφοπλισμού, στους τομείς τόσο των συμβατικών όπλων όσο και των όπλων μαζικής καταστροφής, και για να ενισχύσει τις ικανότητες επαλήθευσης δυνάμει των εν λόγω συνθηκών.

Η ΕΕ προάγει επίσης υπεύθυνους και διαφανείς ελέγχους των εξαγωγών όπλων στο πλαίσιο των πωλήσεων όπλων από κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ μέσω της εφαρμογής της κοινής θέσης 2008/944/ΚΕΠΠΑ, της 8ης Δεκεμβρίου 2008, για τον έλεγχο των εξαγωγών στρατιωτικού εξοπλισμού και τεχνολογίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002340/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: New round of global rearmament

A new round of global rearmament appears to be starting, following statements by the Russian Prime Minister that, if he is elected President, he will begin an unprecedented rearmament of the country.

This also seems to be China's policy, while Iran's and Turkey's expenditure on arms programmes is increasing.

The eastern countries of the EU are naturally more concerned about these developments, which should also concern the EU as a whole.

Although 'total war was buried alongside total peace' with the end of the Second World War, expenditure on armaments has been unrealistically high, even since the end of the Cold War.

Further arms expenditure is a luxury in a period of financial crisis. In addition, it is wrong to give money to the arms industry that could fund social provisions, education and research.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it plan to intervene to curb arms expenditure on Europe's periphery and internationally in 2012?

2. Does it think it would be useful to research the growth potential and the increase in prosperity that disarmament could provide?

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

The EU has no direct responsibility in the level of military expenditure of third countries. Its international action is guided by the EU Security Strategy of 2003 which sets out as EU's objective 'the development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order'. Achieving such an objective on the global stage is very much likely to lower the incentive of national military build ups.

The EU is a committed supporter of global disarmament. It allocates substantial diplomatic and financial resources to assist third countries in acceding international disarmament treaties, both in the field of conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction, and to strengthen the verification capacities under those treaties.

The EU also promotes responsible and transparent arms export controls on arms sales from EU Member States through the implementation of Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 on the control of export of military equipment and technology.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002341/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόσβαση σε προστατευμένη πολιτιστική κληρονομιά

Η πρόσβαση ερευνητών σε πρωτότυπα κείμενα θεωρώ ότι πρέπει να διευρυνθεί.

Το Βατικανό έχει στην κατοχή του τεράστιους θησαυρούς που, βάσει πληροφοριών από ερευνητές, αδυνατεί να δώσει στη δημοσιότητα.

Στους εν λόγω θησαυρούς εδράζεται μέρος της πολιτιστικής βάσης της Ευρώπης, ενώ περαιτέρω μελέτη τους μπορεί να οδηγήσει σε ενδιαφέρουσες ανακαλύψεις για την αρχαιότητα, και κυρίως για τον ελληνικό πολιτισμό.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Εφόσον γνωρίζει το εν λόγω ζήτημα, σκοπεύει να δραστηριοποιηθεί ώστε να συνεργασθεί το Βατικανό στην έκθεση και την πρόσβαση ερευνητών στη πολιτιστική κληρονομιά;

Απάντηση της κας Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Ο κύριος βουλευτής θα πρέπει να γνωρίζει ότι το Βατικανό είναι τρίτη χώρα σε σχέση με την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και ότι το άρθρο 167 παράγραφος 3 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης προβλέπει ότι η Ένωση και τα κράτη μέλη ευνοούν τη συνεργασία με τις τρίτες χώρες στον πολιτιστικό τομέα.

Ωστόσο, η Ένωση δεν έχει ακόμη χαράξει πολιτική σχετικά με τη συνεργασία με τρίτες χώρες στον τομέα της πρόσβασης, ιδίως των ερευνητών, στην πολιτιστική κληρονομιά, ούτε έχει συναφθεί με το Βατικανό συμφωνία που θα μπορούσε να αποτελέσει πλαίσιο για την εν λόγω συνεργασία. Κατά συνέπεια, η Επιτροπή δεν προτίθεται να προσεγγίσει το Βατικανό σχετικά με αυτό το θέμα, αλλά πιστεύει ότι, εάν είναι αναγκαίο, τα κράτη μέλη θα το πράξουν.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002341/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Access to protected cultural heritage

Researchers should be given greater access to original texts.

The Vatican possesses vast treasures which, according to reports by researchers, it is unable to make public.

Part of Europe's cultural foundation lies in these treasures, and further study of these could lead to interesting discoveries regarding antiquity, particularly in relation to Greek culture.

Will the Commission say:

In so far as it is aware of this issue, does it intend to take action to encourage the Vatican to cooperate in displaying these items and permitting access by researchers to this cultural heritage?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

The Honourable Member will be aware that from a European Union perspective the Vatican is a third country and that Article 167 (3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that the Union and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries in the sphere of culture.

However, the Union has not yet developed a policy concerning cooperation with third countries in the area of access, in particular of researchers, to cultural heritage, nor has it concluded with the Vatican an agreement which could form the framework for such a cooperation. As a consequence, the Commission does not intend to approach the Vatican on this matter, but trusts that, if need be, the Member States will do so.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002342/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συνέχεια συγκρούσεων στη Λιβύη

Η Λιβύη βρίσκεται στην πρώτη γραμμή γειτόνων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Παρόλα αυτά η χώρα δεν δείχνει να έχει επηρεαστεί κατ' ελάχιστον από τις ευρωπαϊκές αξίες και τα πολλαπλά ευρωπαϊκά προγράμματα από τα οποία έχει επωφεληθεί.

Η πτώση του προηγούμενου καθεστώτος βρίσκει τη χώρα να αντιμετωπίζει σφοδρές διαφυλετικές συγκρούσεις, ιδίως στο νότιο τμήμα της. Περισσότεροι από 100 άνθρωποι έχουν σκοτωθεί και δεκάδες έχουν τραυματιστεί στις συγκρούσεις που διαρκούν εδώ και δέκα περίπου ημέρες μεταξύ αντίπαλων φυλών όπως αναφέρουν πηγές από τις φυλές.

Κατά τον Ερυθρό Σταυρό, μόνον τη Δευτέρα σκοτώθηκαν 50 άνθρωποι ενώ εκατοντάδες άλλοι έχουν αναγκαστεί να εγκαταλείψουν τις εστίες τους. Από την αρχή των συγκρούσεων υπολογίζεται ότι έχουν σκοτωθεί 113 άνθρωποι (μεταξύ αυτών έξι παιδιά) και έχουν τραυματιστεί 241, όπως δήλωσε ο αρχηγός της φυλής Τόμπου, Ίσα Αμπντελματζίντ. Ο ίδιος καταγγέλλει σχέδιο εξόντωσης της φυλής του και καλεί τη διεθνή κοινότητα να επέμβει για να σταματήσουν οι εχθροπραξίες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει το εν λόγω ζήτημα και κρίνει ότι μπορεί να παρέμβει ανταποκρινόμενη στο κάλεσμα του αρχηγού της φυλής Τόμπου;

2. Υπάρχει συνεργασία με τη Λιβύη σε ανώτατο επίπεδο ώστε να υπάρξει ένα μακροπροθεσμο καθεστώς ειρήνευσης;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Η ΕΕ παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την κατάσταση στην περιοχή Kufra, και έχει επανειλημμένα εκφράσει στις αρχές την ανάγκη να διασφαλίσουν τον σεβασμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και το κράτος δικαίου. Η ΕΕ θα εξακολουθήσει να πράττει το ίδιο και στις υψηλού επιπέδου επαφές της με τις αρχές.

Η ΕΕ έχει προσφέρει επείγουσα ενίσχυση σε πρόσωπα που χρήζουν προστασίας λόγω της σύγκρουσης, και είναι έτοιμη να βοηθήσει με κάθε δυνατό τρόπο τις αρχές στην προσπάθεια τους να διασφαλίσουν τον σεβασμό για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, τις δημοκρατικές αρχές και το κράτος δικαίου στη διάρκεια της μεταβατικής περιόδου.

Η ΕΕ έχει προβλέψει δέσμη βραχυπρόθεσμης βοήθειας ύψους 30 εκατ. ευρώ για τη στήριξη της δημοκρατικής μεταβατικής διαδικασίας. Αυτή η δέσμη συνίσταται στη στήριξη της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των τομέων του εκδημοκρατισμού και της εθνικής συμφιλίωσης· στην ενίσχυση των θεσμικών οργάνων που ασχολούνται με την κοινωνία των πολιτών· στην ενίσχυση των ικανοτήτων της δημόσιας διοίκησης· στην παροχή στήριξης για τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας και της δυνατότητας συμμετοχής στην πρωτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση· στην παροχή στήριξης για τη σταθεροποίηση των κοινοτήτων που διατρέχουν κίνδυνο και την παροχή βοήθειας όσον αφορά τη διαχείριση των μεταναστευτικών ροών εντός της Λιβυής και από τη Λιβύη, και την αποκατάσταση των τραυματιών πολέμου. Πρόσθετο ποσό 50 εκατ. ευρώ προβλέπεται να διατεθεί κατά την επόμενη διετία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002342/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Continuing clashes in Libya

Libya is on the front line of EU neighbouring countries. However, the country does not show any influence from European values and the multiple European programmes from which it has benefited.

The fall of the former regime has left the country facing violent interracial clashes, particularly in the northern region. More than 100 people have been killed and dozens have been injured in clashes lasting around ten days between rival tribes, report sources from the tribes.

According to the Red Cross, on Monday alone, 50 people were killed while hundreds were forced to leave their homes. Since the clashes began, Issa Abdelmajid, the leader of the Tobu tribe, estimates that 113 people have been killed (including children) and 241 injured. He condemns the elimination campaign aimed at his tribe and calls for the international community to intervene and put an end to the hostilities.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of this issue and does it believe it can intervene in response to the call from the leader of the Tobu tribe?

2. Is there any cooperation with Libya at a higher level for bringing about peace in the long term?

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

The EU is closely following the situation in the Kufra region and has repeatedly raised with the authorities the need to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law. The EU will continue to do so in its high level contacts with the authorities.

The EU has provided emergency assistance to people in need of protection as a result of the conflict and stands ready to provide all assistance to the authorities in their efforts to ensure respect for human rights democratic values and the rule of law during the transition period.

The EU has a EUR 30 million short term assistance package in place to support the democratic transition process. This package consists of support to civil society including in the areas of democratisation and national reconciliation; strengthening the institutions dealing with civil society; capacity-building for public administration; support to help increase the quality and inclusiveness of primary education; support to the stabilisation of communities at risk and assistance in the management of migration flows inside and from Libya and rehabilitation of the war wounded. Another EUR 50 million remains to be allocated in the next two years.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002343/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Horizon 2020 — Cultural heritage

Με διάρκεια από το 2014 έως το 2020 και προϋπολογισμό 80 δις ευρώ, το νέο πρόγραμμα της ΕΕ για την έρευνα και την καινοτομία (8ο Πρόγραμμα Πλαίσιο Horizon 2020) στοχεύει στη δημιουργία ανάπτυξης και νέων θέσεων εργασίας στην Ευρώπη. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στην πρότασή της για το πρόγραμμα αυτό, δεν περιλαμβάνει καμία αναφορά για την πολιτιστική και φυσική κληρονομιά, με αποτέλεσμα να δημιουργούνται οι προϋποθέσεις για πιθανό πλήρη αποκλεισμό του τομέα αυτού από μελλοντική χρηματοδότηση της ΕΕ και σχετικές προσκλήσεις υποβολής προτάσεων.

Δεδομένης της τρέχουσας οικονομικής κρίσης, της σημαντικής συμβολής της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς στο συνολικό ΑΕΠ της ΕΕ (με κύκλο εργασιών από 338 δις ευρώ ετησίως από τον τουρισμό, το ποσοστό συμβολής ανέρχεται στο 3,3 % του ΑΕΠ της Ευρώπης), της προσπάθειας ενίσχυσης της κοινωνικής συνοχής και της ευρωπαϊκής ταυτότητας, αλλά και της υποχρέωσης για προστασία της ευρωπαϊκής κληρονομιάς, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 3.3 της Συνθήκης της Λισαβόνας, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή έχει τη μέγιστη υποχρέωση να υποστηρίζει με εξειδικευμένα ευρωπαϊκά προγράμματα τον εν λόγω τομέα.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, η Επιτροπή ερωτάται:

1. για ποιους λόγους δεν συμπεριλήφθηκε στην πρότασή της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για το πρόγραμμα «Ορίζοντας 2020» πρόβλεψη σχετικά με την έρευνα και καινοτομία στον τομέα της πολιτιστικής και φυσικής κληρονομιάς;

2. με ποιόν τρόπο θα διασφαλίσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή τα απαιτούμενα κονδύλια για την έρευνα και καινοτομία στον τομέα της πολιτιστικής και φυσικής κληρονομιάς και πώς θα ενισχύσει την ευρωπαϊκή έρευνα σχετικά με την Προστασία της Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς;

3. πώς προτίθεται να τονώσει τις επενδύσεις από την ΕΕ και την αγορά εργασίας στον τομέα της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς;

Απάντηση της κας Geoghegan-Quinn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Η πολιτιστική και φυσική κληρονομιά μπορεί να υποστηριχθεί από το νέο πρόγραμμα-πλαίσιο έρευνας και καινοτομίας «Ορίζοντας 2020» με διαφορετικούς τρόπους, μέσω των τριών αλληλοενισχυόμενων προτεραιοτήτων του «Επιστήμη αριστείας», «Βιομηχανική υπεροχή» (μέρος «Προηγμένα υλικά») και «Κοινωνιακές προκλήσεις» (κυρίως η πρόκληση «Δράση για το κλίμα, αποδοτικότητα πόρων και πρώτες ύλες»).

2. Η έρευνα στον τομέα της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, και ειδικότερα η περιβαλλοντική έρευνα, περιλαμβάνεται σε όλα τα ερευνητικά προγράμματα-πλαίσια της ΕΕ από το 1986 με σκοπό την ενίσχυση της επιστημονικής και τεχνικής βάσης για την προστασία και αποκατάσταση της ευρωπαϊκής κληρονομιάς και την εφαρμογή κοινών μεθοδολογιών, τεχνολογιών και εργαλείων. Υπάρχει επίσης δυνατότητα στήριξης διασυνοριακών έργων σχετικών με θέματα πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς στο πλαίσιο των προγραμμάτων «Πολιτισμός» ή «Ευρωπαϊκός τουρισμός», που λειτουργούν συμπληρωματικά προς την έρευνα.

3. Κατά το 7ο Πρόγραμμα-πλαίσιο Έρευνας και Τεχνολογικής Ανάπτυξης (ΠΠ7, 2007-2013) αναπτύχθηκαν συμπράξεις, όπως η σύμπραξη ιδιωτικού-δημοσίου τομέα για την «Ενεργειακή απόδοση κτιρίων» που είχε εφαρμογή και στα ιστορικά κτίρια. Η πρόσφατη Πρωτοβουλία Κοινού Προγραμματισμού (ΠΚΠ) για την «Πολιτιστική κληρονομιά και πλανητικές μεταβολές: μια νέα πρόκληση για την Ευρώπη», μια πρωτοβουλία των κρατών μελών που εγκρίθηκε με απόφαση του Συμβουλίου στις 26 Μαΐου 2010, άνοιξε τον δρόμο για να συνενωθούν οι διαφορετικές διάσπαρτες πρωτοβουλίες των κρατών μελών σε αυτό τον τομέα και να καταρτιστεί από κοινού στρατηγικό θεματολόγιο για την έρευνα. Η χρηματοδότηση από την ΕΕ που προβλέπεται στο πρόγραμμα «Ορίζοντας 2020» αναμένεται να προκαλέσει σημαντική μόχλευση εθνικής και τοπικής χρηματοδότησης, καθώς και ιδιωτικών πόρων που τονώνουν την οικονομική ανάπτυξη και τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002343/12
to the Commission
Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Horizon 2020 — Cultural heritage

The new EU programme for research and innovation (Eighth Framework Programme — Horizon 2020), to run from 2014 to 2020 with a budget of EUR 80 billion, aims to create growth and new jobs in Europe. The relevant Commission proposal, however, does not include any reference to cultural and natural heritage, which means that they are likely to be excluded completely from future EU funding and related tenders.

Given the current economic crisis, the significance of cultural heritage in terms of the EU's total GDP (with a turnover of EUR 338 billion a year from tourism, the contribution amounts to 3.3 % of Europe's GDP), the efforts to reinforce social cohesion and European identity and also the obligation to protect European heritage under Article 3(3) of the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Union has an absolute obligation to support this sector, through special European programmes.

In view of this:

1. Why did the Commission proposal for the Horizon 2020 programme not include provisions for research and innovation in the cultural and natural heritage sector?

2. How will the European Union guarantee the necessary funds for research and innovation in the cultural and natural heritage sector and step up European research into the Protection of European Cultural Heritage?

3. How does it intend to stimulate EU investment and step up the employment in the cultural heritage sector?

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

1. Cultural and natural heritage may be addressed in the new Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 'Horizon 2020' in different ways under its three mutually reinforcing priorities 'Excellent Science', 'Industrial Leadership' (via the 'advanced materials' part) and 'Societal Challenges' (in particular the challenge 'Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials').

2. Cultural heritage research has been featured in all EU Research Framework Programmes since 1986, especially regarding environmental research, with the aim of reinforcing the scientific and technical basis for protecting and rehabilitating the European patrimony and setting up joint methodologies, technologies and tools. Complementary to research, cross-border projects addressing cultural heritage issues can also be supported in the framework of 'Culture' or 'Tourism in Europe'.

3. Partnerships developed within the Seventh Framework for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), like the Private-Public Partnership on 'Energy efficient Buildings' also applied to historic buildings. The recent Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) on 'Cultural Heritage and Global Change: a new challenge for Europe', a Member State driven initiative endorsed by the Council Decision on 26 May 2010, paved the way for bringing together the different scattered initiatives in the Member States in this field and developing in common a strategic research agenda. EU funding in Horizon 2020 is supposed to produce a substantial leverage effect on national and regional funding as well as on private resources boosting growth and creation of jobs.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002344/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συνθήκη ACTA

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό τύπο, πολίτες και οργανώσεις επέκριναν τη συνθήκη της ACTA ως απειλή για την ελευθερία του Διαδικτύου αλλά και για την πρόσβαση στα αντίγραφα φαρμάκων.

Παράλληλα έχει παγώσει η κύρωση της συνθήκης από τα εθνικά Κοινοβούλια στη Γερμανία, την Ολλανδία, την Πολωνία, την Αυστρία, την Τσεχία, τη Ρουμανία, τη Βουλγαρία, τη Λεττονία και την Κύπρο. Συντονισμένες διαδηλώσεις με τη συμμετοχή δεκάδων χιλιάδων ατόμων είχαν οργανωθεί σε όλες τις χώρες της Ευρώπης στις 11 Φεβρουαρίου, ενώ ιδιαίτερα έντονες ήταν οι αντιδράσεις σε χώρες του πρώην ανατολικού μπλοκ, λόγω φόβων αυταρχικής εκτροπής. Το ζήτημα αναδείχθηκε πρώτα στην Πολωνία, όπου ο πρωθυπουργός Τουσκ υποχρεώθηκε σε πολύωρη συζήτηση μέσω Ιντερνετ με τους επικριτές της συνθήκης, προτού η Βαρσοβία γίνει η πρώτη ευρωπαϊκή πρωτεύουσα που πάγωσε την επικύρωση της συνθήκης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της και σε ποιες ενέργειες πρόκειται να προβεί λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η ψηφοφορία επικύρωσης της συνθήκης από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, είχε ορισθεί για τον Ιούνιο;

Απάντηση του κ. De Gucht εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

Στις 29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, ο επίτροπος εμπορίου Karel De Gucht παρουσίασε αναλυτικά τις τελευταίες εξελίξεις και την αξιολόγηση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την εμπορική συμφωνία καταπολέμησης της παραποίησης (ACTA) στην επιτροπή διεθνούς εμπορίου INTA. Την επομένη, ο επίτροπος De Gucht συμμετείχε, επίσης, σε μια επιστημονική συνάντηση που διοργανώθηκε από το Κοινοβούλιο με θέμα την εν λόγω συμφωνία, στη διάρκεια της οποίας συζητήθηκε αναλυτικά η συμφωνία και εξετάστηκαν πολλά από τα θέματα στα οποία αναφέρεται ο κ. βουλευτής. Οι δηλώσεις στις οποίες προέβη ο επίτροπος και με τις δύο αυτές ευκαιρίες έχουν αναρτηθεί στον ιστότοπο της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Εμπορίου ([1]).

Επιπλέον, προκειμένου να διασαφηνιστεί οριστικά το ζήτημα της συμβατότητας της συμφωνίας ACTA με το πρωτογενές δίκαιο της ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή παρέπεμψε την υπόθεση στο Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο, που θα αποφανθεί για τη συμβατότητα της εμπορικής συμφωνίας για την καταπολέμηση της παραποίησης με τις Συνθήκες της ΕΕ και τον χάρτη θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων. Πρόκειται για μια σημαντική συνεισφορά στον ευρωπαϊκό δημόσιο και δημοκρατικό διάλογο και ως εκ τούτου το Κοινοβούλιο θα πρέπει να περιμένει την απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου πριν λάβει θέση για τη συμφωνία ACTA.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/february/tradoc_149168.pdf
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=783.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002344/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA)

According to Greek press reports, citizens and organisations have criticised the ACTA, maintaining that it will damage the freedom of the Internet and access to generic medicines.

Simultaneously, ratification of the agreement has been postponed by the national parliaments in Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia and Cyprus. Demonstrations involving tens of thousands of people were organised in every European country on 11 February 2012; opposition was particularly fierce in former Eastern-bloc countries, due to fears of a drift towards authoritarianism. The problem first arose in Poland, where Prime Minister Tusk was forced into a long online discussion with the critics of the agreement and Warsaw became the first European capital to put the ratification of the agreement on hold.

Will the Commission give its official position and say what action it intends to take, given that the European Parliament vote on ratifying the agreement is scheduled for June?

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

On 29 February 2012, Commissioner for Trade Karel De Gucht provided a detailed state-of-play and the Commission's assessment regarding the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), before the INTA Committee. On the following day, Commissioner De Gucht also participated in a Workshop organised by the Parliament on ACTA, where he discussed in detail the treaty and addressed many of the concerns to which the Honourable Member refers. The Commissioner's statements on both occasions are available at Directorate-General Trade's website ([1]).

Furthermore, in order to definitively clarify the issue of the compatibility of ACTA with the EU primary law, the Commission has referred ACTA to the European Court of Justice, which will pronounce itself on ACTA's compatibility with the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. This is an important input to European public and democratic debate, therefore it would be important for the Parliament to await the Court's decision before determining its own position on ACTA.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/february/tradoc_149168.pdf and http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=783

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002345/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σχέδιο για «κούρεμα» οφειλών σε δανειολήπτες στην Ελλάδα

Σε συνέχεια προηγούμενης ερώτησής μας [E-009390/2011] (Διευκόλυνση των καταναλωτών από τον τραπεζικό τομέα) και σύμφωνα με πρόσφατες δηλώσεις του έλληνα Γ.Γ. Καταναλωτή, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση πρόκειται να ανακοινώσει πλαίσιο ρυθμίσεων με στόχο τη διευκόλυνση της αποπληρωμής δανειακών οφειλών σε νοικοκυριά και επιχειρήσεις (στεγαστικών, καταναλωτικών και επιχειρηματικών δανείων). Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι διαγραφή μέρους οφειλών δανειοληπτών προς τις τράπεζες εφαρμόστηκε πρόσφατα στην Ισλανδία, η οποία προχώρησε σε «κούρεμα» των δανειακών υποχρεώσεων των νοικοκυριών ύψους ρεκόρ, που ανέρχεται στο 13 % του ΑΕΠ της χώρας.

Δεδομένου ότι: 1. η ελληνική οικονομία συνεχίζει να βρίσκεται σε βαθειά ύφεση, 2. οι δανειολήπτες εξαιτίας των άκριτων και συνεχών μειώσεων σε μισθούς και συντάξεις αδυνατούν να ανταποκριθούν στις δανειακές τους υποχρεώσεις, με βάση τα νέα εισοδηματικά δεδομένα 3. οι τράπεζες θα ενισχυθούν σημαντικά από το νέο πακέτο οικονομικής βοήθειας προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί η κεφαλαιακή τους επάρκεια, 4. το παράδειγμα της Ισλανδίας που, με το «κούρεμα» στις οφειλές των δανειοληπτών, στοχεύει στην ενίσχυση της επιχειρηματικότητας και της κατανάλωσης, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ως συμβαλλόμενο μέλος της Τρόικα, με κεντρικό ρόλο στη διαμόρφωση προτάσεων με στόχο την ανάκαμψη της ελληνικής οικονομίας, δεν θα πρέπει να προχωρήσει άμεσα σε συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις/συστάσεις προς την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για τη νομοθέτηση και υλοποίηση ενός συγκροτημένου σχεδίου διευκόλυνσης των δανειοληπτών και των υπερχρεωμένων ελληνικών νοικοκυριών, με λύσεις όπως διαγραφή μέρους οφειλών, επιμήκυνση αποπληρωμής χωρίς επιβαρύνσεις σε τόκους, ύψος μηνιαίας καταβολής δόσεων, αναστολή πλειστηριασμών και προστασία της πρώτης κατοικίας;

2. Δεδομένης της σημαντικής ενίσχυσης των τραπεζών με το νέο πακέτο οικονομικής βοήθειας, δεν θα πρέπει να υπάρξει αντίστοιχη πρόβλεψη και πρόνοια για τα υπερχρεωμένα νοικοκυριά, τους ανέργους, τις ευπαθείς ομάδες και τους εργαζόμενους που έχουν υποστεί «κούρεμα» στις αποδοχές τους που σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις αγγίζει και το 50 %;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν συνιστά ούτε προτείνει στην Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση τη θέσπιση νομοθεσίας για διαγραφή οφειλών των νοικοκυριών ή την επιμήκυνση της προθεσμίας αποπληρωμής.

Το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών της Ελλάδας ενημέρωσε πρόσφατα την Επιτροπή ότι η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση δεν έχει, προς το παρόν, καμία πρόθεση να θεσπίσει νέα ή να τροποποιήσει την υφιστάμενη νομοθεσία στους εν λόγω τομείς. Η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση δεσμεύτηκε ότι, σε περίπτωση που αποφάσιζε τη θέσπιση νομοθεσίας σχετικά με τα μη εξοφλούμενα δάνεια ή δάνεια που διατρέχουν κίνδυνο να μην εξοφληθούν, θα προηγηθεί συζήτηση περί του νομοσχεδίου με τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής, την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα και το προσωπικό του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου. Κάθε νέο νομικό πλαίσιο θα πρέπει να εξετασθεί από διεθνείς εμπειρογνώμονες και κάθε αλλαγή μπορεί να πραγματοποιηθεί μόνο κατόπιν διαβουλεύσεως με τον τραπεζικό τομέα. Κάθε ανάλογη νομοθεσία πρέπει να διέπεται από ορισμένες αρχές με στόχο την προστασία των ευπαθών ομάδων, τη διασφάλιση των πληρωμών και την αποφυγή της συστηματικής αθέτησης αποπληρωμής δανείων. Θα πρέπει να διασφαλίσει τη μεγαλύτερη δυνατή ανάκτηση περιουσιακών στοιχείων σε περίπτωση αθέτησης και να κάνει σαφή διάκριση μεταξύ των αξιόχρεων και των αναξιόχρεων δανειοληπτών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002345/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Projected 'haircuts' on loans in Greece

Following our previous Question E-009390/2011 (concerning measures by the banking sector to make life easier for consumers), the Greek Government, according to recent reports by the Greek General Secretariat for Consumers, intends to introduce a regulatory framework to make it easier for households and businesses to repay loans (household, consumer and business loans). It is worth noting that Iceland recently wrote off part of the amount owed to banks, significantly cutting record household debts amounting to 13 % of the country's GDP.

Given that:

(1) The Greek economy remains in deep recession;

(2) Due to the unfair and continuing cuts on wages and pensions, borrowers are unable to meet their loan repayments under their changed levels of income;

(3) Banks will be significantly boosted by the new financial aid package in order to guarantee their capital adequacy;

(4) The example of Iceland which, through cutting loans to borrowers, is aiming to support entrepreneurship and consumption:

1. As a participating member of the Troika, with a key role in creating proposals aimed at Greek economic recovery, should the Commission not immediately make proposals/recommendations to the Greek Government on the legislation and implementation of a coherent plan to make life easier for borrowers and over-indebted Greek households through measures such as writing off part of the debt, extending repayment terms without increasing interest rates or monthly instalment amounts, the suspension of auctions and the protection of first-time buyers?

2. Given the significant boost to banks through the new financial aid packages, should a similar provision not exist for over-indebted households, the unemployed, vulnerable groups and employees whose incomes have been cut by as much as 50 %?

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

The Commission is neither recommending nor proposing the Greek Government to adopt legislation on writing off households debt or extending repayment terms.

The Greek Ministry of Finance has recently informed the Commission that the Greek Government has, currently, no intention of adopting or amending legislation on those areas. The Greek Government committed that, in case it decided to proceed with legislation addressing non-performing loans or at risk of becoming non-performing loans, the draft legislation would in advance be discussed with the Commission services and the European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund staff teams. Any new legal framework would need to be studied by international experts and any change only introduced after consultation with the banking sector. Any such legislation should be ruled by a number of principles targeting the interventions to those truly in need, preserving the payment culture and avoiding strategic loan defaults. It should maximise asset recovery and facilitate the distinctions between rehabilitation of viable borrowers and the efficient exit from the economy of non-viable borrowers.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002346/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ξενοφοβικές αναφορές στα τουρκικά σχολικά εγχειρίδια

Σύμφωνα με άρθρο της τουρκικής εφημερίδας Zaman (20/12), τα σχολικά εγχειρίδια της Τουρκίας που χρησιμοποιούνται φέτος (2011-2012), βρίθουν εκφράσεων αντίθετων με το πνεύμα καλής γειτονίας.

Τα λάθη, οι αντιφάσεις, οι υπερβολικές εθνικές μεγαλοστομίες, βασίζονται σε ιστορικές αναλήθειες. Τα χωρία μέσα σε εισαγωγικά είναι από το σχολικό βιβλίο της δέκατης τάξης μέσης εκπαίδευσης (Ortaoğretim Tarih, 10. Sınıf). Τα παιδιά διαβάζουν πως «οι Οθωμανοί και οι Τούρκοι φέρθηκαν πάντα με επιείκεια στους Ασσύριους, στους Ρωμιούς/Έλληνες και στους Αρμένιους της Τουρκίας και του εξωτερικού, ενώ αυτοί ανταπόδωσαν αυτή την κατανόηση με αχαριστία και κακία». Σε αυτά τα βιβλία η επιείκεια της τουρκικής πλευράς τονίζεται συστηματικά. Δεν είναι δύσκολο να προβλέψει κανείς τα αισθήματα της νέας γενιάς μετά από αυτήν την παιδεία.

Σύμφωνα με αυτά τα βιβλία «οι Άλλοι» λειτούργησαν ως όργανα των ξένων, που χρησιμοποιήθηκαν από τους εχθρούς της Τουρκίας για να κάνουν κακό στη χώρα. Ακόμα και σήμερα εμφανίζεται η Ελλάδα να έχει βλέψεις στα εδάφη της Τουρκίας (σ. 158) ενώ πολύ μεγάλο ενδιαφέρον για την Επιτροπή θεωρώ ότι παρουσιάζουν οι αναφορές στις σελίδες 156-161, 178-180, 198, 199 και 203.

Η Ελλάδα έχει προβεί σε εξόφθαλμες «εκπτώσεις» της σχολικής ιστορίας προς όφελος της ειρηνικής γειτονίας, με χαρακτηριστικότερο παράδειγμα το βιβλίο ιστορίας που είχε προταθεί για την έκτη δημοτικού Αντιθέτως, η ξενοφοβία στη Τουρκία καλλιεργείται από το επίσημο κράτος και δυναμιτίζει το ειρηνικό μέλλον της ευρύτερης περιοχής.

Κατόπιν τούτου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι είναι απαραίτητο να συσταθεί η αποφυγή αβάσιμων, ξενοφοβικών αναφορών στα βιβλία της τουρκικής ιστορίας που διδάσκονται οι μαθητές και να καθαριστεί από τις ξενοφοβικές αναφορές, εφόσον η Τουρκία επιδιώκει να ενταχθεί στην ευρωπαϊκή οικογένεια;

2. Στα πλαίσια των ενταξιακών διαπραγματεύσεων, υπάρχει πρόβλεψη για να δοθεί τεχνογνωσία στη Τουρκία, ώστε να διασφαλιστεί το επίπεδο των απαραίτητων αλλαγών;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2012)

Σε απάντηση στην ερώτησή του, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην απάντησή της στην ερώτηση E-000816/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002346/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Xenophobic comments in Turkish school textbooks

According to an article in Turkish newspaper *Zaman* (20/12), Turkey's school textbooks for school years 2011-2012 make use of expressions undermining the spirit of good neighbourliness.

The errors, inconsistencies and exaggerated national bombast are based on historic falsehoods. The quoted excerpts are from a tenth-grade middle school textbook (Ortaoğretim Tarih, 10. Sınıf). Children read that, 'the Ottomans and the Turks always showed clemency to the Assyrians, the Romious/Greeks and the Armenians of Turkey and abroad, but were repaid with ingratitude and malice.' The books systematically emphasise the forbearance of the Turks. It is not difficult to predict the future feelings of the new generation after receiving such an education.

According to these books the 'others' were foreigners who played into the hands of Turkey's enemies in order to wreak evil in the land. Even today Greece is depicted as having designs on Turkish territories' (p. 158). I also believe that the comments on pages 156-161, 178-180, 198, 199 and 203 will be of great interest to the Commission.

Greece has made some obvious 'cuts' to history taught at schools for the sake of peaceful neighbourliness, the history book recommended for use by sixth-year primary school pupils being a case in point. In contrast, xenophobia in Turkey is being cultivated by the State and is jeopardising the peaceful future of the wider region.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission believe that it is vital to recommend the removal of unfounded, xenophobic references in Turkish school history books and for xenophobic comments to be eliminated, given that Turkey is seeking to join the European Union?

2. Within the framework of the accession negotiations, is any provision made for helping Turkey bring about the necessary changes?

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

In response to his question the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the Commission's reply to Question E-000816/2012 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-002348/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Νέο Ελληνικό Μνημόνιο — κατάργηση ΟΕΚ, επιδότηση ενοικίου

Οι φτωχοί και οι άστεγοι στην Ελλάδα αυξάνονται δραματικά μετά την επιβολή των μέτρων του Μνημονίου. Οι άνεργοι σε όλη την Ελλάδα υπολογίζονται ήδη σε πάνω από 1 000 000 και συνεχώς αυξάνονται. Οι άστεγοι πολλαπλασιάζονται δραματικά και τα εισοδήματα των εργαζομένων συρρικνώνονται ταχύτατα, αυξάνοντας τον αριθμό των φτωχών στη χώρα.

Με δεδομένο ότι: α) μέχρι σήμερα ο Οργανισμός Εργατικής Κατοικίας (ΟΕΚ) μπορούσε να επιδοτεί το ενοίκιο σε δεκάδες χιλιάδες φτωχές οικογένειες και ότι η δαπάνη για το πρόγραμμα είναι καλυμμένη για φέτος, β) ότι το κεφάλαιο του ΟΕΚ προέρχεται αποκλειστικά από εισφορές εργαζομένων και γ) ότι με το νέο Μνημόνιο μεταξύ Ελλάδας και Τρόικας (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, ΕΚΤ και ΔΝΤ), ο ΟΕΚ καταργείται με το επιχείρημα ότι «δεν αποτελεί προτεραιότητα», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι το πρόγραμμα επιδότησης ενοικίου προκειμένου να στεγαστούν συμπολίτες μας, ιδιαίτερα στις κοινωνικές συνθήκες που έχουν δημιουργηθεί σήμερα στην Ελλάδα, «δεν αποτελεί προτεραιότητα»; Ούτε για τους αστέγους;

2. Μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει, λοιπόν, ότι θα υπάρξει συνέχεια του προγράμματος από κάποιο φορέα; Αν ναι, από ποιον; Είναι αξιόπιστος; Έχει τις κατάλληλες υποδομές και τεχνογνωσία; Αν όχι, προτίθεται να ανακαλέσει την απόφαση για κατάργηση του ΟΕΚ;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-002379/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Νέο Ελληνικό Μνημόνιο — κατάργηση ΟΕΚ — επίπτωση στα δάνεια των εργαζομένων

Το νέο Μνημόνιο μεταξύ Ελλάδας και Τρόικας (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, ΕΚΤ και ΔΝΤ) προβλέπει την κατάργησή του Οργανισμού Εργατικής Κατοικίας (ΟΕΚ) μετά από «μεταβατική περίοδο που δεν θα υπερβαίνει τους 6 μήνες» γιατί ασχολείται με κοινωνικές δαπάνες που «δεν αποτελούν προτεραιότητα».

Κυριότερη δραστηριότητα του ΟΕΚ είναι η επιδότηση επιτοκίου δανείων για την αγορά κατοικίας, κατά προτεραιότητα από φτωχές και άπορες οικογένειες, για να καλυφθούν οι στεγαστικές τους ανάγκες. Ο ΟΕΚ έχει δεσμευθεί συμβατικά να επιδοτεί το επιτόκιο στεγαστικών δανείων απέναντι στις τράπεζες και τους δικαιούχους. Αυτήν τη στιγμή υπάρχουν 83 000 ενεργά δάνεια και οι σχετικές υποχρεώσεις κλιμακώνονται μέχρι το 2019. Το γεγονός της κατάργησης του οργανισμού έχει προκαλέσει σοβαρές ανησυχίες στους δανειολήπτες για την πορεία των δανείων τους. Με δεδομένο ότι το κεφάλαιο του ΟΕΚ προέρχεται αποκλειστικά από εισφορές των εργαζομένων, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Μπορεί να διευκρινίσει ποιος αναλαμβάνει πλέον να επιδοτεί τα εν λόγω δάνεια; Μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει τους δανειολήπτες ότι δεν θα υπάρξει μεγαλύτερη επιβάρυνση από αυτήν που ήδη προβλέπεται από τις δανειακές τους συμβάσεις;

2. Μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει ότι θα συνεχιστούν τα προγράμματα επιδότησης επιτοκίου, ιδιαίτερα τώρα που υπάρχουν μεγαλύτερες κοινωνικές ανάγκες; Αν όχι, προτίθεται να ανακαλέσει την απόφαση για την διάλυση του ΟΕΚ;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Απριλίου 2012)

Με το νέο πρόγραμμα οι ελληνικές αρχές συμφώνησαν να μειώσουν τις έμμεσες μισθολογικές επιβαρύνσεις μέσω της μείωσης των συντελεστών των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης (κατά 5 ποσοστιαίες μονάδες) με σκοπό την προώθηση της απασχόλησης. Αυτό προϋποθέτει την εφαρμογή μέτρων για την αντιστάθμιση της απώλειας εσόδων που απορρέει από την αναφερόμενη μείωση, με σκοπό την αποφυγή ζημιών στους εθνικούς λογαριασμούς. Το σκεπτικό στο οποίο βασίζεται το παρόν μέτρο είναι να μειωθεί το εργατικό κόστος χωρίς να επηρεαστούν άμεσα οι μισθοί, με σκοπό την τόνωση της απασχόλησης που είναι επιτακτική ανάγκη και τη μείωση του κόστους παραγωγής. Όσον αφορά τη διάρθρωση των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης, έχουν καθοριστεί οι συντελεστές για ΟΕΕ και ΟΕΚ. Συνεπώς, στα πλαίσια του νέου προγράμματος συμφωνήθηκε με τις ελληνικές αρχές ότι τα κεφάλαια αυτά θα καταργηθούν, ώστε να μειωθούν οι δαπάνες και, επομένως, να αντισταθμιστεί η επιβάρυνση του προϋπολογισμού που προκαλείται από χαμηλότερες εισφορές. Δεν θα υπάρξουν νέες αναλήψεις υποχρεώσεων και θα εξοικονομηθεί η σχετική δαπάνη. Θα τηρηθούν οι υφιστάμενες συμβατικές υποχρεώσεις. Η λύση αυτή αντικατοπτρίζει τις προτεραιότητες της Ελληνικής Κυβέρνησης σχετικά με το ποια κοινωνικά επιδόματα θα διατηρηθούν.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν συστήσει μια προσωρινή επιτροπή που είναι αρμόδια για τον καθορισμό των κανόνων διευθέτησης των εκκρεμών υποχρεώσεων και δικαιωμάτων καθώς και οποιουδήποτε άλλου νομικού κεκτημένου των δυο καταργηθέντων φορέων. Ωστόσο, ούτε η εν λόγω επιτροπή ούτε ο Οργανισμός Απασχολήσεως Εργατικού Δυναμικού (ΟΑΕΔ), που θα αναλάβει την ευθύνη της διαχείρισης των υφιστάμενων συμβατικών υποχρεώσεων από τους ΟΕΕ και ΟΕΚ, μπορεί να αποφασίσει για την ανάληψη νέων υποχρεώσεων παρόμοιων με τις δραστηριότητες που διενεργούσαν οι δυο οργανισμοί. Συγκεκριμένα ερωτήματα σχετικά με τα παραπάνω μπορούν να απευθυνθούν στην εν λόγω επιτροπή.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002348/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: New Greek Memorandum — closure of the Greek Workers' Housing Organisation (OEK) and rent subsidisation

The number of poor and homeless in Greece is increasing dramatically following the austerity measures in the Memorandum. In Greece, it is estimated that there are already over 1 million unemployed and numbers are continuing to rise. The number of homeless people is growing dramatically and workers' incomes are dropping fast, increasing the number of poor people.

In view of the fact that: a) until now the OEK was able to subsidise the rent of tens of thousands of poor families and the expenditure on this programme is covered for this year; b) the OEK's capital derives solely from employee contributions; and c) under the new Memorandum between Greece and the Troika (the European Commission, the ECB and the IMF), the OEK is being closed on the grounds that 'it is not a priority', will the Commission say:

1. Does it believe that the rent subsidy programme to house Greek citizens, particularly in the social conditions that have been created today in Greece, 'is not a priority'? Is this the case for the homeless too?

2. Can it therefore confirm that this programme will continue through another agency? If so, which agency? Is it reliable? Does it have the appropriate infrastructure and know-how? If not, will it revoke the decision to close the OEK?

Question for written answer P-002379/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: New Greek Memorandum — abolition of the Workers' Housing Organisation (OEK) — effects on workers' mortgage loans

The new Memorandum between Greece and the Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund) provides for the abolition of the OEK following 'a transitional period not exceeding six months' because it concerns social expenditure that 'is not a priority'.

The chief activity of the OEK is to subsidise interest rates on mortgage loans, in particular for poor and destitute families seeking to meet their accommodation needs. The OEK is contractually committed to subsidising interest rates on mortgages vis-à-vis the banks and the beneficiaries. Currently, there are 83 000 active loans, and commitments continue until 2019. The fact that the organisation is to be abolished has generated considerable anxiety among borrowers on the future course of their loans. Given that the OEK's capital is derived exclusively from employee contributions, will the Committee say:

1. Is it able to clarify who will now take over subsidising the loans in question? Can it guarantee borrowers that charges will remain as they are in their current loan contracts?

2. Can it provide assurances that the interest rate subsidisation programmes will continue, particularly now that social needs are greater? If not, is it prepared to revoke the decision abolishing the OEK?

Joint answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

Under the new programme, the Greek authorities agreed to reduce non-wage labour costs by means of a reduction of social contribution rates (by five percentage points) with a view to promoting employment. That will be conditional on the implementation of measures that offset the revenues losses deriving from that reduction in order to avoid damage to the government accounts. The rationale for this measure is to reduce labour costs without directly affecting wages in order to support the much needed employment creation and lowering of production costs. In the structure of social contributions, there are earmarked rates for OEE and OEK. Therefore, it was agreed with the Greek authorities, as part of the new programme conditionality, that these funds will be closed in order to reduce expenditure and thereby offset the budgetary drag caused by lower contributions. No new commitments will take place and the associated spending will be saved. The existing contractual obligations will be respected. This option reflects the priorities of the Greek Government over which social transfers to keep in place.

The Greek authorities have set a temporary administrative committee in charge of setting the operational modalities for the settlement of outstanding operational obligations and rights, as well as of any other necessary and vested legal relationship of the two abolished entities. However, neither this committee nor the Employment Agency (OAED), which is the entity that is taking over the responsibility of managing the existing contractual obligations from OEE and OEK, can decide on undertaking new obligations similar to those activities that the two organisations were implementing. Specific questions on that respect can be addressed to this committee.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-002349/12
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(29 februari 2012)

Betreft: Amerikaanse toegang tot PNR-gegevens in computerreservatiesysteem Amadeus

1. Is het de Commissie bekend of Amadeus, een computerreservatiesysteem met een centrale database in Erding (Duitsland), dat door steeds meer luchtvaartmaatschappijen wordt gebruikt voor het opslaan en uitvoeren van luchtvaarttransacties, een spiegeldatabase met backups in de Verenigde Staten heeft?

2. Is het de Commissie bekend of autoriteiten van de VS vanwege de spiegeldatabase van Amadeus in de VS via dagvaardingen rechtstreeks kunnen beschikken over PNR-gegevens, wat vergelijkbaar is met de situatie rond SWIFT tot aan de EU-VS TFTP-overeenkomst?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat Amadeus vanwege zijn aanwezigheid in de VS onder Amerikaanse jurisdictie valt en autoriteiten van de VS met een beroep op de Patriot Act en andere instrumenten toegang hebben tot PNR-gegevens?

4. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van andere, soortgelijke computerreservatiesystemen met PNR-gegevens waarover de autoriteiten van de VS net als op de hierboven beschreven wijze zouden kunnen beschikken?

5. Is de Commissie van mening dat de autoriteiten van de VS bij gebreke van een PNR-Overeenkomst EU-VS of bilaterale overeenkomsten tussen EU-lidstaten en de VS toegang zouden kunnen krijgen tot PNR-gegevens?

6. Is de Commissie van mening dat de autoriteiten van de VS ook toegang zouden kunnen krijgen tot PNR-gegevens die buiten het toepassingsgebied van het ontwerp van de PNR-Overeenkomst EU-VS vallen? Kan de Commissie beschrijven welke PNR-gegevens die niet onder het ontwerp van de PNR-Overeenkomst EU-VS vallen beschikbaar zouden zijn voor de autoriteiten van de VS?

7. Is het de Commissie bekend of er ooit gegevens uit de spiegeldatabase van Amadeus in de VS bij dwangbevel aan de autoriteiten van de VS zijn verstrekt? Is het de Commissie bekend of de spiegeldatabase van Amadeus PNR-gegevens systematisch ter beschikking stelt van de autoriteiten van de VS? Is de Commissie bereid dit te onderzoeken?

8. Is de Commissie van oordeel dat deze regeling analoog is aan die betreffende SWIFT tot aan de EU-VS TFTP-overeenkomst, d.w.z. dat ze in strijd is met de EU-wetgeving inzake gegevensbescherming?

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

Na onderzoek in maart 2012 is gebleken dat Amadeus geen spiegeldatabase in de Verenigde Staten heeft en dat er ook geen gerechtelijke bevelen zijn geweest in verband met vluchten tussen de EU en de VS.

De PNR-overeenkomst tussen de EU en de VS bestrijkt PNR-gegevens betreffende vluchten tussen de EU en de VS, ongeacht de locatie van de database met PNR-gegevens ([1]).

De USA Patriot Act voorziet in de mogelijkheid PNR-gegevens te verzamelen, die via uitvoeringsbepalingen ten uitvoer wordt gelegd. Deze uitvoeringsbepalingen worden in overeenstemming met de respectievelijk geldige PNR-overeenkomst tussen de EU en de VS vastgesteld. Tijdens de laatste gezamenlijke toetsing bevestigden de autoriteiten van de VS dat zij over alle nodige gegevens beschikten en geen gebruik zouden maken van andere gegevenscategorieën die niet door de PNR-overeenkomst zijn gedekt. In deze context lijken gerechtelijke bevelen overbodig.

([1]) Hetzelfde geldt voor computerreservatiesystemen. De Commissie is op de hoogte van het bestaan op VS-grondgebied van computerreservatiesystemen die PNR-gegevens bevatten. Zolang deze gegevens vluchten betreffen tussen de EU en de VS, worden zij gedekt door de PNR-overeenkomst tussen de EU en de VS.

PNR-doorgiften zijn iets heel anders dan de kwestie van TFTP-gegevens. Vóór de TFTP-overeenkomst bestond er geen specifiek wettelijk kader tussen de EU en de VS en werd de overeenkomst inzake wederzijdse wettelijke bijstand als te omslachtig ervaren. Om die reden deden de autoriteiten van de VS een beroep op gerechtelijke bevelen. In het kader van de TFTP-overeenkomst worden de gegevens doorgegeven na een specifiek verzoek van VS-zijde in een zeer concreet geval. Voor de doorgifte van PNR-gegevens geldt niet dezelfde logica. De verwerking van PNR-gegevens heeft betrekking op een systematische en automatische doorgifte van gegevens over een groot aantal vluchten, waarbij de mogelijkheid bestaat in dringende gevallen een ad-hocverzoek om gegevens te doen. Deze gegevens worden dan verwerkt en vergeleken met diverse andere gegevensbanken om overeenstemmingen te vinden, met als doel ernstige misdaden en terrorisme te voorkomen en te bestrijden. De PNR-overeenkomst tussen de EU en de VS voldoet volledig aan deze behoeften en biedt tegelijk garanties voor de bescherming van persoonsgegevens.

Ook zonder de PNR-overeenkomst tussen de EU en de VS of zonder bilaterale overeenkomsten tussen EU-lidstaten en de VS zouden de Verenigde Staten in elk geval van de luchtvaartmaatschappijen eisen PNR-gegevens te verstrekken, aangezien dit een wettelijke verplichting in de VS is.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002349/12
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: US access to PNR data in the Amadeus computer reservation system

1. Has the Commission any knowledge of whether Amadeus, a computer reservation system (CRS) with a central database in Erding (Germany) and used by more and more airlines to store and conduct transactions related to air travel, has a mirror backup database in the United States?

2. Has the Commission any knowledge of whether passenger name record (PNR) data stored on an Amadeus mirror backup database in the United States could be made directly available to US authorities by way of subpoena, comparable to the situation that, until the conclusion of the EU-US TFTP Agreement, applied to SWIFT data ?

3. Does the Commission accept that Amadeus, in view of its presence in the US, falls within US jurisdiction, and that US authorities should be able to access the PNR data stored in the system by invoking, among other instruments, the Patriot Act?

4. Is the Commission aware of any other, similar CRSs containing PNR data accessible to the US authorities in the manner described above?

5. In the absence of an EU-US PNR agreement or of bilateral agreements between the EU member states concerned and the United States, would the Commission accept that US authorities access PNR data ?

6. Does the Commission accept that US authorities should be able to access also PNR data that fall outside the scope of the draft EU-US PNR Agreement? Can the Commission describe which types of PNR data that would be available to the US authorities and that would not fall under the draft EU-US PNR agreement?

7. Has the Commission any knowledge of whether Amadeus' mirror backup database in the United States has ever been subpoenaed by US authorities? Has the Commission any knowledge of whether Amadeus' mirror backup database makes PNR data systematically available to US authorities? Will the Commission investigate this?

8. Does the Commission consider this analogous to the violation of EU data protection laws with regard to SWIFT data that occurred until the EU-US TFTP Agreement was concluded?

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

Further to enquiries undertaken in March 2012, Amadeus does not have a mirror backup database in the US and has not received subpoenas relating to flights between the EU and the US.

The EU-US PNR agreement covers PNR data on flights between the EU and the US, irrespective of where the database containing PNR data is located ([1]).

The US Patriot Act provides for a possibility to collect PNR data which is implemented through regulations. These regulations are made in line with any EU-US PNR agreement in force. During the last joint review, the US authorities confirmed that they received all data necessary and would not seek to access any categories of data beyond those allowed by the PNR agreement. In this context subpoenas appear redundant.

([1]) The same applies to Computer Reservation Systems. The Commission is aware of the existence in the US territory of Computer Reservation Systems containing PNR data. As long as these data concern flights between the EU and the US, they are covered by the EU-US PNR agreement.

PNR transfers are very different to TFTP data. Prior to the TFTP agreement, there was no specific EU-US legal framework established and the mutual legal assistance agreement was considered too cumbersome. Therefore, the US authorities resorted to subpoenas. Under the TFTP agreement, data are transferred upon specific narrowly tailored requests from the US side. The transfer of PNR does not follow the same logic. PNR processing relies on systematic and automatic transfers of data on a high number of flights with a possibility of ad-hoc requests for data in emergency situations. These data are then processed and run against various databases to find matches assisting in preventing and combating serious crime and terrorism. The EU-US PNR agreement responds completely to these needs, while providing safeguards ensuring the protection of personal data.

In the absence of the EU-US PNR agreement or bilateral agreements between the EU Member States and the US, the US would in any case require air carriers to provide PNR data as this obligation is laid down in US law.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002353/12
a la Comisión
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Flexibilización del déficit

Considerando la revisión de los objetivos de déficit planteados por la Comisión Europea el pasado día 24 de febrero; considerando que España se encuentra en una clara situación de recesión económica y, por lo tanto, se deben flexibilizar los objetivos del déficit de acuerdo con lo previsto legalmente;

Considerando que el artículo 126 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea establece que «[s]i un Estado miembro no cumpliere los requisitos de uno de estos criterios o de ambos, la Comisión elaborará un informe, en el que también se tendrá en cuenta si el déficit público supera los gastos públicos de inversión, así como todos los demás factores pertinentes, incluida la situación económica y presupuestaria a medio plazo del Estado miembro»;

Recordando que el artículo 8 de el Reglamento (UE) n° 1176/2011, relativo a la prevención y corrección de los desequilibrios macroeconómicos, establece que «[e]l plan de medidas correctoras tomará en consideración las repercusiones económicas y sociales de estas medidas y será coherente con las orientaciones generales de política económica y las orientaciones para el empleo»;

Considerando que el Reglamento (UE) n° 1177/2011, relativo a la aceleración y clarificación del procedimiento de déficit excesivo, establece que «[u]n déficit público superior al valor de referencia se considerará excepcional, […] cuando obedezca a una circunstancia inusual sobre la cual no tenga ningún control el Estado miembro de que se trate y que incida de manera significativa en la situación financiera de las administraciones públicas, o cuando obedezca a una grave recesión económica»;

¿Qué recomendación piensa hacer la Comisión al Consejo sobre el déficit español?

Con la previsión de datos de la recesión, ¿por qué la Comisión no revisó antes los objetivos?

¿Qué recomendaciones de ajuste económico hará la Comisión, teniendo en cuenta el reglamento mencionado, si toda la zona del euro entra en recesión?

¿Encuentra la Comisión contradictoria la aplicación de dichas normas de Derecho derivado con el nuevo Acuerdo intergubernamental, conocido como Pacto presupuestario *(Fiscal Compact)*, firmado por los Estados Miembros? ¿Podría pedir la Comisión que no se ratifique el Tratado, ante su dudosa compatibilidad con el artículo 126 del TFUE?

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

El 27 de febrero de 2012, el Gobierno español anunció los primeros resultados de la ejecución del presupuesto de 2011 e indicó su previsión de que el déficit de las administraciones públicas alcanzara aproximadamente el 8,5 % del PIB. La cifra de déficit definitiva se conocerá después de la presentación por España de la notificación en el marco del PDE ([1]) a finales de marzo y de la validación de los datos por Eurostat. Tras la reunión del Eurogrupo de 12 de marzo de 2012, España confirmó su compromiso de cumplir el plazo de 2013 para la corrección del déficit excesivo y anunció un objetivo de déficit de las administraciones públicas del 5,3 % del PIB para 2012. Como el país se enfrenta a una grave presión del mercado, una estrategia de saneamiento presupuestario creíble y ambiciosa es crucial para que España gane la confianza del mercado.

En caso de grave recesión económica, en la zona del euro o en la UE en su conjunto, el Consejo, de conformidad con el Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento y, en particular, los artículos 3 y 5 del Reglamento del Consejo sobre la aplicación del procedimiento de déficit excesivo ([2]), puede decidir, previa recomendación de la Comisión, adoptar una recomendación revisada con arreglo al artículo 126, apartado 7, del TFUE y dirgir al Estado miembro de que se trate una advertencia revisada con arreglo al artículo 126, apartado 9. No obstante, la Comisión no desea especular sobre sus posibles medidas futuras a este respecto.

([1]) Procedimiento de déficit excesivo.
([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1467/97.

El Tratado de Estabilidad, Coordinación y Gobernanza en la EUM ([3]) y el Pacto Presupuestario que el mismo incluye se fundan en nociones europeas acordadas. Concretamente, el Tratado confirma como regla el principio básico de unos presupuestos de las administraciones públicas en equilibrio o superávit. El Tratado traduce después este principio en un valor de referencia específico que debe respetar cada país se, a saber, el objetivo presupuestario a medio plazo, que es el núcleo de la vertiente preventiva del PEC ([4]). Así pues, el Tratado intergubernamental y el marco presupuestario de la UE vigente son compatibles ([5]).

([3]) Unión Económica y Monetaria.
([4]) Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento.
([5]) (Incluso en lo que respecta a las cláusulas de salvaguardia en el caso de circunstancias excepcionales.).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002353/12
an die Kommission
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE) und Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Flexibilisierung des Defizits

Angesichts der Überarbeitung der von der Europäischen Kommission am 24. Februar gesetzten Defizitziele; angesichts der Tatsache, dass sich Spanien eindeutig in einer wirtschaftlichen Rezession befindet und dementsprechend die Defizitziele im Einklang mit den rechtlichen Bestimmungen flexibilisiert werden müssen.

Angesichts der Tatsache, dass in Artikel 126 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union Folgendes dargelegt ist: „Erfüllt ein Mitgliedstaat keines oder nur eines dieser Kriterien, so erstellt die Kommission einen Bericht. In diesem Bericht wird berücksichtigt, ob das öffentliche Defizit die öffentlichen Ausgaben für Investitionen übertrifft; berücksichtigt werden ferner alle sonstigen einschlägigen Faktoren, einschließlich der mittelfristigen Wirtschafts- und Haushaltslage des Mitgliedstaats".

Angesichts der Tatsache, dass in Artikel 8 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1176/2011 über die Vermeidung und Korrektur makroökonomischer Ungleichgewichte Folgendes dargelegt ist: „Der Korrekturmaßnahmenplan legt die spezifischen politischen Maßnahmen fest, die der betreffende Mitgliedstaat durchführt bzw. durchzuführen beabsichtigt, und enthält einen Zeitplan für diese Maßnahmen. Der Korrekturmaßnahmenplan berücksichtigt die wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Auswirkungen dieser Maßnahmen und steht im Einklang mit den Grundzügen der Wirtschaftspolitik und den beschäftigungspolitischen Leitlinien".

Angesichts der Tatsache, dass in Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1177/2011 über die Beschleunigung und Klärung des Verfahrens bei einem übermäßigen Defizit Folgendes dargelegt ist: „Überschreitet ein öffentliches Defizit den Referenzwert, so gilt der Referenzwert als ausnahmsweise überschritten […], wenn dies auf ein außergewöhnliches Ereignis, das sich der Kontrolle des betreffenden Mitgliedstaats entzieht und die Lage der öffentlichen Finanzen erheblich beeinträchtigt, oder auf einen schwerwiegenden Wirtschaftsabschwung zurückzuführen ist".

Welche Empfehlung beabsichtigt die Kommission, dem Rat im Hinblick auf das spanische Defizit zu geben?

Warum hat die Kommission angesichts der prognostizierten Rezessionswerte ihre Ziele nicht bereits früher überarbeitet?

Welche Empfehlungen wird die Kommission angesichts der genannten Verordnung für die wirtschaftliche Anpassung geben, wenn die gesamte Eurozone in eine Rezession gelangt?

Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass die Anwendung dieser abgeleiteten Rechtsnormen zu dem neuen, von den Mitgliedstaaten unterzeichneten, als Fiskalpakt *(Fiscal Compact)* bezeichneten zwischenstaatlichen Abkommen im Widerspruch steht? Könnte die Kommission darum ersuchen, dass dieses Abkommen angesichts seiner zweifelhaften Vereinbarkeit mit Artikel 126 AEUV nicht ratifiziert wird?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2012)

Am 27. Februar 2012 teilte die spanische Regierung anlässlich der Bekanntgabe erster Ergebnisse des Haushaltsvollzugs 2011 mit, dass sie von einem gesamtstaatlichen Defizit in Höhe von etwa 8,5 % des BIP ausgehe. Das endgültige Defizitergebnis wird nach Übermittlung der EDP-Datenmeldung ([1]) Spaniens Ende März und der Validierung der Daten durch Eurostat bekannt sein. Nach dem Treffen der Eurogruppe vom 12. März 2012 bekräftigte Spanien seinen Willen, sein Defizit bis zum Jahr 2013 zu korrigieren, und teilte für das Jahr 2012 ein gesamtstaatliches Defizitziel von 5,3 % des BIP mit. Angesichts des starken Marktdrucks auf Spanien muss das Land eine glaubhafte und ehrgeizige Strategie zur Konsolidierung seines Haushalts präsentieren, um das Vertrauen des Marktes zu behalten.

([1]) Verfahren bei einem übermäßigen Defizit.

Im Falle eines schweren Wirtschaftsabschwungs im Euroraum oder in der gesamten EU könnte der Rat gemäß dem Stabilitäts- und Wachstumspakt und insbesondere den Artikeln 3 und 5 der Ratsverordnung über das Verfahren bei einem übermäßigen Defizit ([2]) auf Empfehlung der Kommission entscheiden, eine geänderte Empfehlung nach Artikel 126 Absatz 7 AEUV auszusprechen und dem betreffenden Mitgliedstaat gemäß Artikel 126 Absatz 9 AEUV eine neue Frist für die Defizitkorrektur zu setzen. Die Kommission möchte jedoch nicht darüber spekulieren, welche Maßnahmen sie diesbezüglich in Zukunft ergreifen könnte.

Der Vertrag über Stabilität, Koordinierung und Steuerung in der WWU ([3]) und der darin enthaltene fiskalpolitische Pakt stützen sich auf anerkannte europäische Konzepte. Im Vertrag wird insbesondere die Regel bestätigt, dass ausgeglichene Haushalte bzw. Haushaltsüberschüsse anzustreben sind. Dieses Grundprinzip wird im Vertrag in die Vorgabe eines länderspezifischen Referenzwerts übersetzt: das mittelfristige Haushaltsziel, das im Mittelpunkt der präventiven Komponente des Stabilitäts- und Wachstumspakts steht. Das zwischenstaatliche Abkommen steht somit nicht im Widerspruch zu den bestehenden finanzpolitischen Rahmenbestimmungen der EU ([4]).

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1467/97.
([3]) Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion.
([4]) Dies gilt auch im Hinblick auf Ausweichklauseln im Falle außergewöhnlicher Umstände.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002353/12
to the Commission
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Relaxation of the deficit

On 24 February 2012, the European Commission proposed that the deficit targets be revised; Spain is in a clear situation of economic recession and, therefore, deficit targets must be relaxed in accordance with legal provisions.

Article 126 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states that 'if a Member State does not fulfil the requirements under one or both of these criteria, the Commission shall prepare a report. The report of the Commission shall also take into account whether the government deficit exceeds government investment expenditure and take into account all other relevant factors, including the medium-term economic and budgetary position of the Member State'.

Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances stipulates that 'the corrective action plan shall take into account the economic and social impact of the policy actions and shall be consistent with the broad economic policy guidelines and the employment guidelines'.

Regulation (EU) No 1177/2011 on speeding up and clarifying the implementation of the excessive deficit procedure stipulates that 'the excess of a government deficit over the reference value shall be considered exceptional, […] when resulting from an unusual event outside the control of the Member State concerned and with a major impact on the financial position of general government, or when resulting from a severe economic downturn'.

What recommendation does the Commission intend to make to the Council regarding the Spanish deficit?

With the recession data forecasted, why did the Commission not review the targets before?

Taking into account the aforementioned regulations, what recommendations will the Commission make on economic adjustment if the entire euro area enters into recession?

Does the Commission see a contradiction between application of such secondary legislation and the new intergovernmental agreement, known as the Fiscal Compact, signed by the Member States? Can the Commission ask that the Treaty should not be ratified, given the doubts regarding its compatibility with Article 126 of the TFEU?

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

On 27 February 2012, the Spanish Government announced first results for the 2011 budget execution, indicating that it expects the general government deficit to have reached around 8.5 % of GDP. The final deficit figure will be known after the submission of the EDP ([1]) notification by Spain at end-March and the validation of the data by Eurostat. Following the Eurogroup meeting on 12 March 2012, Spain confirmed its commitment to meet the 2013 deadline for the correction of the excessive deficit and announced a general government deficit target of 5.3 % of GDP for 2012. As a country facing severe market pressure, a credible and ambitious budgetary consolidation strategy is critical for Spain to ensure market confidence.

In the event of a severe economic downturn in the euro area or in the EU as a whole, it is possible in accordance with the SGP and in particular Articles 3 and 5 of the Council Regulation ([2]) on the implementation of the excessive deficit procedure, that the Council decides, on a Commission recommendation, to adopt a revised recommendation under Article 126(7) TFEU, and for the MS concerned also a revised notice under Article 126(9). The Commission does however not wish to speculate on its possible future action in this regard.

([1]) Excessive Deficit Procedure.
([2]) (EC) No 1467/97.

The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the EMU ([3]) and the fiscal compact contained therein rest on agreed European concepts. Specifically, the Treaty restates as a rule the core principle of general government budgets in balance or in surplus. The Treaty then translates this principle into a country-specific reference value to be respected: the medium-term budgetary objective, which is at the heart of the preventive arm of the SGP ([4]). Thus, the intergovernmental Treaty and the existing EU fiscal framework are compatible ([5]).

([3]) Economic and Monetary Union.
([4]) Stability and Growth Pact.
([5]) (including with regard to escape clauses in the case of exceptional circumstances).

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002354/12
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(1. marts 2012)

Om: Frisørers arbejdsmiljø

Frisører er i dag en af de faggrupper, hvor der stadig er store problemer med arbejdsmiljøet i forbindelse med sikkerhed og sundhed på arbejdspladsen. Jeg vil derfor bede Kommissionen svare på følgende spørgsmål:

1. Kommissionens Videnskabelige Komite har konkluderet, at en del produkter, som frisører anvender hver dag, er ekstremt allergifremkaldende, og at nogle af hårfarverne har systemiske skadelige effekter. Hvordan sikrer vi gravide frisører (i første omgang) mod disse stoffer?

2. Har kommissionen tænkt sig at igangsætte en udfasningsplan for skadelige stoffer, f.eks. ekstremt allergifremkaldende stoffer samt stoffer, som den videnskabelige komite har konkluderet skader brugeren?

3. Kosmetik er underlagt kosmetikdirektivet, som kun kræver en sikkerhedsvurdering af almindelige forbrugeres anvendelse af kosmetik. Frisører er i dag udsat for en række skadelige kosmetiske produkter. Nogle kan substitueres, andre kan ikke. Hvad har Kommissionen tænk sig at gøre i anledning af, at frisører eksponeres i langt højere grad end almindelige forbrugere for kosmetiske produkter, og at der ikke er lavet en sikkerhedsvurdering af frisørers professionelle eksponering?

Hvordan får vi kosmetik omfattet REACH-forordningen, så der kommer faremærkning på produkterne? F.eks. burde hårfarvekobleren p-aminophenol mærkes Xn på grund af sundhedsskade.

Hvordan får vi datablade om kosmetiske produkter, så frisører kan se, hvilke arbejdsmiljømæssige forbehold de skal tage?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli
(23. april 2012)

1. Mere end 70 stoffer er af Den Videnskabelige Komité for Forbrugersikkerhed (SCCS) blevet vurderet som sikre i forbindelse med strategien for vurdering af alle anvendte farvestoffer i produkter til farvning af hår i EU. 50 stoffer mangler endnu at blive endeligt vurderet. Sikkerhed på arbejdspladsen for frisører er omfattet af forpligtelsen i EU's »kosmetikdirektiv« 76/768/EØF til at anføre særlige forsigtighedsregler for anvendelsen for erhvervsmæssige brugere af kosmetiske midler ([1]) (f.eks. at der skal anvendes passende handsker) og EU's lovgivning om sundhed og sikkerhed på arbejdspladsen, f.eks. direktiv 89/391/EØF »rammedirektivet« ([2]), direktiv 89/654/EØF »arbejdspladsdirektivet« ([3]), direktiv 89/656/EØF om personlige værnemidler ([4]), direktiv 98/24/EF om kemiske agenser ([5]) og direktiv 2004/37/EF om kræftfremkaldende stoffer ([6]). Inden for rammerne af sin støtte til EU's sektorielle sociale dialog, støtter Kommissionen desuden de europæiske arbejdsmarkedsparter inden for frisørvirksomhed, som er i færd med at lægge sidste hånd på en europæisk rammeaftale om beskyttelse af sundhed og sikkerhed. Forudsat at aftalen indgås og gennemføres, vil der blive indført et øget beskyttelsesniveau for erhvervsmæssig anvendelse af kosmetik, herunder for gravide frisører.

2. Som led i strategien for vurdering har Kommissionen hidtil forbudt 180 farlige hårfarvningsmidler. Siden den 1. november 2011 skal hårfarvningsmidler være påført tydeligere advarsler for at informere forbrugere og frisører om hårfarvningsmidlets potentielle allergirisiko.

3. Ovennævnte aftale mellem arbejdsmarkedets parter indeholder foranstaltninger til bedre beskyttelse af sundhed og sikkerhed på arbejdspladsen for alle arbejdstagere i frisørfaget, herunder gennem en målrettet anvendelse af principperne i direktiv 89/391/EØF, f.eks. risikovurdering og substitution af produkter, materialer og værktøjer på arbejdspladsen.

([1]) Artikel 6, stk. 1, litra d), i kosmetikdirektivet 76/768/EØF (EFT L 262 af 27.9.1976, s. 169), som ændret).
([2]) EFT L 183 af 29.6.1989, s..1.
([3]) EFT L 393 af 30.12.1989, s. 1.
([4]) EFT L 393 af 30.12.1989, s. 18.
([5]) EFT L 131 af 5.5.1998, s. 11.
([6]) EUT L 158 af 30.4.2004, s. 50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002354/12
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Hairdressers' working environment

As things stand, hairdressing is one of a number of professions that still have major problems with the working environment when it comes to occupational health and safety. I would therefore like to ask for a response from the Commission to the following questions:

1. The Commission's Scientific Committee has concluded that some products which hairdressers use every day are extremely allergenic and that some hair dyes have systemic adverse effects. How can we ensure that (in the first instance) pregnant hairdressers are protected from these substances?

2. Has the Commission considered implementing a phase-out plan for harmful substances, e.g. extremely allergenic substances and those substances that the Scientific Committee has deemed harmful to users?

3. Cosmetics are subject to the Cosmetics Directive, which only requires a safety assessment of the use of cosmetics by the general public. Hairdressers are currently exposed to a number of harmful cosmetic products. Some of these can be substituted, others cannot. What has the Commission considered doing to address the fact that, while hairdressers are exposed to cosmetic products to a far greater extent than the general public, no safety assessment of hairdressers' professional exposure is required?

How can we include cosmetics in the REACH Regulation and ensure that these products are subject to hazard labelling? For example, should the hair dye fixative, p-aminophenol, be labelled Xn due to its injurious effect on health?

How can we produce data sheets on cosmetic products so that hairdressers can see what precautions they should be taking in their working environment?

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

1. More than 70 substances have been shown by the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) to be safe, in the assessment strategy for all dyes used in hair dye products in the EU. Fifty substances still await a final opinion. The occupational safety of hairdressers is addressed by the obligation in the EU 'Cosmetics Directive' 76/768/EEC to label special precautionary information for professional users on the cosmetic product ([1]) (for example, to wear suitable gloves) and the EU legislation on occupational health and safety, such as Directive 89/391/EEC 'Framework Directive' ([2]), Directive 89/654/EEC 'Working place' ([3]), Directive 89/656/EEC 'Personal protective equipment' ([4]), Directive 98/24/EC 'Chemical agents' ([5]), and Directive 2004/37/EC 'Carcinogenic agents' ([6]). Furthermore, within the framework of its support to EU sectoral social dialogue, the Commission supports the European social partners in the hairdressing sector, who are currently finalising a European framework agreement on the protection of health and safety. The measures foreseen in this agreement, if signed and implemented, will provide for an additional level of protection for the professional use of cosmetics, including for pregnant hairdressers.

2. Due to the assessment strategy the Commission has so far banned 180 dangerous hair dyes. Since 1 November 2011 hair dye products must bear stronger warnings in order to inform consumers and professionals about the allergenic potential of hair dyeing.

3. The abovementioned social partner agreement proposes measures to better protect the occupational health and safety of all workers in hairdressing, including through a targeted application of the principles of Directive 89/391/EEC e.g. risk assessment and substitution of products, materials and tools at the workplace.

([1]) Art. 6(1)(d) Cosmetics Directive 76/768/EEC (OJ L 262, 27.9.1976, p. 169, as amended).
([2]) OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 393, 30.12.1989, p. 1.
([4]) OJ L 393, 30.12.1989, p. 18.
([5]) OJ L 131, 5.5.1998, p. 11.
([6]) OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002355/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Dominance of motor vehicle insurance companies

It has come to my attention that some motor vehicle insurance companies in the UK and EU are employing anti-competitive tactics to ensure that vehicles are only repaired with 'approved' repairers. An example includes 'bullying' tactics on the part of the companies' call centres, falsely informing customers that the repair will only be paid for if the vehicle is taken to the approved repairer, rather than the customer's preferred repairer. It is in the insurance companies' interests to ensure that these approved repairers offer cheap rates, rather than satisfactory service. As a result, customers may suffer sub-standard repairs to their vehicles and non-approved vehicle repairers suffer loss of business.

In light of this, can the Commission state whether they are aware of these tactics? Furthermore, can the Commission indicate any action they have taken or will be taking in order to assist in the prevention of this anti-competitive behaviour?

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

The Commission is aware of the type of practices described by the Honourable Member.

Insured persons are often encouraged to use specific car repairers which are part of a network, that is 'agreed' by the insurer, in exchange for certain advantages, such as: direct payment between the insurance company and the car repairer or other supplementary services (e.g. replacement vehicle). However, the general practice appears to be that the policyholder still has the right to choose another car repairer, which is not on the list of the 'agreed' repairers, if he so prefers. Therefore, his freedom of choice is not affected by this practice.

According to the EU competition rules, agreements between undertakings, decisions by associations of undertakings and concerted practices which may affect trade between Member States and which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction, or distortion of competition within the common market are prohibited (Article 101 TFEU). Moreover, the fact that one or several undertaking(s) is/are abusing its/their dominant position within the common market or in a substantial part of it is prohibited, insofar as it may affect trade between Member States (Article 102 TFEU).

A competition issue under Article 101 TFEU could arise if a significant proportion of the relevant market were covered by parallel networks of similar vertical contracts between insurance companies and car repairers, which could have a foreclosing effect on the market. A competition issue under Article 102 TFEU could arise if an insurance company in a dominant position unduly limited the freedom of insured persons to choose their car repairer. On the basis of the information the Commission currently has there are no indications of such breaches of Articles 101 or 102 TFEU.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002356/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Arbeitslosigkeit in Portugal

In den letzten drei Monaten 2011 stieg die Arbeitslosigkeit in Portugal sprunghaft an. Nach den vom nationalen Statistikamt des Landes vorgelegten Zahlen kletterte die Arbeitslosenquote Portugals im letzten Quartal des abgelaufenen Jahres auf 14 % und nährte damit Spekulationen eines Teils der Wirtschaftswissenschaftler, dass die Sparmaßnahmen die wirtschaftliche Basis des Landes beschädigen. Durch diesen erheblichen Einbruch am Arbeitsmarkt waren in den drei Monaten bis Dezember 771 000 Menschen ohne Arbeit, was einen Anstieg gegenüber einem Vergleichswert von 12,4 % im Vorquartal bedeutete.

Eurostat schätzte die Arbeitslosenquote im Dezember auf 13,6 %, was genau der Schätzung von EU-Beamten für das gesamte Jahr 2012 entsprach.

Welche Maßnahme beabsichtigt die Kommission zu ergreifen, um hier Abhilfe zu schaffen?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(23. April 2012)

Die im Rahmen der von der portugiesischen Regierung unterzeichneten Vereinbarung bereits durchgeführten oder in Kürze durchzuführenden Reformen sollten die Funktionsfähigkeit des Arbeitsmarktes mittelfristig verbessern und die Beschäftigungsquote im ganzen Land steigern.

Portugal hat finanzielle Nothilfe zur Bewältigung seiner Finanzkrise seitens der Europäischen Union und des Internationalen Währungsfonds erhalten. Gleichzeitig sind der Europäische Sozialfonds (ESF) und der Europäische Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) weiterhin wichtige Geldgeber zur Unterstützung von Wachstum und Beschäftigung. 2011 fand eine Neuprogrammierung des ESF und des EFRE statt, die von der Kommission genehmigt wurde und den gesamten nationalen strategischen Rahmenplan Portugals betraf. Ziel war es, die Nutzung der Strukturfondsressourcen zu maximieren, insbesondere für aktive Arbeitsmarktmaßnahmen. 2012 sollen im Rahmen einer weiteren Neuprogrammierung die bestehenden Unterstützungsmechanismen für KMU im Hinblick auf eine beschleunigte Verabschiedung von KMU-Unterstützungsmaßnahmen überprüft werden.

Als Teil der von Präsident Barroso gestarteten Initiative „Chancen für junge Menschen“ prüfen die Kommission und die portugiesischen Behörden außerdem die Möglichkeit, die Strukturfondszuweisungen für Portugal neu zu programmieren, um so die Mittel für Maßnahmen zur Förderung der Beschäftigung junger Menschen zu erhöhen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002356/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Unemployment in Portugal

In the last three months of 2011, unemployment in Portugal experienced a significant leap. According to figures from the country's national statistical office, Portugal's unemployment rate jumped to 14% in the final quarter of last year, up from 12.4% in the preceding quarter, increasing speculation among some economists that the austerity measures are actually eroding the country's economic base. The major dent in the job market left 771 000 people without jobs in the three months to December.

Eurostat estimated the jobless rate at 13.6% in December, the same rate that EU officials have forecast for the whole of 2012.

What action does the Commission intend to take to deal with this situation?

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

The reforms which have been, or are soon to be, implemented under the memorandum of understanding signed by the Portuguese Government are expected to improve the way the labour market functions in the medium term and increase the rate of employment across the country.

Portugal has received emergency financial support from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund to tackle its fiscal crisis. At the same time, the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) have continued to be key sources of investment in support of growth and employment. In 2011 an ESF and ERDF reprogramming exercise approved by the Commission involved the whole of the Portuguese National Strategic Reference Framework. The aim was to maximise the utilisation of Structural Funds resources, especially for active labour market policy. In 2012, a new reprogramming exercise is to review existing SME support mechanisms with a view to speeding up the adoption of SME support measures.

Moreover, as part of the Youth Opportunities Initiative launched by President Barroso, the Commission and the Portuguese authorities are also considering the possibility of reprogramming Portugal's Structural Funds allocation with a view to increasing the financing available for measures to promote youth employment.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002357/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: EU Jam Directive (Council Directive 2001/113/EC of 20 December 2001)

It has been brought to my attention that a UK preserve producer who makes jam from British Bramley apples has been prevented from selling her product as 'jam' because it contains too little sugar under the EU Jam Directive (Council Directive 2001/113/EC of 20 December 2001).

The product has too much sugar to be labelled as a 'low-sugar jam'. The product is clearly a jam as per the directive, i.e. a mixture, brought to a suitable gelled consistency, of sugars, the pulp and/or purée of one or more kinds of fruit and water. It is also understood to be a jam by consumers. The product has now been relabelled as a conserve. However, the producer has been informed that the term conserve may also not be used.

1. Can the Commission please advise what we should call a mixture, brought to a suitable gelled consistency, of sugars and the pulp and purée of apples which contains 52 g per 100 g of sugar.

2. Does the Commission agree that, especially in a time of austerity, it should be supporting small businesses — especially those set up by women — rather than encumbering them with red tape and niggling regulations?

3. Will the Commission help preserve this award-winning manufacturer and get her out of her current jam?

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

The Council Directive relating to jams, jellies and marmalades and chestnut purée was adopted in 1979 (Directive 79/693/EEC ([1])) and recast in 2001 (Directive 2001/113/EC ([2])) to avoid any unfair competition and prevent misleading consumers. This directive lays down definitions and common rules governing composition, manufacturing specifications and labelling of the products concerned and mainly establishes that products such as jam, extra jam, jelly, marmalade must have a soluble dry matter content of 60 % or more.

The Commission would like to underline that an international standard for jams, jellies and marmalades also exists at the Codex Alimentarius level (CODEX-STAN 296-2009).This standard establishes provisions equivalent to the Council Directive, in particular on the soluble dry matter content. In both cases (at EU level and Codex level) provisions have been agreed with stakeholders and Members of the Codex and/or Member States.

Therefore, such a standard should not be considered as red tape; it guarantees that consumers are appropriately informed as regards the food they consume and prevents any practice that may mislead them.

The UK product made from British Bramley apples falls outside the scope of the directive because of its level of soluble dry matter content (below 60 %). However, pursuant to part II of Annex I of Directive 2001/113/EC, Member States may authorise, in order to take account of certain particular cases, the reserved names for products defined in part I of Annex I which have a soluble dry matter content of less than 60 %. These particular cases are to be justified in the light of the specific objectives and purposes of the directive or other valuable purposes such as traditional local products with low sugar level marketed in Member States.

Therefore, it is up to the UK authorities to decide whether they will grant an authorisation for the product in question to use the reserved name 'jam' from part I of Annex I of aforementioned Directive.

([1]) OJ L 205, 13.8.1979, p. 5-16.
([2]) OJ L 10, 12.1.2002, p. 67-72.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002359/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(1 martie 2012)

Subiect: Măsuri pentru consolidarea încrederii reciproce dintre statele membre în contextul cooperării judiciare în materie penală

Articolul 82 alineatul (1) din Tratatul privind funcționarea UE prevede principiul recunoașterii reciproce ca punct de plecare pentru cooperarea judiciară în materie penală. Recunoașterea reciprocă, la rândul său, se bazează înainte de toate pe încrederea reciprocă între sistemele judiciare ale statelor membre. Cu toate acestea, încrederea nu ar trebui să fie considerată a fi de la sine înțeleasă într-un domeniu al justiției caracterizat prin diversitate și eterogenitate, astfel cum a demonstrat implementarea mandatului european de arestare. Prin instrumentele ulterioare de cooperare judiciară, care se bazează de asemenea pe principiul recunoașterii reciproce, decalajul de încredere dintre sistemele de justiție ale statelor membre devine o chestiune de interes primar.

Punerea în aplicare a principiului recunoașterii reciproce necesită sisteme judiciare care sunt la fel de fiabile și care au același nivel de calitate și integritate.

Cu excepția armonizării legislative, ce măsuri intenționează să adopte Comisia pentru a sprijini statele membre să consolideze încrederea reciprocă în sistemele lor de justiție penală?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(25 aprilie 2012)

În vederea încrederii reciproce și a certitudinii în privința corectitudinii acțiunilor în materie penală, Comisia a propus mai multe instrumente pentru a crea standarde minime comune: o directivă cu privire la dreptul la interpretare și traducere, o directivă cu privire la dreptul la informație pentru persoanele suspecte sau acuzate, o directivă cu privire la dreptul de a fi asistat de un avocat și dreptul de a comunica după arestare. Mai mult, Comisia a prezentat un set de instrumente pentru a consolida drepturile victimelor care vor constitui o preocupare majoră în cadrul procedurilor penale ([1]).

Aceste măsuri, dezvoltate în baza jurisprudenței Curții Europene a Drepturilor Omului, vor încuraja statele membre să atingă cele mai înalte standarde în domeniul asigurării drepturilor fundamentale.

Cu toate acestea încrederea reciprocă solicită, de asemenea, o cunoaștere temeinică a legislației UE și o bună înțelegere a diferitelor sisteme juridice naționale. În comunicarea sa din 13 septembrie 2011 ([2]), Comisia Europeană a propus o varietate de acțiuni pentru a instaura un climat de încredere în justiție la nivelul UE și pentru a se asigura că judecătorii și procurorii din cadrul Uniunii sunt bine instruiți, astfel încât să dețină cunoștințele necesare în materie de legislație UE pentru a asigura o cooperare judiciară tranfrontalieră rapidă și eficientă.

Tratatul de la Lisabona a conferit Uniunii Europene responsabilitatea de a sprijini formarea profesională a magistraților și a personalului din justiție în probleme legate de cooperarea judiciară în materie civilă și penală. Strategia Europa 2020 ([3]) îndeamnă, de asemenea, la investiții eficiente în domeniul formării și la un context juridic coerent la nivel european. În Planul de acțiune pentru punerea în aplicare a Programului de la Stockholm ([4]) și în Raportul privind cetățenia UE ([5]), Comisia a declarat acest lucru drept o prioritate. În plus, Comisia a decis să dezvolte schimburile de judecători din diferite state membre și a lansat un portal european e-justiție ce conține informații juridice în 22 de limbi ([6]).

([1]) COM(2011) 326 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 551.
([3]) COM(2010) 2020 final.
([4]) COM(2010) 171.
([5]) COM(2010) 603.
([6]) COM(2011) 551.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002359/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Measures to strengthen mutual trust among Member States in the context of judicial cooperation in criminal matters

Article 82(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU provides for the principle of mutual recognition as a starting point for judicial cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual recognition, in turn, relies primarily on mutual confidence among the judicial systems of the Member States. Trust, however, should not be taken for granted in an area of justice characterised by diversity and heterogeneity, as the implementation of the European Arrest Warrant has illustrated. With the subsequent instruments of judicial cooperation, which are also based on the mutual recognition principle, the confidence gap among Member States' justice systems is becoming a matter of primary concern.

The implementation of the mutual recognition principle requires in practice judiciaries which are equally reliable and share the same level of quality and integrity.

What measures, excluding legal harmonisation, does the Commission plan to adopt in order to support Member States in consolidating mutual trust in their criminal justice systems?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

To increase mutual trust and confidence in the fairness of criminal proceedings, the Commission has proposed several instruments to create common minimum standards: a directive on the right to interpretation and translation, a directive on the right to information for persons suspected or accused, a directive on access to a lawyer and the right to communicate upon arrest. Moreover, the Commission presented a set of instruments to strengthen the rights of victims to be a central concern of the criminal procedure ([1]).

These measures, developed in the light of the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, will encourage Member States to meet the highest requirements in the field of ensuring fundamental rights.

But mutual trust also requires a solid knowledge of EC law and a good understanding of the different national legal systems. In its communication of 13 September 2011 ([2]), the European Commission has put forward a wide range of actions to build trust in EU-wide justice and to ensure that judges and prosecutors across the Union are well trained to have the required knowledge of EC law to ensure efficient and swift cross-border judicial cooperation.

The Lisbon Treaty has given the European Union the authority to support the training of the judiciary and of judicial staff in matters relative to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal law. The Europe 2020 strategy ([3]) also calls for efficient investment in training and for a coherent legal context at European level. In the Stockholm Programme Action Plan ([4])and the European Citizenship Report ([5]) the Commission stated this to be a priority. Furthermore the Commission decided to develop exchanges between judges of different Member States and has launched a European e-Justice Portal with legal information in 22 languages ([6]).

([1]) COM(2011) 326 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 551.
([3]) COM(2010) 2020 final.
([4]) COM(2010) 171.
([5]) COM(2010) 603.
([6]) COM(2011) 551.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002361/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Directive 2003/72/EC supplementing the Statute for a European Cooperative Society with regard to the involvement of employees

With reference to Directive 2003/72/EC supplementing the Statute for a European Cooperative Society with regard to the involvement of employees ([1]), up until 2010 only 17 European cooperative societies (SCEs) had been established, with a total of 32 employees across the entire EU.

Would the Commission concede that this directive has been a failure, and that it is bad legislation?

Would the Commission consider repealing the directive?

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

Directive 2003/72/EC ([2]) is not a stand-alone piece of legislation, instead it supplements Regulation 1435/2003/EC ([3]). In its 2010 report on the review of the directive ([4]) the Commission stated that it must examine why the acceptance rate of the EU legal framework for cooperatives is so low. It also states that the regulation must be evaluated before any decision on the directive is considered.

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its February 2012 report on the application of the abovementioned regulation ([5]). The report examines both the positive and negative factors affecting the establishment of a European Cooperative Society and suggests reasons for its relative lack of success to date.

During 2012 the Commission will also consult stakeholders on the future of the European Cooperative Society. Also, current discussion of EU company law encompasses provision for European legal forms and the revision thereof ([6]).

([1]) OJ L 207, 18.8.2003, p. 25.
([2]) Council Directive 2003/72/EC of 22 July 2003 supplementing the Statute for a European Cooperative Society with regard to the involvement of employees, OJ L 207, 18.8.2003, p. 25.
([3]) Of 22 July 2003 on the Statute for a European Cooperative Society (SCE), OJ L 207, 18.8.2003, p. 1.
([4]) COM(2010) 0481 final of 16 September 2010, OJ L 207, 18.8.2003, p. 1.
([5]) COM(2012) 72 final.
([6]) Public consultation at http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2012/company_law_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002362/12
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(1er mars 2012)

Objet: Embarquement des achats effectués dans les aéroports

Lors d'un voyage en avion, les passagers ont en principe toujours eu le choix entre emporter à bord de l'avion leurs achats effectués dans les boutiques hors taxes des aéroports et acheter les produits hors taxes pendant leur vol.

Mais depuis plusieurs années, un certain nombre de compagnies aériennes à bas coût refusent aux passagers la possibilité d'embarquer avec leurs achats, à moins de payer des frais supplémentaires si les produits ne rentrent pas dans leur bagage à main.

Cette pratique constitue historiquement une régression des droits des passagers aériens et crée une forme de concurrence déloyale pour l'activité hors taxes au sol.

Ces restrictions ont en effet pour conséquence de réduire considérablement les activités hors taxes dans les aéroports au profit des compagnies aériennes qui pratiquent la politique du bagage à main unique et vendent des produits hors taxes à bord de leurs avions.

Constatant la chute drastique des ventes des boutiques hors taxes au sol, le Parlement espagnol a essayé de garantir par la loi le droit des passagers à emporter leurs achats effectués dans les boutiques sans coût supplémentaire. Malheureusement, cette loi est contournée par les compagnies à bas coût au motif qu'elles sont enregistrées dans un autre État membre de l'UE.

Au regard de ces éléments:

1. La Commission considère-t-elle que la politique du bagage à main unique pratiquée par les compagnies à bas coût constitue une forme de concurrence déloyale? Si tel est le cas, quelle procédure envisage-t-elle de mettre en œuvre pour rétablir une concurrence libre et non faussée sur ce marché?

2. Comment la Commission entend-elle assurer aux passagers aériens le droit d'embarquer avec les achats effectués dans les boutiques hors taxes sans frais abusifs et sans avoir à les ranger dans les bagages à main?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(19 avril 2012)

1. La Commission n'estime pas que la politique du bagage à main unique pratiquée par les compagnies aériennes à bas coût constitue nécessairement une forme de concurrence déloyale dans tous les cas. Les questions de concurrence relèvent non seulement de la Commission européenne mais aussi des autorités nationales de concurrence et des tribunaux nationaux. L'article 102 du traité interdit uniquement l'abus de position dominante. Prouver l'existence d'abus dans ce domaine n'est probablement possible que sur des lignes précises ou dans certains aéroports et cela nécessiterait une évaluation au cas par cas de la part desdites autorités nationales de concurrence et desdits tribunaux nationaux.

En ce qui concerne la manière dont la politique du bagage unique touche les passagers, comme l'a indiqué la Commission dans sa réponse à la question écrite E-000936/2012 ([1]), il semble que certains passagers soient déconcertés par l'application variable de ces règles par le personnel au sol des différents aéroports. La Commission examine donc actuellement s'il est nécessaire d'introduire des mesures visant à améliorer l'information des passagers sur les bagages autorisés ou d'autres mesures supplémentaires.

2. En tout état de cause, ces pratiques doivent se conformer aux règles générales en matière d'information du consommateur, notamment aux dispositions de la directive relative aux pratiques commerciales déloyales ([2]). La directive exige que les professionnels travaillent conformément à une diligence professionnelle et affichent de manière claire, intelligible et en temps utile les informations dont les consommateurs ont besoin pour effectuer un achat informé, notamment les caractéristiques principales du produit mis en vente. En conséquence, les compagnies aériennes doivent dûment informer les consommateurs sur la politique du bagage unique (qui comprend les achats hors taxes) avant l'achat des billets d'avion pour être en conformité avec cette directive.

([1]) Disponible sur http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.
([2]) JO L 149 du 11.6.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002362/12
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Taking airport purchases on board aircraft

When travelling by air, passengers have always theoretically been able to choose between taking on board the aircraft purchases made in airport duty-free shops and buying duty-free products during their flight.

However, for several years now a number of low-cost airlines have only allowed passengers to take their purchases on board in return for an additional payment if the items in question do not fit into their hand baggage.

This practice deprives air passenger of established rights and exposes the terrestrial duty-free sector to a form of unfair competition.

These restrictions have significantly reduced duty-free trade at airports to the benefit of those airlines which have a policy of allowing one item of hand baggage only and which sell duty-free products on board their aircraft.

The Spanish Parliament, noting the dramatic decrease in sales from terrestrial duty-free shops, has attempted to give passengers the legal right to take purchases made in such shops on board aircraft at no additional cost. Unfortunately, this law is being circumvented by low-cost airlines, which claim that it does not apply to them as they are registered in another EU Member State.

1. Does the Commission consider that the 'only one item of hand baggage' policy implemented by low-cost airlines constitutes a form of unfair competition? If so, how does it intend to re-establish free and fair competition in this market?

2. How does the Commission intend to guarantee air passengers the right to take purchases made in duty-free shops on board aircraft without facing excessive charges and without being required to carry the items purchased in their hand baggage?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

1. The Commission does not consider that the 'only one item of hand baggage' policy implemented by low-cost airlines necessarily constitutes a form of unfair competition in all cases. Competition issues are not only dealt with by the European Commission but also by national competition authorities and courts. Article 102 of the Treaty prohibits only abuses of dominant positions. To prove abuses in this field would probably be possible only on specific routes or airports and would require a case-by-case assessment by such national competition authorities and courts.

As regards the way passengers are affected by the one bag policy, as mentioned in the Commission's answer to Written Question E-000936/2012 ([1]), it appears that some passengers have been confused by the varying strictness in the application of such policies by ground staff across airports. The Commission is therefore analysing whether measures are needed to improve the information to passengers on luggage allowances or whether other measures are needed.

2. In any case, such practices should comply with the general rules on consumer information, in particular with the provisions of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([2]). The directive requires traders to operate in accordance with professional diligence and to display in clear, intelligible and timely manner material information that consumers need to make an informed purchase, including the main characteristics of the product offered for sale. This means that airlines must dutifully inform consumers about the one bag policy (that includes duty free purchases) before the purchase of the flight tickets to be in compliance with this directive.

([1]) Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.
([2]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002365/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Sperimentazione animale su primati e randagi

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'arrivo in Italia di centinaia di scimmie, provenienti dalla Cina, destinate alla sperimentazione, e della sollevazione di gran parte dell'opinione pubblica che giustamente reagisce in modo fermo e negativo considerato anche che la sperimentazione animale è ormai diventata ripetitiva, inutile e non probante per l'essere umano.

Allarmano i dati secondo i quali ogni giorno sono usati per la sperimentazione migliaia di animali e lo stesso oncologo prof. Veronesi, già Ministro della salute in Italia, ha dichiarato sul Corriere della Sera del 28 febbraio 2012 «non c'è nessuna ragione scientifica per sacrificare dei primati».

Si chiede inoltre alla Commissione di rivedere la direttiva 2010/63/UE, la quale consente di utilizzare, per le sperimentazioni, animali randagi visto che è scientificamente provato come l'animale randagio e cioè meticcio (del quale perciò non si conosce la storia familiare) non è in grado di fornire risultati stabili.

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

Per determinare la sicurezza dei prodotti farmaceutici, dei dispositivi medici, delle sostanze chimiche e di altre sostanze, oggi non sono sufficienti i metodi in vitro disponibili. Gli animali, compresi i primati non umani ([1]), sono ancora necessari per numerosi programmi di ricerca su malattie quali HIV, malaria ed epatite, nonché affezioni invalidanti quali la malattia di Alzheimer e di Parkinson. Il ricorso agli animali è inoltre necessario per mettere a punto e sperimentare la sicurezza dei prodotti veterinari.

La direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici ([2]), che entra in vigore il 1º gennaio 2013, riesamina e aggiorna integralmente la direttiva 86/609/CEE, integrando nel quadro giuridico le più recenti conoscenze scientifiche e considerazioni di natura etica. Tale direttiva rafforzerà e migliorerà notevolmente la legislazione attualmente vigente nell'UE. Diverse misure ridurranno al minimo il ricorso agli animali e le loro sofferenze, e miglioreranno sensibilmente il ricovero e la cura degli animali utilizzati a fini sperimentali. In particolare, l'uso di primati non umani è soggetto ad ulteriori restrizioni.

La direttiva 2010/63/UE stabilisce che nelle procedure non siano utilizzati gli animali randagi e selvatici delle specie domestiche.

Tuttavia, in casi assolutamente eccezionali, ad esempio quando si studia un'affezione che riguarda soltanto i randagi, potrebbe essere necessario utilizzare i randagi a scopi di ricerca. Come risulta evidente dalle disposizioni degli articoli 10 e 11 della direttiva, si tratta di casi del tutto eccezionali e sempre basati su una motivazione scientifica (e non, ad esempio, economica), da valutare caso per caso.

Tutte le altre sperimentazioni o ricerche effettuate utilizzando cani e gatti sono possibili esclusivamente con animali specificamente allevati a scopi scientifici.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/pdf/scher_o_110.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002365/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Animal testing on primates and strays

The Commission is aware of the arrival of hundreds of monkeys from China in Italy for testing, not to mention the public outcry of many people who, quite rightly, have reacted resolutely and negatively, particularly given the fact that animal testing has now become repetitive, pointless and inconclusive.

Data confirming that thousands of animals are tested on every day is alarming and even the oncologist Prof. Veronesi, former Minister for Health in Italy, stated that 'there is no scientific reason for sacrificing primates' in the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper on 28 February 2012.

The Commission is therefore called upon to review Directive 2010/63/EU, which permits the use of stray animals in testing, given that it has been scientifically proven that stray animals, i.e. crossbreeds (where no family history is known), are unable to provide stable results.

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

Today the safety of pharmaceutical products, medical devices, chemicals and other substances cannot be sufficiently determined with the available *in vitro* test methods. Animals, including non-human primates ([1]), are currently still needed for a number of vital research programmes on diseases such as HIV, malaria and hepatitis, and debilitating conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. Animals are also needed for the development and safety testing of veterinary products.

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes ([2]) which enters into force on 1 January 2013, fully revises and updates Directive 86/609/EEC incorporating the latest scientific knowledge as well as ethical considerations into the legal framework. It will strengthen, and significantly improve on the legislation currently in place in the EU. A number of measures will minimise as far as possible the use and suffering of animals, and considerably improves the housing and care of experimental animals. The use of non-human primates specifically is subject to further restrictions.

Directive 2010/63/EU states that stray and feral animals of domestic species should not be used in scientific procedures.

However, in some very exceptional cases, such as when investigating an affliction which is particular only to strays, it may be necessary to use them in a research study. As can be seen from the provisions of Articles 10 and 11 of the directive, this would be highly exceptional and always based on a clear case by case scientific (not e.g. an economic) justification.

Any other testing or research using dogs and cats can only be done with animals that have been specifically bred for scientific purposes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/pdf/scher_o_110.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:EN:PDF.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002367/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Stato di applicazione della direttiva 2011/07/UE sul ritardo dei pagamenti

La stampa italiana ha reso nota, in queste ore, la situazione delle «Latterie Vicentine», una realtà dal fatturato di circa 70 milioni di euro, che raggruppa circa 400 soci produttori dando lavoro a circa 120 persone, che rischia il fallimento in quanto lo Stato italiano non paga il rimborso di 8 milioni di euro che le spetta a titolo di rimborso IVA.

Il caso della società vicentina è solo un esempio, citato per dar voce a tutte quelle imprese che in Italia aspettano dallo Stato pagamenti per un ammontare complessivo di 70 miliardi di euro.

In un periodo in cui la difficoltà di accesso al credito e alla liquidità uccide imprese e imprenditori, posto che l'obbligo per gli Stati membri di adeguare la propria normativa a quanto stabilito dalla direttiva 2011/07/UE dovrebbe coincidere con il 16 marzo 2013, la Commissione è in grado di fornire un quadro sullo stato di recepimento della direttiva negli Stati membri?

Come intende monitorare la sorte dei crediti maturati dalle imprese verso la pubblica amministrazione prima dell'entrata in vigore della direttiva? Come valuta l'ipotesi, paventata da alcuni governi, come quello italiano, di sostituire la liquidità con titoli di debito pubblico?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(7 maggio 2012)

La direttiva 2011/7/UE dovrà essere recepita dagli Stati membri entro il 16 marzo 2013. Tuttavia, considerato l'impatto significativo che i pagamenti tardivi hanno sulla competitività delle imprese europee, il Vicepresidente Tajani ha invitato personalmente gli Stati membri, con lettera del 24 ottobre 2011, a intensificare i loro sforzi a livello nazionale per il recepimento e l'attuazione, su base volontaria, della direttiva entro i primi mesi del 2012.

Per assistere gli Stati membri nel compito oneroso di recepimento precoce la Commissione ha convocato il 3 febbraio 2012una prima riunione del gruppo di esperti sui ritardi di pagamento cui sono stati invitati tutti gli Stati membri. In tale occasione alcuni Stati membri hanno già annunciato l'intenzione di recepire la direttiva prima della fine del 2012.

A tutt'oggi nessuno Stato membro ha comunicato le proprie misure nazionali di recepimento della direttiva 2011/7/UE alla Commissione.

La Commissione è al corrente del fatto che certi governi nazionali contemplano l'eventualità di emanare titoli di Stato per pagare i debiti pendenti. La Commissione esaminerà, caso per caso, tali misure e in particolare la loro compatibilità con la normativa europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002367/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Implementation of Directive 2011/07/EU on late payments

The Italian press recently disclosed the position of Latterie Vicentine, a cooperative with a turnover of approximately EUR 70 million and around 400 member producers, providing work for approximately 120 people, which faces bankruptcy as the Italian State has not paid the VAT refund of EUR 8 million that the company is owed.

The case of the Vicenza company is just one example cited to illustrate the plight of all the businesses in Italy awaiting payments from the State, totalling EUR 70 billion.

In a period in which difficulty in accessing credit and liquidity is killing businesses and entrepreneurs and given the obligation of Member States to bring their legislation into line with Directive 2011/07/EU by 16 March 2013, is the Commission able to provide an overview of the current state of transposition of the directive in the Member States?

How does it intend to monitor what becomes of public administration debts to businesses accumulated before the directive comes into effect? What is its view on the proposal put forward by some governments, such as that of Italy, to issue government bonds instead of paying the debts?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2012)

Directive 2011/7/EU will have to be transposed by Member States by 16 March 2013 at the latest. However, considering the significant impact of late payments on the competitiveness of European enterprises, Vice-President Tajani personally invited Member States, by letter of 24 October 2011, to step up their efforts at a national level for transposition and implementation of the directive by early 2012, on a voluntary basis.

With a view to assisting Member States in the challenging task of an early transposition, the Commission called a first meeting of the Late Payment Expert Group, to which all Member States are invited, on 3 February 2012. On that occasion, some Member States already announced their intention to transpose the directive by the end 2012.

To date no Member States have communicated their national measures to transpose Directive 2011/7/EU to the Commission.

The Commission is aware that some national governments are considering issuing government bonds to pay outstanding debts. The Commission will examine, on a case by case basis, such measures and in particular their compatibility with European law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002369/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Crisi dell'azienda Om

A Bari 258 lavoratori della Om sono a rischio esubero. L'azienda impegnata nella costruzione di migliaia di auto ecologiche, elettriche ha deciso di interrompere la produzione.

Anche il progetto di riconversione industriale della Om carrelli elevatori è saltato. L'imprenditore principale artefice della cordata che avrebbe costruito taxi ibridi nella zona industriale di Modugno, ci ha ripensato e non investirà più nel progetto di riconversione dell'azienda controllata dalla multinazionale tedesca Kion.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza della crisi della Om e dell'imminente chiusura dello stabilimento di Bari?

2. Il governo italiano ha fatto richiesta per l'attivazione del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione al fine di aiutare i lavoratori a trovare un nuovo impiego e a riqualificarsi?

3. Nell'affermativa, a quale stadio si trova la procedura di richiesta di attivazione del fondo?

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

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di una richiesta in corso da parte delle autorità italiane relativa a un contributo del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione per assistere i lavoratori che potrebbero essere licenziati dall'azienda menzionata dall'onorevole deputato.

Per sapere se vi è l'intenzione di presentare una simile domanda l'onorevole deputato farebbe bene a mettersi in contatto con il referente del Fondo in Italia ([1]).

([1]) Gli estremi sono disponibili sul sito web del Fondo all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002369/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Crisis at the company OM

258 workers at the OM company in Bari face possible redundancy. The company, which manufactures thousands of electric environmentally-friendly cars, has decided to suspend production.

The industrial restructuring project of *Om carrelli elevatori*, which manufactured fork lift trucks, has also been cancelled. The key entrepreneur from the consortium that was going to make hybrid taxis in the industrial zone of Modugno has changed his mind and will no longer be investing in the restructuring project for the company, which is run by the KION Group, a multinational German company.

In the light of the above, could the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the crisis at OM and of the imminent closure of the plant in Bari;

2. whether the Italian Government has requested the activation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund in order to help workers to find new jobs and to retrain;

3. if so, what stage has been reached in the Fund activation process?

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

The Commission is not aware of any application in the pipeline from the Italian authorities for a contribution from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund to assist workers who may be made redundant by the company referred to by the Honourable Member.

To find out whether there are plans to submit such an application, the Honourable Member is advised to get in touch with the contact person for the Fund in Italy ([1]).

([1]) Contact details are available on the Fund's website at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002370/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Discariche italiane non conformi alla direttiva del 1999

L'Unione europea ha avviato una procedura nei confronti dell'Italia relativa a 102 discariche, di cui tre di rifiuti pericolosi, che non risultano conformi alla direttiva europea del 1999. Pertanto la Commissione europea ha inviato all'Italia una prima lettera di costituzione in mora, prima tappa della procedura d'infrazione al trattato UE.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può dunque la Commissione comunicare se intende presentare l'elenco completo delle discariche non conformi alla direttiva europea del 1999 in materia e la loro ubicazione?

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

La Commissione conferma di aver recentemente avviato la procedura di infrazione nei confronti dell'Italia in relazione alla presenza di 102 discariche (di cui 3 di rifiuti pericolosi) già autorizzate o in servizio allo scadere del termine per il recepimento della direttiva 1999/31/CE ([1]) e che, contrariamente all'articolo 14 della direttiva, non sono state né chiuse con decisione definitiva né rese pienamente conformi alla direttiva.

La procedura è stata avviata sulla base delle informazioni fornite dalle autorità italiane, aggregate a livello regionale. L'esatta ubicazione delle discariche non conformi all'articolo 14 della direttiva 1999/31/CE non è pertanto nota alla Commissione.

Le informazioni attualmente in possesso della Commissione indicano che le discariche non ancora conformi all'articolo 14 della direttiva 1999/31/CE sono situate nelle seguenti regioni:

Abruzzo (21 discariche), Basilicata (19 discariche), Calabria (4 discariche, di cui una di rifiuti pericolosi), Campania (5 discariche), Friuli Venezia Giulia (10 discariche), Emilia Romagna (2 discariche), Liguria (1 discarica di rifiuti pericolosi), Lombardia (2 discariche), Marche (1 discarica), Molise (10 discariche, di cui una di rifiuti pericolosi), Piemonte (7 discariche), Puglia (6 discariche), Sardegna (12 discariche), Umbria (2 discariche).

([1]) GU L 182 del 16.7.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002370/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Italian landfill sites which do not comply with Council Directive 99/31/EC of 26 April 1999

The European Union has initiated proceedings against Italy with regard to 102 landfill sites, three of which contain hazardous waste, which are not compliant with Council Directive 99/31/EC of 26 April 1999. The Commission has therefore sent a first letter of formal notice to Italy, the first stage of EU Treaty infringement proceedings.

In light of this, could the Commission therefore state whether it intends to present a full list of landfill sites that do not comply with Council Directive 99/31/EC of 26 April 1999 in this regard, as well as their location?

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

The Commission confirms that it has recently launched an infringement procedure against Italy in relation to the presence of 102 landfills (three of which for hazardous waste) which were already authorised or operational when the deadline for transposing Directive 1999/31/EC ([1]) expired and which, contrary to Article 14 of the directive, have neither been closed with a definite decision nor been brought fully in compliance with the directive.

The procedure has been launched on the basis of the information provided by the Italian authorities, aggregated at Regional level. The precise location of the landfills which do not comply with Article 14 of Directive 1999/31/EC is therefore not known to the Commission.

The information presently possessed by the Commission indicates that the landfills which do not yet comply with Article 14 of Directive 1999/31/EC are located in the following Regions:

Abruzzo (21 landfills), Basilicata (19 landfills), Calabria (4 landfills, one of which for hazardous waste), Campania (5 landfills), Friuli Venezia Giulia (10 landfills), Emilia Romagna (2 landfills), Liguria (1 landfill for hazardous waste), Lombardia (2 landfills), Marche (1 landfill), Molise (10 landfills, one of which for hazardous waste), Piemonte (7 landfills), Puglia (6 landfills), Sardegna (12 landfills), Umbria (2 landfills).

([1]) OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002371/12
alla Commissione
Antonio Cancian (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Omologazione europea guardrail — sicurezza per tutti gli utenti della strada

Tra gli utenti delle strade, una delle categorie più vulnerabili risulta essere quella dei motociclisti. Le statistiche (rapporto DEKRA 2010, dati riferiti all'anno 2008) dimostrano che sulle strade italiane ogni otto ore muore un motociclista. Nonostante negli ultimi anni si sia verificata una apprezzabile riduzione delle vittime e dei feriti in incidenti stradali, il numero riferito ai motociclisti esprime un risultato in controtendenza, sia per cause riferibili direttamente al comportamento dei centauri, sia per eventi riconducibili alla deficitaria condizione delle infrastrutture.

Lo scenario più frequente vede incidenti con coinvolto il solo motociclista che l'ha causato su strade extraurbane, con uscita di strada, scivolata sulla carreggiata, collisione sul guardrail (27 % della casistica). A questo proposito, la condizione dei guardrail risulta spesso inadeguata perché pensata per veicoli a quattro ruote, causando ferite mortali ai motociclisti che scivolano fin sotto ai guardrail stessi e sbattono contro i sostegni verticali degli stessi riportando ferite spesso mortali.

A livello europeo, risulta non ancora emanata una disciplina finalizzata a promuovere la produzione di prodotti di «ritenuta stradale» con marcatura «CE» specificatamente finalizzata anche alla sicurezza dei motociclisti o plurivalenti (per veicoli e motociclisti). Tuttavia, in diversi paesi, sono state sperimentate soluzioni volte al miglioramento dell'attuale struttura dei guardrail e completi di protezione/lamiera inferiore.

Può la Commissione spiegare come intende agire al fine di proporre un'omologazione a livello europeo dei guardrail in grado di ridurre i danni ai motociclisti in caso di incidente e salvaguardare quindi la salute e la vita stessa di tutti gli utenti della strada?

Può la Commissione esprimersi sul perché il CEN (Comitato europeo di normazione) ha definito «specifica tecnica» e non «norma» il punto relativo all'omologazione dei guardrail (Progetto di norma EN 1317-8)?

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

La Commissione segue da vicino gli sviluppi in seno al CEN in relazione alle norme appartenenti alla famiglia EN 1317 che coprono i diversi aspetti dei sistemi di ritenuta stradale. Nell'ambito dei suoi lavori il CEN, agendo in forza della propria autonomia, ha deciso in effetti di definire lo status della norma EN 1317-8 in relazione a guardrail idonei per i motocicli quale specifica tecnica e non norma. Tuttavia, più di recente, ci si è adoperati per correggere la situazione e per far rientrare i guardrail per motocicli (parte 8 della norma) nel campo di applicazione della norma europea armonizzata EN 1317-5, che coprirebbe in tal modo tutte le diverse parti dei sistemi di ritenuta stradale. Tale revisione, che coincide con le richieste esplicite della Commissione, dovrebbe essere completata nel corso del 2013.

Una riunione delle autorità competenti degli Stati membri, di rappresentanti del CEN e di fabbricanti europei di sistemi di ritenuta stradale è stata organizzata dalla Commissione il 15 dicembre 2011 per chiarire la situazione attuale per quanto concerne in particolare l'uso di guardrail per motocicli nell'ambito di tali sistemi. La Commissione ha anche inviato, il 3 gennaio 2012, un questionario alle autorità competenti di tutti i 27 Stati membri chiedendo loro di illustrare quali pratiche applicassero in relazione ai guardrail per motocicli. A tutt'oggi, quasi la totalità degli Stati membri ha risposto al questionario. In seguito a un'attenta analisi delle risposte e dell'eventuale follow-up che si riveli necessario, e dopo aver ricevuto informazioni complementari dal CEN, la Commissione sarà in condizioni di decidere le misure da adottarsi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002371/12
to the Commission
Antonio Cancian (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: European type-approval for guardrails — safety for all road users

Motorcyclists are one of the most vulnerable categories of road users. Statistics (2010 DEKRA report based on 2008 data) show that every eight hours a motorcyclist is killed on Italian roads. Although in recent years the number of people killed or injured in road accidents has fallen considerably, the opposite is true for motorcyclists, for reasons linked directly to both the riders' own behaviour and poor road conditions.

The most common scenario is that of a motorcyclist riding along a country road and, without any other vehicle being involved, going off the road, sliding across the carriageway and colliding with the guardrail (27 % of cases). Guardrails are often inadequate, being designed with four-wheeled vehicles in mind, with the result that motorcyclists slide underneath them and strike their vertical supports, often suffering fatal injuries.

There is still no European legislation to promote the manufacture of a CE-marked 'vehicle restraint barrier' specifically designed to guarantee the safety of motorcyclists or of both motorcyclists and other road users. However, in several countries solutions have been tested with a view to improving the current design of guardrails by incorporating sections fitted closer to the ground.

Can the Commission explain what action it intends to take in order to propose Europe-wide type-approval for guardrails and so reduce injuries to motorcyclists involved in accidents and protect the safety and lives of all road users?

Can the Commission explain why the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) has defined the issue of the type-approval of guardrails (draft standard EN 1317-8) as a 'technical specification' and not a 'standard'?

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

The Commission has closely followed the developments within CEN of the standards belonging to the EN 1317 family and covering different aspects of road restraint systems. During its work, CEN acting in its autonomous capacity has indeed decided to define the status of EN 1317-8 on motorcycle barriers as a technical specification and not as a standard. However, more recently, efforts have begun to correct this situation and to bring motorcycle barriers (Part 8 of this standard) within the coverage of the harmonised European standard EN 1317-5, which would thus be covering all different parts of road restraint systems. This revision, concurring with the explicit demands of the Commission, is due to be completed during 2013.

A meeting of Member States competent authorities, CEN representatives and European manufacturers of road restraint systems was organised by the Commission on 15 December 2011, to clarify the current situation regarding notably the use of motorcycle barriers within these systems. The Commission has also sent on 3 January 2012 a questionnaire to competent authorities in all 27 Member States, inquiring as to their practices on the treatment of motorcycle barriers. As of now, almost all Member States have responded to this questionnaire. After thorough analysis of these responses and any necessary follow-up, as well as receiving complementary information from CEN, the Commission will be in a position to decide on the measures to be taken.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002372/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Aiuti ai paesi terzi e gare d'appalto

Dei quasi 130 miliardi di dollari all'anno che i paesi industrializzati dichiarano ufficialmente di investire in cooperazione allo sviluppo, il 15 % viene vinto direttamente da imprese dei paesi OCSE che finanziano l'iniziativa senza nessuna gara d'appalto. Questo limite alla concorrenza determina una distorsione dei prezzi al rialzo — con un innalzamento dei costi tra il 18 % e il 40 %.

Inoltre, circa il 60 % delle forniture soggette a gara d'appalto viene comunque assegnato a imprese dello stesso paese che finanzia l'iniziativa di sviluppo. In termini assoluti rientrano ai donatori altri 29 miliardi.

Questo è possibile poiché i bandi di gara tendono indirettamente a favorire le imprese internazionali o del donatore, in termini di lingua, accesso all'informazione o requisiti per la partecipazione. Il risultato è che si ostacolano imprenditoria e impiego locali nei paesi in via di sviluppo.

In molti casi la giustificazione per evitare una gara d'appalto internazionale competitiva si fonda sul fatto che l'appalto sarebbe vinto da imprese di economie emergenti e non si avvantaggerebbe comunque il tessuto produttivo destinatario dell'intervento. Questo è il motivo per cui molti paesi OCSE non vogliono ulteriormente «slegare l'aiuto» nell'ambito dei negoziati internazionali sull'efficacia.

La scelta da fare, anche alla prossima Conferenza internazionale sull'efficacia di Busan, è di consentire al paese partner di dotarsi di una normativa sugli appalti con clausole di preferenza per le nascenti imprese nazionali, volta sostenere un moltiplicatore occupazionale, d'imposte proprie e di crescita. In Afghanistan i donatori hanno approvato una normativa per gli appalti sugli aiuti internazionali che privilegia le imprese locali e registrate nel paese. Questo ha permesso di spendere localmente 441 milioni di dollari con la creazione di 118 000 posti di lavoro.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. può elencare il totale delle iniziative d'aiuto europeo attribuito alla fine della gara a imprese europee?

2. Quali sono le normative europee in merito e in che modo intende favorire le nascenti imprese locali nel partecipare all'aggiudicazione di gare d'appalto per le iniziative d'aiuto europee?

Risposta data da Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(23 aprile 2012)

I dati richiesti sono disponibili sul sito web di EuropeAid, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/index_it.htm alla voce «Inviti a presentare proposte e bandi di gara» o sulla pagina web del sistema di trasparenza finanziaria della Commissione europea http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm.

La Commissione non ha la facoltà di stabilire norme di ammissibilità o di limitarle. Per quanto riguarda le azioni esterne finanziate nell'ambito del bilancio dell'UE, le norme di ammissibilità sono definite dal Parlamento e dal Consiglio nel regolamento finanziario (articolo 168) e negli atti di base che disciplinano le azioni esterne. Nel caso del FES ([1]), tali norme sono state stabilite dalle parti contraenti dell'accordo di Cotonou ([2]). Fatte salve le specificità di ogni atto di base, la partecipazione alle procedure di appalto e di concessione di sovvenzioni è aperta a tutte le persone fisiche e giuridiche stabilite in un paese beneficiario e in un paese in via di sviluppo per i programmi tematici finanziati dal bilancio, o nei paesi ACP e nei paesi meno sviluppati per il FES.

L'accordo di Cotonou sostiene l'utilizzazione ottimale delle risorse materiali e umane degli Stati ACP accordando prezzi preferenziali o assistenza agli offerenti oppure privilegiando subappaltatori o esperti locali degli Stati ACP od offerenti che consentono l'utilizzazione ottimale delle risorse degli ACP.

([1]) Fondo europeo di sviluppo.
([2]) Accordo di partenariato ACP-CE tra i membri del gruppo degli Stati dell'Africa, dei Caraibi e del Pacifico (ACP), da un lato, e l'Unione europea e i suoi Stati membri, dall'altro.

Le modalità di esecuzione ([3]) del regolamento finanziario dell'UE favoriscono altresì gli offerenti locali in quanto, ai sensi dell'articolo 243, paragrafo 1, lettera a) e dell'articolo 245, paragrafo 1, lettera b), in funzione del valore, i bandi di gara sono pubblicati soltanto nel paese beneficiario.

Nella proposta di norme comuni di esecuzione per le azioni esterne e di nuove modalità di esecuzione, la Commissione incoraggia inoltre la partecipazione delle imprese locali, slegando ulteriormente, nei programmi geografici, la partecipazione dei paesi in via di sviluppo e aumentando il massimale per il ricorso alle procedure locali.

([3]) Modalità di esecuzione applicabili al bilancio generale dell'Unione europea — regolamento (CE, Euratom) n. 2342/2002 della Commissione del 23 dicembre 2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002372/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Aid for third countries and invitations to tender

Of the almost USD 130 billion per year that industrialised countries officially declare they invest in development cooperation, 15 % is won directly by companies from the OECD countries that finance the initiatives, with no call for tenders. This barrier to competition leads to prices being distorted upwards, with an increase in costs of between 18 % and 40 %.

Furthermore, roughly 60 % of the contracts that are put out to tender are nevertheless awarded to companies from the same country that finances the development initiative. In absolute terms, donors get back some USD 29 billion.

This occurs as invitations to tender tend to indirectly favour global companies or companies from the donor country, in terms of language, access to information or participation requirements. The result is that entrepreneurial activity and local employment in developing countries are hindered.

In many cases, the justification for not holding an international competitive call for tenders is based on the fact that the competition would be won by companies from emerging economies and would not, in any case, be beneficial to the productive fabric of the recipient of the intervention. For this reason, many OECD countries choose not to free up additional aid during international negotiations on effectiveness.

A decision that should be made, even at the next International Conference on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, is to allow partner countries to insert clauses into their legislation on competitions that favour growing national companies, with the aim of fostering employment, generating taxes and promoting growth. In Afghanistan, donors have approved a piece of legislation for competitions on international aid that favours local businesses and businesses registered in the country. This has led to USD 441 million being spent locally and has seen the creation of 118 000 jobs.

In view of this, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Could it list all the European aid initiatives that have been allocated to European companies following an invitation to tender?

2. What European legislation is in place and how does it intend to favour growing local companies during the award of contracts in invitations to tender for European aid initiatives?

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

The requested data can be found on the EuropeAid website, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/index_en.htm under 'call for proposal and procurement notice' or on the European Commission Financial and Transparency System page, http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

The Commission does not have the power to decide on or restrict eligibility rules. For external actions funded under the EU Budget, the eligibility rules are defined by the Parliament and the Council in the Financial Regulation (Article 168) and in the basic acts governing external actions. For the EDF ([1]), the Parties of the Cotonou Agreement ([2]) decreed these rules. Without prejudice to the specificities of each basic act, participation in the procurement and grant procedures is open to all natural and legal persons established in a beneficiary country and in a developing country for Budget thematic programme, or in ACP countries and in least developed countries for the EDF.

Cotonou favours the best possible use of ACP's physical and human resources by giving price preferences or assistance to tenderers or priorities to local sub-contractors or experts from ACP's or tenderers that allow for the best possible use of the ACP's resources.

([1]) European Development Funds.
([2]) ACP-EC Partnership agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part.

The Implementing Rules ([3]) for the EU's Financial Regulation also favours local tenderers since, pursuant to Article 243 (1)(a) and Article 245 (1)(b), depending on the amount, the procurement notices are only published in the beneficiary country.

The Commission also encourages the participation of local companies in the proposed common implementing rules for external action and in the proposed new Implementing Rules by untying further, in geographical programmes, the participation of developing countries and by increasing the maximum limit for using the local procedure.

([3]) Implementing Rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union-Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) N°2342/2002 of 23 December 2002.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002373/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti — città di Napoli

Gli enti territoriali, quali Comuni e Province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei fondi diretti programmati ed erogati da parte delle Direzioni generali della Commissione europea. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono ad esempio: il programma «Cultura», il programma per l'occupazione e la solidarietà «Progress», il programma «Europa per i cittadini», quello per l'ambiente «Life +», il programma per gestire i flussi migratori «Solidarietà e gestione dei flussi migratori», quello dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e tanti altri.

In merito a questo e ad altri programmi disponibili, può la Commissione rispondere alle seguenti domande:

1. Ci sono programmi per i quali la città di Napoli ha fatto richiesta?

2. In caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati i suddetti programmi sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta data da Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(18 aprile 2012)

La città di Napoli ha presentato una domanda per un progetto nell'ambito dell'invito a presentare proposte 2011 per il programma LIFE+ — Biodiversità in città per migliorare la sostenibilità ambientale — nel settore dell'ambiente urbano, per il quale il bilancio complessivo è stimato a 1 337 539 EUR. Poiché la procedura di valutazione delle proposte di progetto presentate per LIFE+ nel 2011 è ancora in corso, è troppo presto per sapere se questa domanda sarà selezionata per ricevere i fondi.

Inoltre nel 2007 la città di Napoli ha presentato una domanda di finanziamento in qualità di co-organizzatore di un progetto nell'ambito del programma Cultura (nella sezione dei progetti di cooperazione pluriennale), ma questo progetto non è stato selezionato.

Infine nel 2009 la città di Napoli ha presentato una domanda nell'ambito del programma «Investire nelle persone», in relazione all'invito a presentare proposte «Accesso alla cultura locale, protezione e promozione della diversità culturale», per il progetto «SMARTER (Social Mediterranean Art to Reuse Theatre for Educational Reinforcement)», che non è stato selezionato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002373/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Direct funding programmes — city of Naples

Local government bodies, such as municipalities and provinces, are among the prime potential beneficiaries of the direct funding planned and allocated by the European Commission's Directorates-General. Among the available funds, there are for example: the 'Culture' programme, the 'Progress' programme for employment and solidarity, the citizenship programme 'Europe for Citizens', the 'Life+' programme for the environment, the programme for the management of migration flows 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows', the programme focused on human resources, 'Investing in people', and many more.

With regard to this and other available programmes, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Are there any programmes for which the city of Naples has applied?

2. If so, which projects were given access to European funds, and what results did these programmes have once they were completed?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The City of Naples has submitted a project application under the LIFE+ 2011 call for proposals — BIOdiversity for Cities Towards Improvement of Environmental Sustainability — in the policy area urban environment, for which the total estimated budget is EUR 1,337,539. Since the evaluation procedure of the LIFE+ 2011 round is still ongoing, it is too early to say whether this application will be retained for financing.

Furthermore, the City of Naples applied for funding as project co-organiser under the Culture Programme in 2007 (Multi-annual cooperation projects strand), but its project was not selected.

Finally, the City of Naples applied in 2009 under the programme 'Investing in People' to the call for proposals 'Access to local culture, protection and promotion of cultural diversity' for the project 'SMARTER (Social Mediterranean Art to Reuse Theatre for Educational Reinforcement)', the project was not selected.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002374/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Progetto del gasdotto Nabucco

Nabucco è il nome di un progetto per la realizzazione di un gasdotto che favorisce l'approvvigionamento di gas all'Unione europea. Il piano prevede la costruzione di un'infrastruttura che consenta di trasportare il gas naturale del Caucaso, del Mar Caspio e di parte del Medio Oriente dalla Turchia all'Austria.

Il prospetto del gasdotto è ora in un periodo di stallo per cui, secondo gli analisti, il consorzio che ha elaborato il piano per l'approvvigionamento del gas naturale ha ora davanti a sé due sole alternative. La prima prevede un totale abbandono di Nabucco a dieci anni dall'avvio dei primi studi di fattibilità. Questa opzione comporterebbe una sconfitta sia sul fronte dei piani per migliorare l'approvvigionamento di gas utile al fabbisogno UE sia su quello dell'influenza europea nell'area strategica del Mar Caspio. La seconda opzione è invece legata alla possibilità di realizzare una fusione, facendo confluire Nabucco in un altro gasdotto, riducendo i costi e dando nuova solidità al progetto che potrebbe attirare un maggior numero di investitori.

Al momento l'Europa ottiene gas naturale da quattro fornitori principali. La Russia fornisce all'UE il 41 % del gas necessario ogni anno, la Norvegia il 27 %, l'Algeria il 17 % e la Nigeria il 5 %. La diversificazione dei fornitori di gas comporterebbe maggior sicurezza di approvvigionamento per tutti i paesi dell'Unione europea.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. in che modo e con quali mezzi la Commissione sta sostenendo il progetto del gasdotto Nabucco ed già esistono già analisi che consentono di quantificare le prospettive di riduzione di dipendenza dell'UE da altri fornitori?

2. con quali altri progetti transnazionali l'UE sta collaborando per assicurare l'approvvigionamento energetico dei suoi Stati membri?

Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2012)

1. Il progetto Nabucco ha potuto beneficiare di un contributo di 200 milioni di euro nel quadro del Programma energetico europeo per la ripresa. La Commissione europea coordina altresì la valutazione d'impatto ambientale del progetto, oltre a mantenere intensi contatti con Turkmenistan, Azerbaigian, Georgia e Turchia in vista dell'allestimento di una nuova rotta di approvvigionamento del gas, comunemente nota come «corridoio meridionale del gas».

In merito all'impatto del progetto sulla diversificazione delle forniture di gas, al seguente indirizzo si può trovare un'analisi di mercato concernente l'Europa centrale e sudorientale:
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/doc/2012_wg_north_south_interconnections.pdf

2. La Commissione europea sostiene progetti volti a diversificare le fonti di approvvigionamento del gas nell'UE tramite la realizzazione di nuove infrastrutture come Nabucco o il consolidamento di quelle esistenti. Esistono, ad esempio, numerosi progetti transnazionali (vedere i link) cofinanziati dall'Unione europea nel quadro del Programma energetico europeo per la ripresa (European Energy Program for Recovery — EEPR):
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:200:0031:0045:IT:PDF
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/exemptions/doc/exemption_decisions.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002374/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Nabucco gas pipeline project

Nabucco is the name of a project to develop a gas pipeline which will improve the supply of gas to the European Union. The project involves the building of the infrastructure needed so that natural gas from the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and the Middle East can be transported from Turkey to Austria.

The project is currently at a standstill. As a result, analysts now believe that the consortium behind the plan has just two options: the first is the total abandonment of the pipeline project, 10 years after the first feasibility studies were started. This would represent a defeat in terms of both improving the gas supply to the EU and strengthening Europe's influence in the strategic area of the Caspian Sea. The second option would involve linking up Nabucco with another gas pipeline in a joint venture, thus reducing costs and putting the project on a firmer footing in an effort to attract a greater number of investors.

At present, Europe obtains natural gas from four main suppliers: Russia (41 % of annual needs), Norway (27 %), Algeria (17 %) and Nigeria (5 %). Diversifying gas suppliers would improve security of supply for all the EU Member States.

1. How and with what resources is the Commission supporting the Nabucco gas pipeline project, and have studies been carried out in order to quantify the likely reduction in the EU's dependence on other suppliers?

2. With what other transnational projects is the EU cooperating in order to secure its Member States' energy supplies?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

1. Nabucco could benefit from a EUR200 million contribution under the European Energy Program for Recovery. The European Commission is also coordinating the Environmental Impact Assessment for the project. Furthermore, the Commission is in intensive contact with Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey to ensure the realisation of a new gas supply route, generally referred to as the Southern Gas Corridor.

Concerning its impact on the diversification of gas supply, a market analysis on Central and South-East Europe can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/doc/2012_wg_north_south_interconnections.pdf

2. The European Commission supports projects that aim at diversifying gas supply in the EU through the development of new infrastructures like Nabucco or the re-enforcement of existing ones. For instance, there are many transnational projects (see links) that benefit from EU financial assistance under the European Energy Program for Recovery (EEPR): http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:200:0031:0045:EN:PDF and http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/exemptions/doc/exemption_decisions.pdf.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002376/12
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(1 maart 2012)

Betreft: Kwijting 2010 Europees Milieu Agentschap

Vandaag bleek in de Commissie begrotingscontrole dat sprake is van ernstige misstanden bij het Europees Milieu Agentschap: ondernemingen waarmee eerder zaken werden gedaan zijn voorgetrokken; er is sprake van „fictieve arbeidsovereenkomsten"; bij vervulling van vacatures lijkt sprake van „vriendjespolitiek". Er worden stapels rapporten geschreven, maar er zijn geen aantoonbare resultaten die van nut zijn voor de EU. Bovendien stelde de Europese Rekenkamer vast dat de directeur van het Agentschap tegelijkertijd bestuurslid c.q. lid van de Raad van Advies was bij NGO „Earthwatch" en „Worldwatch". Deze directeur heeft met een aantal personeelsleden biodiversiteitsprojecten van Earthwatch in het Caribisch gebied bezocht, waar zij dus zelf actief bij betrokken was en het Agentschap heeft deze reizen betaald (in 2010 en 2011). Toen de Rekenkamer hierover kritische vragen stelde, heeft de directeur geweigerd een diepgaand onderzoek in te stellen. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat dit Agentschap per direct onder versterkt en strikt (begrotings)toezicht moet worden geplaatst, gezien de ernst van de misstanden?

2. Wat is de mening van de Commissie met betrekking tot de vermelde belangenverstrengeling, daden en opstelling daarna van voornoemde directeur?

3. Kunt u aangeven of deze directeur ter verantwoording is geroepen en alle financiële schade, opgelopen door het agentschap, inmiddels heeft terugbetaald of dit alsnog gaat doen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Is deze directeur inmiddels ontslagen vanwege wanbeleid of is de Commissie voornemens dit alsnog te doen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

5. Kunt u gedetailleerd en concreet aangeven hoe u voornemens bent verder orde op zaken te stellen bij dit Agentschap? Welke specifieke maatregelen gaat u daartoe ondernemen?

6. Bent u met de PVV van mening dat de toegevoegde „Europese" waarde van dit Agentschap grenst aan nul en dat het beter zou zijn om dit Agentschap gewoon op te heffen, om hernieuwde problemen die kennelijk van structurele aard zijn, in de toekomst te voorkomen?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(30 april 2012)

De Commissie, met inbegrip van het OLAF ([1]), is op de hoogte van het verslag dat werd voorgelegd op de hoorzitting van de Commissie begrotingscontrole over het EMA. Zij constateert evenwel dat blijkens het verslag van de Rekenkamer van 2010 over het EMA geen bewijzen in die richting zijn gevonden. Het OLAF onderzoekt de beweringen en verzoekt het geachte Parlementslid meer precieze gegevens te verstrekken.

1. Het EMA is juridisch autonoom en wordt beheerd door een uitvoerend directeur, onder toezicht van de Raad van Bestuur ([2]). Het EMA wordt gecontroleerd door de Rekenkamer en de DIA ([3]). Aangezien er geen bewijzen van overtredingen zijn, is er geen reden om het EMA onder nog andere vormen van toezicht te plaatsen. Bovendien wordt de rol van de Commissie geregeld en ingeperkt door de juridische, organisatorische en budgettaire autonomie waarin deze agentschappen functioneren.

De bestuursaangelegenheden met betrekking tot de agentschappen worden momenteel besproken in een interinstitutionele werkgroep waarbij de Raad en het Parlement betrokken zijn.

2. De Commissie heeft geen weet van enig belangenconflict en constateert dat de Rekenkamer de rekeningen van het EMA over 2010 heeft onderzocht en ze als wettig en regelmatig heeft aangemerkt.

([1]) Europees Bureau voor fraudebestrijding.
([2]) Zie http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/governance/management-board/
([3]) Dienst interne audit.

3. De Commissie ziet geen redenen om terugbetaling van kosten te eisen. Gezien de ernst van de beweringen heeft de Commissie het EMA om verduidelijking gevraagd teneinde de Commissie begrotingscontrole in de context van de kwijting voor 2010 genoegdoening te verlenen. Binnenkort zal ook de DIA een inspectie verrichten.

4. De uitvoerend directeur is niet ontslagen. De Commissie heeft geen bewijzen van overtredingen.

5. Zie punt 3. Doordat er geen bewijzen van overtredingen zijn, overweegt de Commissie op dit ogenblik geen verdere acties.

6. Gezien de bijdrage van het EMA aan een beter milieu voor de EU is sluiting van het agentschap volgens de Commissie niet gerechtvaardigd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002376/12
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Discharge 2010: European Environment Agency (EEA)

It emerged at today's meeting of the Committee on Budgetary Control that serious abuse has been committed at the EEA: preferential treatment has been given to companies that have previously worked for the Agency, there are fictitious employment contracts and nepotism seems to play a role in the filling of vacancies. Many reports are written, but there are no demonstrable results that are of use to the EU. Furthermore, the European Court of Auditors has established that the Agency's director was simultaneously serving as a member of the Board of Directors at the NGO Earthwatch and as a member of the Advisory Council at the NGO Worldwatch. She and several staff members visited Earthwatch's biodiversity projects in the Caribbean, where she was actively involved, and the Agency paid the expenses (in 2010 and 2011). When the Court of Auditors asked critical questions about this matter, the director refused to organise an in-depth investigation. In this connection, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that, in view of the gravity of the abuse, this Agency must be immediately placed under strict (budgetary) supervision?

2. What view does the Commission take of the specified conflict of interest, actions and the ensuing attitude of the aforesaid director?

3. Has this director been called to account and has she already paid back in full the financial cost incurred by the Agency or is she going to do so? If not, why not?

4. Has this director already been dismissed on account of mismanagement or does the Commission plan to dismiss her? If not, why not?

5. Can the Commission explain, in a detailed and concrete manner, how it plans to put things in order at this Agency? What specific measures will be taken to that effect?

6. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that this Agency's added 'European' value is close to zero and that it would be better to simply abolish it in order to avoid future problems, which are clearly structural in nature?

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

The Commission, including OLAF ([1]), is aware of the report tabled at the hearing of the Budgetary Control Committee concerning the EEA. However, the Commission notes that the 2010 Court of Auditors report on the EEA found no evidence of the sort cited. OLAF is evaluating the allegations and invites the Honourable Member to provide it with more detailed information.

1. The EEA has legal autonomy and is managed by an Executive Director under the control of the Management Board ([2]). The EEA is audited by the Court of Auditors and the IAS ([3]). In the absence of evidence of wrongdoing there are no grounds for placing the EEA under other forms of supervision. Moreover, the Commission's role is governed and limited by the legal, organisational and budgetary autonomy under which such Agencies operate.

The governance issues regarding agencies are currently being discussed in an interinstitutional working group involving the Council and the Parliament.

2. The Commission is not aware of any conflict of interest and notes that the Court of Auditors examined the EEA 2010 accounts and found them legal and regular.

3. The Commission sees no grounds for requiring repayment of any costs. In view of the seriousness of the allegations, the Commission has asked the EEA to provide a clarification, with a view to satisfying the Budget Control Committee in the context of the 2010 Discharge. An IAS inspection will also be undertaken soon.

([1]) The European Anti-Fraud Office.
([2]) See http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/governance/management-board/
([3]) Internal Audit Service.

4. The Executive Director has not been dismissed. The Commission has no evidence of wrongdoing.

5. See 3 above. Due to the lack of evidence of wrongdoing, the Commission is not considering further action at this time.

6. Given the EEA's contribution to a better environment for the EU, the Commission does not consider that closure of the Agency is warranted.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002378/12
à Comissão
Regina Bastos (PPE)
(1 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Número de crianças e jovens com diabetes está a aumentar

Segundo os dados constantes do Relatório do Observatório da Diabetes e publicados recentemente na imprensa, o número de crianças e jovens com diabetes em Portugal está a aumentar, tendo duplicado nos últimos dez anos. Ao todo, só em 2010 morreram em Portugal quase cinco mil pessoas devido a esta doença, o que equivale a uma média de 13 portugueses por dia.

A incidência da diabetes tipo 1 nas crianças e nos jovens tem vindo a aumentar significativamente, registaram-se em 2010 mais de 2 800 casos em jovens até os 19 anos e, no mesmo ano, foram detetados 18 novos casos por cada 100 mil jovens com idades até aos 14 anos.

Também a diabetes tipo 2 apresenta aumentos, com maior incidência na população entre os 20 e os 39 anos, contribuindo decisivamente para este fenómeno a hiperalimentação, rica em gorduras e açúcar, e o sedentarismo.

Verifica-se também que, em 2010, há uma maior incidência da diabetes nos homens e, por outro lado, na população portuguesa iletrada, rondando os 30 % entre a população iletrada e os 6,5 % entre os que concluíram o ensino superior.

O consumo de medicamentos para a diabetes também está a aumentar, estimando-se que em 2010 o custo direto seja entre os 1 150 e os 1 350 milhões de euros, o que representa 1 % do PIB e 11 % da despesa em saúde.

Sem prejuízo das competências dos Estados-Membros em matéria de saúde, solicito à Comissão os seguintes esclarecimentos:

1. Existem planos a nível europeu que apoiem os Estados-Membros no combate à diabetes ou tenciona a Comissão criá-los?

2. Em caso afirmativo, será que esses planos preveem medidas específicas para as crianças e jovens?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do pesado fardo que a diabetes representa em toda a União Europeia, bem como da prevalência crescente de ambos os tipos (1 e 2) da doença.

A Comissão centra a sua atenção no combate aos principais fatores de risco da diabetes, tais como a alimentação e a falta de exercício físico, e no apoio à investigação sobre a diabetes. O «Livro branco sobre uma estratégia para a Europa em matéria de problemas de saúde ligados à nutrição, ao excesso de peso e à obesidade» ([1]), adotado pela Comissão em maio de 2007, identificava as crianças como grupo prioritário, uma vez que a infância é um período importante para aprender os conhecimentos básicos necessários para manter um estilo de vida saudável. A estratégia da UE denominada «Regime de Fruta Escolar» ([2]), lançada em 2009, destina-se igualmente a promover hábitos alimentares saudáveis junto dos jovens, através da distribuição de fruta e de vegetais nas escolas. Desde o seu lançamento, mais de 8,1 milhões de crianças em mais de 54 000 escolas beneficiaram dessa estratégia.

Além disso, a Comissão iniciou um processo de reflexão sobre doenças crónicas, em conjunto com os Estados-Membros e as partes interessadas neste domínio. Esse processo — se bem que não incida especificamente sobre as patologias — identificará áreas em que subsistem lacunas e em que uma ação reforçada da UE poderá constituir uma mais-valia.

([1]) COM(2007)279 final de 30.5.2007.
([2]) (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/fruit-and-vegetables/school-fruit-scheme/index_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002378/12
to the Commission
Regina Bastos (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Number of children and young people with diabetes on the increase

According to the information contained in the National Diabetes Observatory's report and recently published in the press, the number of children and young people with diabetes in Portugal is on the rise, having doubled in the last 10 years. In all, around 5 000 people died of this disease in Portugal in 2010 alone, which is the equivalent of an average of 13 Portuguese citizens a day.

The incidence of type 1 diabetes in children and young people is increasing significantly; in 2010, more than 2 800 cases were recorded in young people up to the age of 19, and 18 new cases per 100 000 young people of up to 14 years of age were detected in the same year.

Type 2 diabetes is also on the increase, with greater incidence in the population between the ages of 20 and 39, with excessive consumption of food rich in fat and sugar and a sedentary lifestyle making a decisive contribution to this trend.

It was also found in 2010 that there is a major incidence of diabetes both in men and in people who are illiterate, standing at around 30 % among the illiterate population compared with 6.5 % of the population that completed higher education.

The consumption of diabetes medication is also increasing, with the direct cost in 2010 estimated as between EUR 1 150 and EUR 1 350 million, which represents 1 % of GDP and 11 % of the health budget.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Member States in health matters, can the Commission provide the following information:

1. Are there any plans at European level to support Member States in the fight against diabetes, or does the Commission intend to create any?

2. If so, will these plans set out specific measures for children and young people?

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

The Commission is aware of the serious burden that diabetes represents across the European Union and of the growing prevalence of both types 1 and 2 of diabetes.

The Commission focuses its action on addressing the main risk factors of diabetes such as nutrition and lack of physical activity and by supporting research on diabetes. The 'Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues' ([1]) adopted by the Commission in May 2007, identified children as a priority group, as childhood is an important period to learn the life skills necessary to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The EU Fruit School Scheme ([2]) launched in 2009 further encourages good eating habits in young people by providing them with fruit and vegetables at school. Over 8.1 million children in over 54 000 schools benefited from the Scheme since its launch.

In addition, the Commission has launched a reflection process on chronic diseases together with Member States and stakeholders. This process — while not disease specific — will identify areas where there are gaps and added value for further action at EU level.

([1]) COM(2007) 279 final, 30.5.2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/fruit-and-vegetables/school-fruit-scheme/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002380/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Legislation threatening LGBT freedom of expression in Russia

The Vice-President/High Representative will already be aware of the draft legislation currently being considered by the Legislative Assembly of St Petersburg relating to the 'propaganda of sodomy, lesbianism, bisexualism, transgenderism and paedophilia to minors.'

On 8 February 2012 the bill passed its second reading in the Assembly. Two other regions in Russia already have similar legislation in force.

While Russia is not, of course, an EU member state, it is nevertheless a signatory of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), both of which guarantee freedom of expression. The draft legislation also contradicts advice from Russia's own Supreme Court.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm the progress of the draft legislation?

In light of Russia's aforementioned international obligations, the European Parliament's joint motion for a resolution on the rule of law in Russia of 14 February 2011 and the ongoing negotiations for a new EU-Russia agreement to replace the existing Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, what is the Vice-President/High Representative doing to halt the spread of this dangerous and repressive legislation across Russia?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is well aware of the developments. On 7 March 2012, the governor of St Petersburg, Mr Poltavchenko, signed the bill in to following its passage by the Legislative Assembly on 29 February. The HR/VP regrets this bill coming into law. Serious concerns have been expressed by the EU concerning this development on a number of occasions throughout the process.

As early as November 2011, the issue was raised by the EU at the EU-Russia human rights consultations, such a law would be in contradiction to Russia's legislation and its international obligations, especially discrimination of minorities, and the LGBTI individuals' right to freedom of expression and assembly. The EU also pointed to the danger of putting together homosexuality, bisexuality, and transsexuality — which involve legal acts by consenting adults — into one law together with sexual crimes against children.

After the bill had passed the second reading, the Head of the EU Delegation in Moscow expressed EU's position and serious concerns in a meeting with the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister. Once the bill was approved by the Assembly but awaited a signature of the governor, a letter reiterating the concerns was sent from the Head of Delegation in Moscow to the Governor of St Petersburg. In addition to these steps, Member States representatives in St Petersburg, in cooperation with the Delegation, have also met with the Legislative Assembly Members to state the EU's concerns, while the Delegation has kept in close contact with the representatives of NGOs dealing with LGBTI issues.

After the signature of the bill into the law, EU statements expressing disappointment are being issued by the EU representatives in the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002381/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Überarbeitung der Berufsqualifikationsrichtlinie — Genehmigungsfiktion

In der Berufsqualifikationsrichtlinie aus dem Jahr 2005 wird die gegenseitige Anerkennung von Berufsqualifikationen zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten geregelt. Im Dezember 2011 legte die Kommission eine überarbeitete Fassung vor. Ziel ist es, die Mobilität von Berufsangehörigen innerhalb der Union weiter zu fördern, indem das System der gegenseitigen Anerkennung von Qualifikationen, Ausbildungszeiten und Abschlüssen zügiger und effizienter als bisher erfolgen soll. In diesem Zusammenhang schlägt die Kommission eine automatische Validierung der Anerkennung im Falle der Untätigkeit der nationalen Behörde vor. Demnach hat die Behörde des Aufnahmestaates genau einen Monat Zeit, um über einen Antrag auf Anerkennung zu entscheiden; nach Ablauf dieser Frist wird die Genehmigung des Antrags automatisch fingiert.

1. Ist es tatsächlich in jedem Fall für die nationalen Behörden zumutbar, binnen einem Monat eine inhaltlich fundierte Entscheidung über die Anerkennung einer Berufsqualifikation zu fällen?

2. Zieht die Kommission eine Verlängerung dieser Frist für bestimmte Fälle in Betracht? Wenn ja, welche?

3. Durch die fingierte Genehmigung kommt es zu einem Ausbleiben der Prüfung der Kompetenzen des Antragstellers. Läuft man damit nicht Gefahr, schlecht oder nicht ausreichend qualifizierten Personen leichtfertig eine Genehmigung auszustellen?

4. Wie kann ein dadurch entstehender Qualitätsverlust und eine damit einhergehende potenzielle Gefahr für Konsumenten vermieden werden?

5. Wie begründet die Kommission ihre Abwägung zugunsten der Fristeinhaltung, jedoch zulasten hoher Qualitätsstandards in vielen Berufssparten?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

In ihrem Vorschlag vom 19. Dezember 2011 ([1]) sieht die Europäische Kommission die Entwicklung eines europäischen Berufsausweises vor, der die Anerkennungsverfahren einfacher und schneller abwickelbar machen soll. Damit dürfte eine Alternative zu den derzeitigen Anerkennungsverfahren nach der Richtlinie über Berufsqualifikationen ([2]) vorliegen.

1. In dem Vorschlag sind Fristen vorgesehen, die sich nach dem Umfang des Verfahrens richten: ein Monat im Falle der automatischen Anerkennung und zwei Monate im Rahmen der allgemeinen Regelung. Die Einbeziehung des Herkunftsmitgliedstaates gewährleistet Vollständigkeit, Gültigkeit und Authentizität der Unterlagen des Antragsstellers.

2. Der Vorschlag sieht keine Fristverlängerung vor.

3. Die Berufsqualifikationen werden durch den Herkunftsmitgliedstaat überprüft und die Unterlagen werden nur an den Aufnahmemitgliedstaat weitergeleitet, wenn die Berufsqualifikationen des Antragstellers für eine Anerkennung infrage kommen.

4. Eine stillschweigende Anerkennung wird nur als letztes Mittel wirksam, sofern die Mitgliedstaaten innerhalb der vorgeschriebenen Frist untätig ([3]) bleiben. Die Überprüfung durch den Herkunftsmitgliedstaat stellt sicher, dass keine Qualitätsverluste entstehen.

([1]) KOM(2011)883 endg.
([2]) Richtlinie 2005/36/EG über die Anerkennung von Berufsqualifikationen, ABl. L 255, 30.9.2005, S. 22.
([3]) Der Aufnahmemitgliedstaat hat verschiedene Möglichkeiten: Er kann die Berufsqualifikationen anerkennen; im Falle erheblicher Abweichungen, zum Beispiel fehlende Unterlagen des Antragstellers, kann er Ausgleichsmaßnahmen vorschreiben; in Ausnahmefällen kann er sogar die Anerkennung ablehnen.

5. Für einige Berufe sind die derzeit in der Richtlinie festgelegten Fristen für die Entscheidung über die Anerkennung nicht auf den Arbeitsmarktbedarf zugeschnitten. Die Mitgliedstaaten reagieren darauf nicht. Dagegen standen 2010 40 Prozent der SOLVIT-Fälle zur Berufsqualifikation im Zusammenhang mit der Nichteinhaltung dieser Fristen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002381/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Revision of the Professional Qualifications Directive — fictitious approval

The Professional Qualifications Directive from 2005 regulates the mutual recognition of professional qualifications between the Member States. The Commission presented a revised version in December 2011. The objective is to further foster the mobility of professional persons within the Union by making the system of mutual recognition of qualifications, time spent in training and diplomas faster and more efficient than before. In this context, the Commission proposes automatic validation of recognition, should there be a lack of action on the part of the national authorities. This gives the authorities in the host State exactly one month to decide on an application for recognition; after this period, the application will be deemed automatically approved.

1. Can national authorities be reasonably expected to make a well-founded decision on the recognition of a professional qualification within one month in every case?

2. Is the Commission considering extending this period for certain cases? If so, which?

3. Automatic approval means that the expertise of the applicant is not verified. Does this not entail the risk that poorly or insufficiently qualified persons could be negligently approved?

4. How would it be possible to avoid a consequent loss of quality and an associated potential danger for consumers?

5. What are the Commission's reasons for its decision in favour of adherence to the approval period, but at the expense of high quality standards in many professional areas?

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

In the legislative proposal ([1]) adopted on 19 December 2011, the European Commission foresees the creation of European Professional Cards (EPC) to facilitate and accelerate the recognition procedures. These should represent an alternative to the current recognition procedures foreseen in the Professional Qualifications Directive ([2]).

1. The proposal foresees deadlines according to the complexity of the procedure: 1 month in case of automatic recognition and 2 months under the 'general system'. The involvement of the home Member State ensures the completeness, the validity and authenticity of the professional's file.

2. No extension of the deadlines is foreseen in the proposal.

3. The qualifications of the professional are verified by the home Member State and the file is forwarded to the host Member State only if the professional qualifies for the recognition of his qualifications.

4. Tacit recognition intervenes only in the last resort if the Member States takes no action ([3]) at all in the given timeframe. The checks carried out by the home Member State guarantees that there will be no quality loss.

5. Deadlines currently in the directive within which a decision on application should be taken are not adapted to the needs of the labour market for certain professions. Member States do not react to this. Instead, 40 % of the 2010 Solvit cases on professional qualifications are related to the non-respect of these deadlines.

([1]) COM(2011) 883 final.
([2]) Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 22.
([3]) The host Member State has several options: it can recognise the qualifications of the professional; if there are substantial differences — for example because some documents are missing from the file of the professional — it can impose compensation measures; in exceptional cases it could even refuse the recognition.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002382/12
a la Comisión
Inés Ayala Sender (S&D)
(1 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Medidas para promover las tecnologías de adaptación inteligente de la velocidad

Se necesitan medidas continuas para abordar la cuestión del exceso de velocidad, puesto que sigue siendo el principal factor que contribuye a los accidentes de tráfico mortales. Las orientaciones políticas sobre seguridad vial de la Comisión y el Libro Blanco sobre el transporte reconocen que «los sistemas a bordo de vehículos para proporcionar información en tiempo real sobre los límites de velocidad vigentes pueden contribuir a mejorar el control de la velocidad». El Libro Blanco también menciona la necesidad de armonizar y utilizar las tecnologías de seguridad vial. La adaptación inteligente de la velocidad (ISA) es un sistema de transporte inteligente (STI) que advierte al conductor sobre el exceso de velocidad, le disuade de acelerar y le impide exceder el límite de velocidad.

¿Cuál considera la Comisión que es el papel de los sistemas de adaptación inteligente de la velocidad en Europa?

¿Cómo prevé la Comisión apoyar y fomentar la ISA como tecnología de seguridad vial y qué medidas (incluido el calendario) se contemplan para facilitar su implantación?

Una de las principales características de la utilización es la interacción de la ISA con la infraestructura vial. Con objeto de evitar incompatibilidades entre los Estados miembros, ¿tiene previsto la Comisión adoptar medidas para hacerlos interoperables?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión considera que los sistemas de adaptación inteligente de la velocidad que informan al conductor sobre el límite de velocidad en todo momento pueden contribuir a mejorar la seguridad vial, ya que pueden impedir que el conductor exceda el límite de velocidad por inadvertencia.

En relación con la segunda pregunta de Su Señoría, la Comisión subraya que una serie de medidas específicas adoptadas en el marco del Plan de acción para el despliegue de sistemas de transporte inteligentes se refieren a las tecnologías de seguridad vial y cuestiones afines; por ejemplo, se han analizado y se están desarrollando, en el marco de proyectos de investigación del Séptimo Programa Marco (Rosatte y eMaps), la recopilación, el intercambio y la difusión de los límites de velocidad permanentes, a fin de mantener y actualizar los mapas digitales; se está evaluando el desarrollo y el uso de interfaces persona-máquina (HMI) seguras y la integración de dispositivos nómadas, y sigue en curso la evaluación y la promoción de sistemas avanzados de ayuda al conductor (ADAS).

Además, la Directiva relativa a los sistemas de transporte inteligentes establece el marco legal necesario para el despliegue y la utilización de aplicaciones de sistemas de transporte inteligentes, incluidos los sistemas de adaptación inteligente de la velocidad. La seguridad vial y las aplicaciones sobre seguridad constituyen uno de los ámbitos prioritarios de la Directiva, la cual determina, en este campo, las medidas necesarias para integrar sistemas avanzados de información al conductor.

En relación con la tercera pregunta de Su Señoría, la Comisión observa que la plena integración del vehículo en el sistema de transporte y, en particular, la interacción entre vehículos y con la infraestructura guardan relación con el concepto de «sistemas cooperativos», cuyo desarrollo y evaluación figuran en el Plan de acción para el despliegue de sistemas de transporte inteligentes. La Directiva relativa a los sistemas de transporte inteligentes también establece el marco aplicable a la definición de normas y especificaciones en este campo, centrándose en la interoperabilidad y compatibilidad de los servicios cooperativos de sistemas de transporte inteligentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002382/12
to the Commission
Inés Ayala Sender (S&D)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Action to promote Intelligent Speed Assistance technologies

Continued action to tackle excessive speed is required, as speeding remains the single biggest contributory factor in fatal road collisions. The Commission's Road Safety Policy Orientations and White Paper on Transport recognise that 'in-vehicle systems providing real-time information on prevailing speed limits could contribute to improve speed enforcement'. The White Paper also refers to the need to harmonise and deploy road safety technologies. Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) is an Intelligent Transport System (ITS) which warns the driver about speeding, discourages the driver from speeding or prevents the driver from exceeding the speed limit.

What does the Commission see as the role for Intelligent Speed Assistance systems in Europe?

How does the Commission intend to support and promote ISA as a road safety technology, and what actions (within what timeframe) will be taken to facilitate this?

One of the key features for deployment is ISA's interaction with road infrastructure. In order to avoid incompatibilities between Member States, does the Commission intend to take action to make them interoperable?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

The Commission considers that Intelligent Speed Assistance systems that inform the driver about the speed limit at any moment can contribute to improve road safety, since they may prevent the driver from inadvertently exceeding the speed limit.

In relation to the Honorable Member's second question, the Commission notes that a number of specific actions under the ITS Action Plan are addressing road safety technologies and related issues : e.g. the collection, exchange and dissemination of standing speed limits to maintain and update digital maps have been analysed and are being further developedt within the framework of FP7 research projects (ROSATTE and eMaps); the development and use of safe Human Machine Interfaces (HMI) and the integration of nomadic devices are being evaluated; the assessment and the promotion of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) are ongoing.

In addition, the ITS Directive provides the legal framework for the deployment and use of ITS applications, including ISA systems. Road safety and security applications are one of the priority areas of the directive, which, in this area, provides for the definition of measures to integrate advanced driver support informtaion system.

Concerning the Honourable Member's third question, the Commission notes that the full integration of the vehicle into the transport system, and notably the interaction between vehicles and with the infrastructure, relate to the concept of 'cooperative systems', the development and evaluation of which are covered in the ITS Action Plan. The ITS Directive also provides the framework for the definition of standards and specifications in this field, focusing on the interoperability and compatibility of the related cooperative ITS services.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002384/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Iceland and the Faroe Islands

In the continued absence of an agreement on the allocation of the Western Stock of mackerel, will the Commission condemn in the strongest possible terms the irresponsible attitude taken by the Governments of Iceland and the Faroe Islands on this matter?

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

The Coastal State consultations on mackerel for 2012 came to an end inconclusively in Reykjavik on 16 February after several rounds. Following the breakdown of these negotiations, the Member of the Commission responsible for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and her Norwegian counterpart, the Minister of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs, Ms Berg-Hansen, issued a joint statement, where they expressed their disappointment and concern at this outcome of the discussions.

Both expressed the opinion that the sustainability of the mackerel stock is being directly threatened by the recent development of new and unilateral fisheries by Iceland and the Faroe Islands. Furthermore, they have called upon Iceland and the Faroe Islands to reduce their current unsustainable fishing levels.

The Commission has made it clear that the Union is ready in the future to continue to seek a reasonable and fair quota sharing arrangement, which will respect the rights and obligations of all Parties. It is also relevant to note that the Commission has tabled a proposal for a legal instrument allowing the rapid implementation of certain trade-related measures against countries that allow fishing unsustainably. As soon as this proposal will be approved by the European Parliament and the Council, it would provide the Commission also with legal tools to address unsustainable fishery practises by third countries.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002385/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/08

1. What ideas does the Commission have to address the contradiction created by the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/08, which encourages fishermen in the Irish Sea to avoid cod, and of the requirement to supply data from the fishery to provide evidence of a recovery in the stock?

2. What schedule is being followed in respect of proposing a replacement of Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/08, which established a long-term plan for cod stocks and the fisheries exploiting those stocks?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission.
(18 April 2012)

There is no contradiction between the obligation to avoid cod and the provisions regarding the collection of data on catches. The stock assessment process carried out by International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) incorporates information from fishery independent data, information from observer trips as well as fisheries-science partnerships. This ensures that while fishermen can fish in a manner that seeks to limit cod mortality, the stock can still be robustly assessed. ICES has recently held a workshop looking in detail at the stock assessment process for this stock which should feed into their future advice.

The Commission is well aware of the difficulties that fishermen have in applying the provisions of the Cod Plan concerning effort and specific measures regarding cod avoidance. These aspects of the implementation of the plan and practical experience in the Member States have been discussed at a technical workshop on 20 March 2012 on the application of the Cod Plan in view of preparing a proposal for the amendment of that plan by autumn 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002386/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Fisheries long-term management plans

What steps is the Commission taking to encourage dialogue between itself, the Council and Parliament in order to remove the impasse between the institutions in respect of securing agreement on the growing number of fisheries long-term management plans?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission has offered to facilitate a debate between the co-legislators on the issue mentioned by the Honourable Member; it has done so recently, for instance, in the context of the proposal for a horse mackerel management plan.

However, the interinstitutional deadlock cannot be overcome without the active engagement of all parties concerned and the start of joint discussions. The Commission invites both the European Parliament and the Council to engage in discussion with each other in order to find solutions.

The Commission remains at the disposal of Parliament and Council to find, in full compliance with the provisions of the treaty, a pragmatic solution to the issue of multiannual plans, which are at the heart of fisheries management as proposed by the Commission in the context of the reform.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002387/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Invitation to Northern Ireland

Are there any plans for the Fisheries Commission or the Agriculture Commissioner to visit Northern Ireland during 2012? In the absence of current plans, would an invitation to visit Northern Ireland be accepted?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

Since 2010, the Commission has established and maintained intensive dialogue with all EU Member States on issues related to agriculture, rural development as well as on Maritime Policy and the common fisheries policy.

As part of this continuous dialogue, the Member of the Commission responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development has visited the United Kingdom in 2012 and will return in the coming months. The Member of the Commission responsible for the Maritime and Fisheries Policy has visited the United Kingdom on several occasions in 2012 and will also be returning to the UK in the coming months.

Neither Member of the Commission will however be in a position to visit Northern Ireland in 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002388/12
to the Council
Nick Griffin (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Value of art pieces in institutional buildings

Can the Council clarify if in its working buildings there are any paintings and/or art pieces?

If so, how many?

Has the use of taxpayers' money to establish such collection ever been submitted to a vote?

How much in total was paid for the collection?

What is its current estimated worth?

Who decides which paintings to buy?

Does a set of guidelines exist for the European institutions as buyers?

If so, can the Council provide me with a copy?

Is the acquisition programme continuing and, if so, how much has been allocated for purchase in 2012?

Reply
(30 April 2012)

There are art pieces in both the Justus Lipsius and Lex buildings.

Fifty-one pieces in total were either purchased or have been made available to the General Secretariat of the Council under different arrangements for varying or indefinite periods. Twenty-one pieces were purchased for a total of EUR 1 250 000. The current estimated worth of the 51 pieces is approximately EUR 1 900 000.

Seventeen other decorative or ornamental objects without artistic value were donated to the institution by the consecutive Presidencies of the Council, and 24 objects (mainly souvenirs and gifts) were given to the institution by the former High Representative, Mr Javier Solana.

The rules applicable to the purchases are laid down in Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities ([1]).

A Committee appointed by the Council held a Europe-wide competition from among 1 500 artists and selected 20 pieces, including five paintings, for the Justus Lipsius building when it was under construction. No further paintings have been bought since. The only piece of art in the Lex building was approved as part of the contract for its construction.

There is no ongoing acquisition programme and no acquisitions have been planned for 2012.

([1]) OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002390/12
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(1er mars 2012)

Objet: Promotion du 9 mai

L'Europe a choisi le 9 mai comme jour de commémoration de la construction européenne. C'est un jour historique, qui rappelle le discours fondateur de Robert Schuman. Il fait partie de l'héritage que nous avons créé depuis plus de 50 ans. Mais c'est un jour qui est très mal connu de nos concitoyens. Il n'est pas férié, comme le reste des journées nationales: c'est sans doute une raison.

De plus en plus de mairies organisent des événements le 9 mai. Mais il y encore du chemin à parcourir pour qu'elle devienne incontournable dans le calendrier. Notamment dans cette période de morosité ambiante où l'Europe démontre une fois de plus qu'elle est un échelon incontournable.

1. La Commission a-t-elle dégagé un budget pour inciter financièrement les collectivités (régions, départements, mairies) et les associations à organiser des événements le 9 mai?

2. Met-elle à leur disposition du matériel spécifique? Auprès de qui les organisateurs peuvent-ils se fournir?

3. La Commission peut-elle donner des exemples d'initiatives qui ont rencontré un grand succès le 9 mai?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(17 avril 2012)

Les bureaux de représentation de la Commission dans les États membres organisent les activités liées à la Journée de l'Europe en étroite coopération avec les bureaux d'information du Parlement européen et les autorités nationales et locales, ainsi qu'avec des organismes issus de la société civile. Consciente de la valeur ajoutée qu'apportent ces organismes et les collectivités locales à la diffusion et à la prise de conscience des valeurs de l'Union européenne, la Commission s'efforce de les faire participer activement.

Bien que la Commission ne dispose pas de budget spécifique pour proposer des incitations financières aux collectivités locales, celles-ci bénéficient indirectement du budget de l'Union pour les activités relevant du titre «Communication» qu'elles contribuent à organiser. En 2012, le budget pour ces activités sera d'environ un million d'euros.

Les bureaux de représentation de la Commission proposent plusieurs types de supports de communication (brochures générales et spécialisées, affiches, matériel promotionnel) à leurs partenaires et aux coorganisateurs de manifestations (pour le 9 mai ou pour d'autres occasions).

En dehors de la traditionnelle journée «portes ouvertes» au siège des institutions européennes, de nombreuses activités sont organisées le 9 mai par les bureaux de représentation de la Commission, telles que des concerts, des tables rondes, des jeux, des concours, des festivals de films et des conférences avec la participation d'hommes politiques nationaux de premier plan, de députés européens et de membres de la Commission européenne. Les manifestations de ces dernières années ont été très appréciées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002390/12
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Promotion of 9 May

Europe has chosen 9 May as a day to commemorate European integration. It is a historic day and brings to mind Robert Schuman's founding speech. It is part of the heritage that we have been creating for more than 50 years. However, many European citizens are not aware of this day. It is not a public holiday like other national holidays, which is undoubtedly one of the reasons why.

An increasing number of town halls are organising events to mark 9 May. However, there is still some way to go before 'Europe Day' becomes an integral part of the calendar, particularly in these gloomy times when Europe is showing once more that it has a key role to play.

1. Has the Commission earmarked a budget to provide financial incentives to local authorities (at regional, county and municipal level) and organisations to organise events to mark 9 May?

2. Has it provided them with any specific materials? Where can the organisers obtain materials?

3. Can the Commission provide any examples of successful initiatives to mark 9 May?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission's representation offices in the Member States organise Europe Day activities in close cooperation with European Parliament information offices, national and local authorities, and civil society organisations. The Commission endeavours to reach a strong involvement of local authorities and organisations, conscious of their added value in promoting EU values and awareness.

Although the Commission does not have a specific budget earmarked to provide financial incentives to local authorities, activities co-organised under the communication Title of the EU budget benefit local authorities indirectly. In 2012 the budget for these activities will be around one million euros.

The Commission's representation offices offer various types of communication material (general and specialised publications, posters and promotional material) to the partners, co-organisers of events (9 May and other occasions).

Apart from the traditional 'Open Door Day' in the EU institutions' headquarters, the Commission's representation offices organise on 9 May numerous activities, ranging from concerts, discussion forums, quizzes, competitions, to film festivals and conferences with participation of high-level national politicians, Members of the European Parliament and Members of the European Commission. The events have been highly appreciated in the past years.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002391/12
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(1er mars 2012)

Objet: Arrêt du captage et du stockage de CO^2 à Jurançon

Sur autorisation de l'arrêté préfectoral du 13 mai 2009, la société TOTAL procède à Jurançon, dans les Pyrénées-Atlantiques à l'enfouissement de 120 000 tonnes de CO^2 en zone habitée et cultivée. Selon les rapports français de l'Institut national de l'environnement industriel et des risques (Ineris), publiés en mars 2010 et février 2011, ce projet comporte des risques de fuites, d'acidification des nappes phréatiques et des sols, ainsi que des risques d'accroissement sismique.

De plus, il est prévu que TOTAL se désengage à partir de 2013. Les responsabilités ne seront alors pas assumées, contrairement à ce qu'impose la directive européenne 2009/31/CE du 23 avril 2009 relative au stockage géologique du dioxyde de carbone, qui, dans son 32e considérant, énonce: «*Après fermeture d'un site de stockage, il convient que l'exploitant continue à assumer la responsabilité de l'entretien, de la surveillance et du contrôle, de l'établissement des rapports et des mesures correctives conformément aux exigences de la présente directive, sur la base d'un plan de postfermeture soumis à l'autorité compétente et approuvé par celle-ci, ainsi que toutes les obligations en découlant en vertu d'autres dispositions communautaires applicables, jusqu'à ce que la responsabilité du site de stockage soit transférée à l'autorité compétente*».

1. La Commission est-elle informée de ce dossier?

2. La Commission trouve-t-elle normal que l'entreprise TOTAL fuie ses responsabilités liées à l'activité de stockage de CO^2?

3. Que compte faire la Commission pour régulariser cette situation?

Réponse donnée par Mme Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(18 avril 2012)

La question soulevée par l'Honorable Parlementaire a été portée à l'attention de la Commission au moyen d'une pétition adressée au Parlement européen, qui l'a transmise à la Commission. Celle-ci a envoyé des demandes d'éclaircissement aux autorités françaises. En fonction de leur réponse, attendue dans les semaines à venir, la Commission évaluera la situation et prendra, si nécessaire, une décision sur les mesures de suivi à adopter.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002391/12
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Discontinuation of CO_2 capture and storage in Jurançon

On the basis of an authorisation granted under the terms of the prefectoral decree of 13 May 2009, the French oil company TOTAL is burying 120 000 tonnes of CO_2 in Jurançon, in the Pyrénées-Atlantiques, on a site situated close to housing and farmland. According to reports by the French National Institute for the Study of Industrial Environments and Risks (INERIS), published in March 2010 and February 2011, this project involves risks of leaks, acidification of the groundwater and soil and increased seismic activity.

What is more, TOTAL is expected to withdraw from the project as from 2013. Ongoing responsibilities will therefore not be met, contrary to the provisions of Directive 2009/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the geological storage of carbon dioxide, Recital 32 of which states the following: 'After a storage site has been closed, the operator should remain responsible for maintenance, monitoring and control, reporting, and corrective measures pursuant to the requirements of this directive on the basis of a post-closure plan submitted to and approved by the competent authority as well as for all ensuing obligations under other relevant Community legislation until the responsibility for the storage site is transferred to the competent authority.'

1. Is the Commission aware of this matter?

2. Does the Commission believe it is right that TOTAL should be allowed to shirk its responsibilities relating to the storage of CO_2?

3. What does the Commission intend to do to resolve this situation?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The issue raised by the Honourable Member has been brought to the Commission's attention by a petition submitted to the European Parliament which has forwarded the petition to the Commission. The Commission has sent questions of clarification to the French authorities. Based on the reply from the French authorities, which is expected in the coming weeks, the Commission will assess the situation and, if necessary, decide on follow-up action.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002392/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(1 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Apoio para o regadio na PAC pós-2013

Só a agricultura de regadio permite, nos países da Europa Mediterrânica, como Portugal, cultivar de forma produtiva (com produções pelo menos cinco vezes superiores às de sequeiro) e responder, de forma segura, à necessidade crescente de alimentos (aumento de 50 % da produção vegetal e animal, até 2050, para fazer face ao aumento da população mundial). O regadio é também fator de sustentabilidade ambiental pois assegura a conservação da biodiversidade, a mitigação e adaptação às alterações climáticas, a valorização das paisagens rurais e contribui para a vitalidade e coesão económica e social dos territórios rurais.

Para garantir a competitividade da agricultura portuguesa, a PAC deve incentivar o regadio ao nível da reabilitação e modernização dos regadios públicos existentes, da construção de novos regadios e do apoio ao investimento dos agricultores para a renovação e aquisição de equipamentos de rega.

A posição da Federação Portuguesa sobre a nova PAC é apoiada pela «Euromediterranean Irrigators Community» (EIC) que agrupa as organizações de regantes de todo o Mediterrâneo, à qual pertencem membros de diferentes países como França, Itália, Portugal, Espanha e Grécia e que representa em Bruxelas os regantes de toda a União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Não equaciona a elegibilidade dos apoios às infraestruturas dos regadios na PAC 2014/2020, no âmbito do programa de desenvolvimento rural?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão partilha o ponto de vista de que a irrigação pode, em determinadas condições, ser sustentável do ponto de vista ambiental e contribuir para a conservação da biodiversidade, a atenuação das alterações climáticas e a adaptação a estas últimas, entre outros objetivos.

No entanto, a Comissão não pode aplicar automaticamente este parecer a todos os casos. Está documentado que várias zonas da UE estão sujeitas a considerável *stress* hídrico. Até 2007, 11 % da população da Europa e 17 % do seu território tinham sido afetados pela escassez de água ([1]). A agricultura foi um setor de captação significativo, tendo atingido 80 % da captação total nos Estados-Membros do sul ([2]); nesses casos, não é possível considerar que toda a irrigação presente e futura é sustentável. Por conseguinte, a agricultura deve aumentar a eficiência das instalações de irrigação atuais, de modo a reduzir ou evitar o *stress* hídrico. É este o desafio a que a Comissão pretende fazer face por meio do Plano destinado a preservar os recursos hídricos da Europa.

No âmbito da política agrícola comum, a necessidade de uma boa gestão da água (qualidade e qualidade dos recursos hídricos e estatuto hidromorfológico) é abrangida pela proposta de prioridades da política de desenvolvimento rural a partir de 2013.

A Comissão propôs que, após 2013, o apoio aos investimentos em irrigação do Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural (Feader) se oriente para o melhoramento da eficiência das instalações de irrigação atuais (salvo um pequeno número de exceções). Isso contribuiria para manter as despesas do Feader em consonância com a prioridade de crescimento sustentável da estratégia Europa 2020.

No caso de a proposta da Comissão ser adotada pelo Conselho e pelo Parlamento Europeu, ela não impediria um agricultor de investir em novas infraestruturas de irrigação com financiamento proveniente de outras fontes.

([1]) Comissão Europeia, 2012, Documento de consulta para o Plano destinado a preservar os recursos hídricos da Europa.
([2]) EEE, 2009, Water resources across Europe — confronting water scarcity and drought (Recursos hídricos na Europa — Fazer face à escassez de água e à seca).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002392/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Support for irrigation in the common agricultural policy (CAP) after 2013

Irrigated farming is the only way to enable European countries with a Mediterranean climate, for example Portugal, to grow crops productively, with yields at least five times higher than in dry farming, and to successfully meet the rising demand for food (crop and animal production will have to increase by 50 % by 2050 in order to cope with the growing world population). Irrigation is also environmentally sustainable, since it makes for biodiversity conservation and for mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change, promotes the countryside and contributes to the vitality and the economic and social cohesion of rural areas.

To make Portuguese agriculture competitive, the CAP must encourage irrigation by providing for the restoration and modernisation of existing public irrigation systems, the building of new irrigation systems, and support for farmers' investment in restoring and purchasing irrigation equipment.

The Portuguese Federation's view of the new CAP is backed by the Euromediterranean Irrigators Community, a grouping of irrigation organisations from every part of the Mediterranean. Its members include France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Greece, and it works in Brussels to represent irrigation farmers from all over Europe.

Does the Commission not believe that irrigation infrastructure should be eligible for support in the 2014-2020 CAP under the rural development programme?

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

The Commission shares the view that irrigation can, under certain conditions, be environmentally sustainable and can contribute to biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation/adaptation and other objectives.

However, the Commission cannot automatically apply this judgment to all cases. It is documented that various areas of the EU are subject to considerable water stress. By 2007, 11 % of Europe's population and 17 % of its territory have been affected by water scarcity ([1]). Agriculture has been a significant abstracting sector with up to 80 % of the total abstractions in Southern Member States ([2]); in such cases it cannot be assumed that all current and future irrigation is sustainable. Therefore, agriculture should increase the efficiency of existing irrigation installations so that water stress is reduced or prevented. This is the challenge the Commission wants to address through the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources.

Within the common agricultural policy, the need for proper water management (water quality, water quantity and status of the hydromorphology) is covered by the proposed priorities of rural development policy for after 2013.

The Commission has proposed that, after 2013, support for investments in irrigation from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) should be focused on improving the efficiency of existing irrigation installations (with limited exceptions). This would help to keep EAFRD spending in line with the Europe 2020 strategy's priority of 'sustainable growth'.

If the Commission's proposal were adopted by the Council and the European Parliament, it would not prevent a farmer from investing in new irrigation infrastructure with funding from other sources.

([1]) European Commission, 2012, Consultation document for the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources.
([2]) EEA, 2009, Water resources across Europe — confronting water scarcity and drought.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002393/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(1 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Segurança privada em Portugal e na Europa

Segundo a Associação Nacional de Vigilantes, «existe atualmente uma grande disparidade no tratamento da segurança privada, a nível dos diferentes países da UE.»

Tal disparidade abrange áreas tão diversificadas como a formação prática sobre extinção de incêndios, simulacros de evacuação de edifícios, ameaça de bomba, aglomerado de pessoas, noções de código penal, ausência de comunicação direta com as autoridades, ausência de meios de defesa, ausência de exames psicotécnicos, entre outros.

Em Portugal, e segundo a mesma Associação, constatam-se lacunas na legislação do setor, representando situações de omissão em matéria de segurança, sendo a mais gritante encontrada, por exemplo, no transporte de valores, relativamente ao qual existem inúmeras diferenças nos Estados-Membros.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Confirma as diferenças supramencionadas na atividade de segurança privada dos 27 Estados-Membros da U.E?

Considera adequada a uniformização na formação, bem como nos critérios e procedimentos a adotar em toda a UE?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2012)

A Diretiva-Quadro de 1989 estabelece disposições gerais relativas à melhoria da saúde e da segurança dos trabalhadores ([1]). O artigo 6.° da diretiva declara que a entidade patronal deve tomar as medidas necessárias à defesa da segurança e da saúde dos trabalhadores. Além disso, o artigo 8.° descreve as medidas a tomar em matéria de primeiros socorros, de combate a incêndios, de evacuação dos trabalhadores e em situações de perigo imediato. No entanto, a diretiva não aborda questões específicas de segurança.

A diretiva aplica-se a todos os setores, tanto públicos como privados, e exige que os Estados-Membros procedam à sua transposição e execução. As autoridades nacionais competentes, com frequência as inspeções do trabalho, são responsáveis pelo controlo da aplicação da legislação nacional e, quando necessário, pela aplicação de sanções.

Embora a diretiva exija que a entidade patronal garanta que os trabalhadores e/ou seus representantes recebem as informações e a formação adequadas em matéria de saúde e segurança, é omissa quanto a mecanismos conducentes à harmonização da formação e dos procedimentos em todos os Estados-Membros.

([1]) Diretiva 89/391/CEE do Conselho, de 12 de junho de 1989, relativa à aplicação de medidas destinadas a promover a melhoria da segurança e da saúde dos trabalhadores no trabalho, JO L 183 de 29.6.1989.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002393/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Private security services in Portugal and Europe

According to the Portuguese national association representing security guards, the Associação Nacional de Vigilantes (ANV), there is currently wide disparity in the approaches to private security in the EU Member States.

The disparity extends to a diverse range of areas including practical firefighting training, evacuation drills, bomb threats, crowds, the fundamentals of criminal codes, and the shortcomings as regards direct communication with the authorities, means of defence, and psychometric testing.

In Portugal, according to the ANV, there are loopholes in legislation applying to the sector, which translate into oversights in terms of security. This is most apparent in, for example, the cash-in-transit sector, in which there are many disparities from one Member State to the next.

Is the Commission aware of the aforementioned disparities in the area of private security in the EU's 27 Member States?

Does it see any need to standardise training and the criteria and procedures to be adopted throughout the EU?

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

General provisions for improvement of workers' health and safety are laid down in the 1989 Framework Directive ([1]). Article 6 of the directive states that the employer must take the necessary measures to protect the safety and health of his/her workers. Furthermore, Article 8 describes the measures to be implemented concerning first aid, fire fighting, the evacuation of workers and situations of imminent danger. The directive does not, however, specifically address issues relating to security.

The directive applies to all sectors, both public and private, and requires transposition and implementation by the Member States. The competent national authorities, often the labour inspectorates, are responsible for enforcing the national legislation and, where appropriate, imposing penalties.

While the directive requires that employers ensure their workers and/or representatives receive appropriate information and training on occupational health and safety, it does not provide for mechanisms to harmonise training and procedures across the Member States.

([1]) Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, OJ L 183, 29.6.1989.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002394/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(1 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Diminuição da dependência energética da União Europeia e investimentos nas energias renováveis

Tendo em conta que:

— No âmbito da estratégia Europa 2020, a Comissão Europeia apresentou, em novembro de 2010, a Comunicação «Energia 2020» que define as prioridades em termos de energia para os próximos dez anos e as ações a empreender perante os desafios decorrentes da necessidade de poupar energia, conseguir um mercado com preços competitivos e aprovisionamento seguro, impulsionar a liderança tecnológica e negociar eficazmente com os parceiros internacionais;

— Segundo o Comissário responsável pela pasta da Energia, Günther Oettinger, «o desafio da energia é um dos maiores testes para todos nós. Lançar o nosso sistema energético numa nova senda, mais sustentável e segura, poderá demorar tempo, mas impõe-se que tomemos decisões ambiciosas desde já. Para termos uma economia eficiente, competitiva e hipocarbónica, devemos europeizar a nossa política de energia e concentrar-nos em algumas prioridades, poucas, porém urgentes.»;

— Alguns Estados-membros têm vindo a apostar na dinamização das energias renováveis, alocando importantes investimentos dos fundos comunitários em projetos relacionados com a exploração dos recursos naturais, tais como o sol, vento, geotermia e ondas;

— No entanto, o investimento nas energias renováveis demora a trazer benefícios sustentados para a sociedade, sendo necessário continuar a importar grandes quantidades de petróleo e gás natural de fora da União Europeia;

— No inverno, regularmente existem notícias da grande dependência europeia da Rússia ou Argélia, argumentando-se que são poucos os pipelines existentes e que é urgente modificar a situação;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Enquanto a aposta nas energias renováveis não permite alcançar os resultados obtidos pelos combustíveis fósseis, quais são as ações que a Comissão está a promover para diminuir a dependência dos Estados-Membros face aos países externos produtores de petróleo ou gás natural?

2. Entende que é apropriado apostar apenas nos projetos de energias renováveis, abandonando completamente os projetos na área da energia nuclear?

3. Qual a fonte de energia renovável com maior potencial de crescimento a longo prazo na União Europeia e em Portugal? Quais as tipologias de energias renováveis em que aconselha Portugal a investir?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2012)

1. A crescente dependência em relação aos combustíveis importados não é forçosamente um problema, desde que a União Europeia disponha dos poderes e instrumentos políticos para aumentar a segurança das importações, a previsibilidade nos mercados mundiais e a energia sustentável na própria UE e em países terceiros. As medidas tomadas pela União a este respeito figuram na estratégia Energia 2020, na comunicação da Comissão sobre política energética externa e na proposta, também apresentada pela Comissão, de regulamento relativo às orientações para as infraestruturas ([1]). Entre as ações essenciais, constam o reforço da eficiência energética, o estímulo à utilização das fontes de energia renováveis endógenas, a promoção de tecnologias hipocarbónicas e o melhoramento das redes de aprovisionamento.

([1]) (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0639:PT:HTML:NOT)
(http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0539:PT:HTML:NOT)
(http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0658:FIN:PT:HTML).

2. As decisões quanto à gama de energias a utilizar, incluindo a nuclear, são da competência de cada Estado-Membro. A diversificação das fontes de aprovisionamento é fundamental. A UE necessita de uma gama de opções e tecnologias hipocarbónicas para a produção de energia, assim como de medidas ambiciosas visando a eficiência energética, para poder reduzir as emissões de CO_2 e tornar-se mais sustentável e competitiva, mantendo ao mesmo tempo vias de aprovisionamento seguras, comportáveis e fiáveis.

3. Segundo os planos de ação nacionais para as energias renováveis (PANER) elaborados pelos Estados-Membros, está previsto um crescimento até 2020 no vasto setor das fontes renováveis: energia hidráulica, biomassa e biogás, energia eólica, energia solar fotovoltaica e térmica, energia solar concentrada, bombas aerotérmicas e hidrotérmicas, energia geotérmica e dos oceanos e biocombustíveis para transportes. De acordo com o PANER português, as fontes de energia renováveis fundamentais para o cumprimento do objetivo de 2020 incluem a hidráulica, a eólica, a solar, a biomassa, a energia das ondas e a energia geotérmica ([2]).

([2]) (http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/transparency_platform/doc/national_renewable_energy_action_plan_portugal_pt.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002394/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Reducing the European Union's energy dependence — investment in renewable energies

In November 2010, as part of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission issued the 'Energy 2020' communication, which identifies the energy priorities for the next 10 years and the action to be taken to meet the challenges arising from the need to save energy, achieve a market with competitive prices and secure supply, encourage technological leadership and negotiate effectively with international partners.

According to the Energy Commissioner, Günther Oettinger, 'the energy challenge is one of the greatest tests for us all. Putting our energy system on to a new, more sustainable and secure path may take time, but ambitious decisions need to be taken now. To have an efficient, competitive and low-carbon economy, we have to Europeanise our energy policy and focus on a few but pressing priorities'.

Some Member States have been focusing on promoting renewables, investing significant amounts of EU funds in projects connected with the exploitation of natural resources such as the sun, wind, geothermal energy and waves.

However, investment in renewables is slow to bring sustained benefits to society, and large quantities of oil and natural gas still need to be imported from outside the European Union.

In winter, there is regular news of Europe's great dependence on Russia or Algeria, a frequent contention being that there are few existing pipelines and that the situation needs to change urgently.

1. If focusing on renewable energies fails to achieve the results obtained with fossil fuels, what measures will the Commission promote to reduce the dependence of Member States on external oil or natural gas producers?

2. Does it believe that the focus should be confined to renewable energy projects and nuclear energy projects should be completely abandoned?

3. Which renewable energy source has the greatest long-term growth potential in the European Union and in Portugal? In which kinds of renewable energy does it advise Portugal to invest?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

1. Growing dependence on imported fuels need not be a problem, providing the EU has the political powers and tools to increase security of imports, predictability in global markets and sustainable energy in the EU and in third countries. EU measures to achieve this are set out in the Energy 2020 strategy, the Commission's external energy communication and its proposal for a regulation on infrastructure guidelines ([1]). Key actions include strengthening energy efficiency, boosting indigenous renewable energy, promoting low-carbon technologies and improving supply networks.

2. Decisions on energy mix, including whether to use nuclear power, are a national competence. Diversification of supplies is crucial. The EU needs a range of low carbon energy options and technology, as well as ambitious energy efficiency measures, to enable it to reduce CO2 emissions and become more sustainable and competitive, while maintaining secure, affordable and reliable energy supplies.

3. According to the National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAPs) produced by the Member States, by 2020 growth is projected in the wide range of renewable energy sectors: hydropower, biomass and biogas, wind power, solar photovoltaics and thermal energy, concentrated solar power, heat pumps from aerothermal and hydrothermal energy, geothermal and ocean energy, and biofuels for transports. According to the Portuguese NREAP, key renewable energy sources for meeting the 2020 target include hydro, wind, solar, biomass, wave and geothermal ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0639:EN:HTML:NOT
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0539:EN:HTML:NOT
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0658:EN:NOT

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/transparency_platform/doc/national_renewable_energy_action_plan_portugal_pt.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002395/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(1 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Ponto de situação da implementação da Taxa Tobin — Imposto sobre as transações financeiras

Tendo em conta que:

A Comissão Europeia apresentou uma proposta de diretiva sobre um sistema comum de imposto sobre as transações financeiras (Taxa Tobin) a ser implementado nos 27 Estados-Membros;

França, Itália, Alemanha, Áustria, Bélgica, Espanha, Finlândia, Grécia e Portugal subscreveram uma carta que convida a presidência dinamarquesa a «acelerar os trabalhos do Conselho, de forma a alcançar uma primeira leitura do projeto de diretiva a partir do primeiro semestre de 2012»;

No entanto, no 42.° Fórum Económico Mundial realizado em Davos, na Suíça, David Cameron manifestou-se contra a aplicação da Taxa Tobin na «City» londrina, referindo ainda que a criação de uma taxa sobre operações financeiras na Europa «é simplesmente uma loucura»;

Na pergunta que formulei à Comissão Europeia sobre a «Taxa Tobin — Imposto europeu sobre transações financeiras» (E-009065/2011), Algirdas Semeta referiu que «os Estados-Membros em que já seja aplicada alguma forma de imposto sobre as transações financeiras poderão ter de modificar as suas regras nacionais para ajustá-las às regras propostas pela Comissão»;

Em outra pergunta que tive oportunidade de formular sobre o «Imposto sobre as transações financeiras» (E-009863/2011), o mesmo Comissário Europeu referiu que «os debates durante a Cimeira do G20, em Cannes, revelaram que uma parte das economias emergentes (Brasil, Argentina e África do Sul) apoiam a introdução de um imposto sobre as transações financeiras a nível global»;

A criação de um imposto global poderá ser uma forma de reduzir as possíveis deslocalizações das instituições financeiras dos centros europeus;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o atual ponto de situação da implementação da taxa sobre as transações financeiras? Após os debates realizados no Conselho, considera a sua aplicação na generalidade dos Estados-Membros, ou apenas na Zona Euro?

2. Os Estados-Membros que possuem uma taxa sobre as transações financeiras já se encontram a proceder a algumas modificações, conforme a Comissão referiu que será necessário?

3. Face aos avanços verificados no G20 em Cannes, pretende a Comissão tomar a iniciativa de criar uma taxa global sobre as transações financeiras?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2012)

1. Os debates relativos à proposta de diretiva do Conselho sobre um sistema comum de imposto sobre as transações financeiras e que altera a Diretiva 2008/7/CE (COM(2011)594) prosseguem, no Conselho e no Parlamento Europeu. A sessão de 13 de março do Ecofin confirmou o interesse dos Estados-Membros em discutir mais profundamente os pormenores técnicos e o impacto económico previsível da proposta, na perspetiva de um debate político a desenvolver sob a Presidência Dinamarquesa.

A Comissão apresentou uma proposta para a totalidade da União Europeia. Um imposto harmonizado aplicável em toda a UE evitaria, não só distorções, mas também a dupla tributação ou a ausência de tributação no mercado interno.

2. referida proposta não conduziu ainda à adoção da correspondente diretiva pelo Conselho. Por conseguinte, nesta fase, os Estados-Membros não são obrigados a adaptar as respetivas legislações neste domínio, podendo considerar tal adaptação prematura.

3. A Comissão vai continuar a lutar pela solução mundial mais ampla possível no que respeita a um imposto sobre as transações financeiras, no âmbito do G-20 e de outros fóruns. A adoção da diretiva proposta, na UE, constituiria um passo decisivo neste sentido.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002395/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: State of play regarding the introduction of the Tobin tax — tax on financial transactions

The Commission has submitted a proposal for a directive on a common financial transaction tax system (Tobin tax) to be implemented in the 27 Member States.

France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Spain, Finland, Greece and Portugal have signed a letter calling on the Danish Presidency to speed up the proceedings in the Council, so as to enable the proposal for a directive to be given its first reading in the first half of 2012.

However, at the 42nd World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, David Cameron spoke out against the introduction of the Tobin tax in the City of London and maintained, moreover, that levying a tax on financial transactions in Europe was simply ludicrous.

In reply to my question to the Commission on the 'Tobin tax — European tax on financial transactions' (E-009065/2011), Commissioner Šemeta said that 'those Member States which already have a form of financial transaction tax in place may have to modify their national rules to align them with the rules proposed by the Commission'.

In reply to another question that I tabled on the 'Tax on financial transactions' (E-009863/2011), Commissioner Šemeta said that 'the discussions during the G20 summit in Cannes have shown that some of the emerging economies (Brazil, Argentina and South Africa) support the introduction of a financial transaction tax (FTT) at global level'.

Establishing a global tax could be a way to reduce possible relocations of financial institutions based in the European centres.

1. What is the current state of play regarding the introduction of the tax on financial transactions? Following the discussions in the Council, does the Commission believe that this tax should be introduced in most Member States, or simply in the euro area?

2. Have the Member States that have a tax on financial transactions already made the necessary changes, as proposed by the Commission?

3. Will the Commission take the initiative of establishing a global tax on financial transactions, given the progress made at the G20 in Cannes?

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

1. The discussions on the proposal for a Council Directive on a common system of financial transaction tax and amending Directive 2008/7/EC (COM(2011) 594) are ongoing in the Council, as well as in the European Parliament. The 13 March Ecofin meeting confirmed the interest of Member States to discuss further the technical details and the expected economic impact of the proposal in view of a political debate to be held under the Danish Presidency.

The Commission presented a proposal for the entire European Union. A harmonised tax applied in the entire EU would avoid distortions and double or non-taxation in the entire internal market.

2. The abovementioned proposal has not yet led to the adoption of a corresponding Directive by the Council. At this stage, therefore, Member States are not obliged to adapt their national legislation in this area, and they may consider such adaptation as premature.

3. The Commission will continue to strive for the widest possible global solution with respect to a tax on financial transactions in the framework of the G-20 but also other fora. The adoption of the proposed Directive in the EU would constitute a major step forward in this respect.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002396/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) y Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(1 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Reforma laboral en el Estado español y Estrategia Europa 2020

El pasado 12 de febrero entró en vigor una nueva reforma del mercado de trabajo en el Estado español. Esta reforma se basa en la rebaja de los costes del despido y la simplificación de sus mecanismos, la rebaja de los salarios y la discrecionalidad para que las empresas modifiquen las condiciones laborales sin diálogo con los trabajadores y trabajadoras. Estos elementos podrían entran en contradicción con la Estrategia Europa 2020 de crecimiento sostenible e inclusivo. El abaratamiento del despido podría situar como inasumible el objetivo de una tasa de empleo del 75 % para mujeres y hombres de 20 a 64 años antes de 2020, ya de por sí muy difícil en el Estado Español. Por otro lado, la rebaja de los salarios puede suponer un empobrecimiento de las personas con riesgo de pobreza. Según estudios recientes de Eurostat publicados este mismo mes, más de once millones de ciudadanos y ciudadanas del Estado español corren riesgo de pobreza, es decir, un 25,5 % del total. Además, la Comisión ha concedido a la lucha contra el paro juvenil y el paro de larga duración dos de sus principales prioridades en materia de empleo. Sin embargo, estas cuestiones parecen escapar de los objetivos de la reforma laboral española.

¿Considera la Comisión que la reforma laboral va a generar ocupación en el Estado español? En caso negativo, ¿qué medidas considera que se deberían llevar a cabo?

¿Considera la Comisión que las medidas en materia laboral a corto plazo deben anteponerse a los objetivos a medio y largo plazo marcados por la Estrategia Europa 2020, principalmente en lo relativo a los emblemáticos de crecimiento inteligente, inclusivo y sostenible?

¿Considera la Comisión que las previsibles consecuencias de la reforma laboral son acordes a los objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020?

¿Considera la Comisión que la reforma laboral española responde a las recomendaciones realizadas por el Consejo dentro del semestre europeo para el año 2011? ¿Mantendrá recomendaciones similares para el próximo semestre?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de abril de 2012)

Uno de los objetivos de la reforma del mercado laboral en España es llevar a la práctica las recomendaciones que el Consejo formuló a ese país durante el semestre europeo de 2011. Entre las cuestiones más apremiantes se encuentran la segmentación del mercado laboral y las alarmantes tasas de desempleo general y juvenil. Otros factores clave que deben estudiarse detenidamente son la mejora de la eficacia de una política activa del mercado de trabajo y el desarrollo de la capacitación que necesita el mercado laboral. La Comisión reconoce asimismo que la reforma en España introduce un conjunto completo de medidas destinadas a proporcionar una mayor flexibilidad en el mercado laboral y en las empresas, facilitar la creación de empleo y reducir el nivel de desempleo, que es persistentemente elevado, haciendo frente a la segmentación que caracteriza al mercado de trabajo español.

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría al Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento 2012, en el que se analiza la necesidad de encontrar un equilibrio entre las reformas con efectos a corto plazo sobre el crecimiento y unos modelos de crecimiento adecuados a medio plazo.

España debe afrontar urgentemente su nivel de desempleo, que sigue siendo elevado. Tiene que poner en marcha un conjunto completo de reformas que impulsen la economía española, ayuden al mercado laboral a hacer frente a las actuales condiciones económicas y creen puestos de trabajo. Todos estos objetivos coinciden con lo que se propone la Estrategia Europa 2020, es decir aumentar el crecimiento y el empleo y reducir al mismo tiempo la pobreza y la exclusión social.

Las propuestas de la Comisión, cuya presentación está prevista en el Consejo de primavera de 2012, constituirán una evaluación de las recomendaciones, incluyendo toda nueva recomendación necesaria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002396/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) and Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Labour reform in Spain and the Europe 2020 strategy

On 12 February, a new reform of the labour market in Spain entered into force. This reform is based on the reduction of the costs of redundancy and streamlining its mechanisms, the reduction of wages and allowing companies to change working conditions at their own discretion, without dialogue with workers. These elements could run counter to the Europe 2020 strategy for sustainable and inclusive growth. Cheaper redundancy could make the target of a 75 % employment rate for women and men aged 20 to 64, to be achieved before 2020, which was already difficult enough for Spain, now quite untenable. Furthermore, the lowering of wages may lead to impoverishment for people at risk of poverty. According to recent Eurostat studies published this month, more than 11 million Spanish citizens, some 25.5 % of the total, are at risk of poverty. Moreover, the Commission has made the fight against youth and long-term unemployment two of its top priorities in the area of employment. However, these issues seem to have been ignored in the objectives of Spanish labour reform.

Does the Commission believe that the labour reform will generate employment in Spain? If not, what measures does it consider should be taken?

Does the Commission believe that short-term labour measures should take precedence over the medium- and long-term goals set by the Europe 2020 strategy, particularly with regard to the pillars of intelligent, inclusive and sustainable growth?

Does the Commission believe the foreseeable consequences of the labour reform to be consistent with the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy?

Does the Commission believe that the Spanish labour reform meets the recommendations made by the Council in the European semester for 2011? Will it maintain similar recommendations for the next semester?

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

One of the aims of Spain's labour market reform is to implement the recommendations addressed by the Council to Spain during the 2011 European Semester. Among the most pressing issues are the segmentation of the labour market and the alarming rates of general and youth unemployment. Other key factors which require serious consideration include improving the effectiveness of active labour market policy and developing the skills needed by the labour market. The Commission also acknowledges that Spain's reform incorporates a comprehensive set of measures which aim to provide greater flexibility in the labour market and within firms; facilitate job creation; and reduce the persistently high level of unemployment by addressing the segmentation which characterises the Spanish labour market.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the 2012 Annual Growth Survey, in which it discusses the need to strike a balance between reforms with a short-term effect on growth and appropriate growth models for the medium term.

Spain urgently needs to address its persistently high unemployment rate. It needs to implement a comprehensive set of reforms that will kick-start the Spanish economy, help the labour market facing current economic conditions, and increase employment. These targets are in line with the Europe 2020 objectives of increasing growth and employment while reducing poverty and social exclusion.

The Commission proposals, due to be presented to the Council in spring 2012, will reflect an assessment of the recommendations, including any new recommendations required.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002397/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Megaupload y la recuperación de archivos privados

Como resultado del cierre de la página web Megaupload el 19 de enero de 2012, muchos usuarios europeos de Megaupload han perdido sus documentos personales. Independientemente de las posibles actividades o usos ilícitos de Megaupload, millones de personas usaban esta página de forma totalmente legal para almacenar o compartir videos familiares, fotos personales u otros archivos privados.

Esta suspensión ha puesto en peligro la privacidad de terceros, ya que no pueden acceder a sus archivos privados, que les han sido sustraídos de forma arbitraria. Los archivos privados de usuarios que no infligen ningún derecho de autor no pueden serles arrebatados a la fuerza.

El artículo 12 de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos establece que «[n]adie podrá ser objeto de injerencias en su vida privada [y] en su correspondencia» ; los artículos 8 y 7 de la Carta de los derechos fundamentales de la UE afirman que «[t]oda persona tiene derecho a la protección de los datos de carácter personal que le conciernan» y «[t]oda persona tiene derecho al respeto de su vida privada y familiar, de su domicilio y de sus comunicaciones».

¿Cómo va a actuar la Comisión ante esta vulneración de derechos humanos tan fundamentales como los de la privacidad, intimidad y secreto de los comunicaciones de miles de usuarios europeos de Megaupload? ¿Cree la Comisión que es pertinente reclamar a los Estados Unidos la devolución de todos estos documentos sustraídos para que los usuarios puedan recuperar sus archivos subidos legalmente a Internet? ¿Cree la Comisión que para proteger los derechos de propiedad intelectual se debe llegar al extremo de sustraer archivos privados de personas, pasando por alto los derechos fundamentales? ¿Qué medidas va a tomar para garantizar el derecho a la recuperación de documentos personales de miles de europeos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de mayo de 2012)

Megaupload, empresa con sede en Hong Kong, prestaba servicios en línea relacionados con el almacenamiento y visualización de ficheros. La legislación nacional de los Estados miembros por la que se aplica la Directiva 95/46/CE sobre protección de datos es de aplicación a las empresas no establecidas en la EU únicamente en las situaciones en las que estas empresas, a efectos del tratamiento de datos personales, hagan uso de equipos situados en el territorio de un Estado miembro. Este no parece ser el caso en lo que respecta a Megaupload. La incautación del sitio Megaupload.com en los EE.UU. fue seguida de una declaración del Departamento de Justicia de Estados Unidos en la que se señalaba que Megaupload había advertido claramente a los usuarios que conservaran copias de cualquier fichero que subieran, y que los usuarios asumían el riesgo de pérdida de sus datos, así como que en las condiciones del contrato, Megaupload se reservaba el derecho de poner fin a sus actividades sin previo aviso. La Comisión advierte a todos los usuarios de servicios en línea, en particular, de servicios establecidos fuera del territorio de la UE, de la necesidad de leer atentamente las condiciones de los contratos y las advertencias sobre protección de la intimidad antes de subir su información personal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002397/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Megaupload and recovering private files

As a result of the closure of the Megaupload website on 19 January 2012, many European Megaupload users have lost their personal documents. Setting aside potentially illegal activities or use of Megaupload, millions of people made completely legal use of this site to store and share home videos, personal photos and other private files.

This suspension has compromised the privacy of third parties, as they cannot access their private files, which have been removed arbitrarily. The private files of users who do not infringe any copyright cannot be forcibly removed from them.

Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that '[n]o one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence'; Articles 8 and 7 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union lay down that '[e]veryone has the right to the protection of personal data concerning him or her' and '[e]veryone has the right to respect for his or her private and family life, home and communications'.

What action is the Commission going to take on this violation of such fundamental human rights as the privacy, confidentiality and secrecy of the communications of thousands of European users of Megaupload? Does the Commission believe it appropriate to call on the United States to return all of these removed documents so that users can retrieve their files legally uploaded to the Internet? Does the Commission believe it appropriate to go so far as to remove people's private files, ignoring fundamental rights, in order to protect intellectual property rights? What measures is it going to take to guarantee the right to recover the personal documents of thousands of Europeans?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2012)

Megaupload, a Hong Kong-based company, ran online services related to file storage and viewing. The national laws of Member States implementing the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC apply to companies not established in the EU only in situations when such companies, for purposes of processing personal data makes use of equipment situated on the territory of a Member State. This seems not to be the case for Megaupload. The seizure of the site Megaupload.com in the U.S. was followed by a statement of the US Department of Justice pointing out that Megaupload had clearly warned users to keep copies of any files they upload, and that users assume the risk of loss of their data, as well as that Megaupload's terms of reference reserved rights to terminate operations without prior notice. The Commission encourages all users of online services, in particular of services established outside the EU territory, to read carefully terms of references and privacy notices of these companies before uploading their personal information.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002398/12
an die Kommission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Berücksichtigung von Tierschutzaspekten in Freihandelsabkommen

1. In welchen Freihandelsabkommen werden aktuell Tierschutzaspekte berücksichtigt, und welche Tierschutzkriterien sind Bestandteil der jeweiligen Abkommen (bitte genaue Auflistung) ([1])?

2. Mit welchen Mechanismen wird deren Einhaltung garantiert?

3. Wie häufig und von wem werden Kontrollen durchgeführt?

4. Welche Verstöße wurden im Jahr 2011 dokumentiert?

5. Welche Strategie verfolgt die Kommission bei der Aufnahme von Tierschutzstandards in Abkommen der Welthandelsorganisation (WTO), und welche Tierschutzaspekte spielen hier eine Rolle?

6. Wie unterscheiden sich die Tierschutzstandards der EU von denen der Mercosur-Staaten, und welche Tierschutzaspekte beabsichtigt die Kommission in das Abkommen mit dem Mercosur aufzunehmen?

7. Wo sieht die Kommission generell Grenzen für die Integration von Tierschutzstandards in Freihandelsabkommen?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(15. Mai 2012)

1. Die Zusammenarbeit der Vertragsparteien in Tierschutzangelegenheiten ist Bestandteil der Abkommen der EU mit Chile, Kanada, Neuseeland und Südkorea. Auch mit Australien besteht ein Forum zur Zusammenarbeit in Tierschutzfragen.

2. Die Zusammenarbeit erfolgt in speziellen Arbeitsgruppen der Ausschüsse für gesundheitspolizeiliche und pflanzenschutzrechtliche Maßnahmen im Rahmen der Abkommen. Diese Arbeitsgruppen treten in der Regel jährlich zusammen und stützen sich bei ihrer Arbeit auf Jahresprogramme.

3. Kontrollen in Drittstaaten werden vom Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt der Kommission durchgeführt. Im Tierschutzbereich werden ausschließlich die Bedingungen bei der Schlachtung kontrolliert, damit Betriebe, die Fleisch in die EU ausführen, gleichwertige Tierschutzstandards erfüllen. Im Jahresauditprogramm ist kein fester Turnus für die Besuche vorgesehen ([2]).

4. Die Verstöße sind in den Auditberichten dokumentiert. Die zuständigen Behörden des jeweiligen Landes, in dem der Auditbesuch stattgefunden hat, werden aufgefordert, die festgestellten Mängel zu beheben. Die Auditberichte wie auch die Pläne mit den zu ergreifenden Abhilfemaßnahmen werden auf der unter Punkt 3 genannten Website veröffentlicht.

5. In der Strategie der Europäischen Union für den Schutz und das Wohlergehen von Tieren 2012-2015 ([3]) hat die Förderung der internationalen Zusammenarbeit einen hohen Stellenwert. In diesem Zusammenhang bringt sich die Kommission sehr aktiv in der Weltorganisation für Tiergesundheit (OIE) sowie in der Ernährungs- und Landwirtschaftsorganisation (FAO) ein.

6. Mercosur verfügt nur über sehr begrenzte Tierschutzvorschriften. Die Kommission beabsichtigt, die Zusammenarbeit in Tierschutzangelegenheiten in das Kapitel zu den gesundheitspolizeilichen und pflanzenschutzrechtlichen Maßnahmen des künftigen EU-Abkommens mit den Mercosur-Staaten aufzunehmen.

7. Die Kommission möchte in alle Handelsabkommen Bestimmungen zur Zusammenarbeit in Tierschutzfragen aufnehmen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/docs/aw_strategy_19012012_de.pdf
([2]) Programme und Auditberichte können eingesehen werden unter: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm
([3]) KOM(2012)6 endg./2 vom 15.2.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002398/12
to the Commission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Factoring animal welfare issues into free-trade agreements

1. In connection with which free-trade agreements are animal welfare issues currently factored in, and which animal welfare criteria are included in the various agreements ([1])? Please provide a detailed list.

2. What mechanisms are used to ensure compliance?

3. How often are inspections carried out, and by whom?

4. What infringements were documented in 2011?

5. What strategy is the Commission pursuing in including animal welfare standards in World Trade Organisation agreements, and which animal welfare issues play a role in this connection?

6. How do the animal welfare standards of the EU differ from those of the Mercosur states and which animal welfare issues does the Commission intend to incorporate into the agreement with Mercosur?

7. Where, in general, does the Commission see limits to incorporating animal welfare standards into free-trade agreements?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2012)

1. The EU Agreements with Chile, Canada, New Zealand and South Korea include a provision on collaboration between the parties on Animal Welfare (AW) matters. There is also an AW Cooperation Forum with Australia.

2. The collaboration takes place in special working groups of the SPS committees of the Agreements. In principle, these working groups meet every year and work on the basis of annual programmes.

3. The Commission inspection service, the Food and Veterinary Office, carries out inspections in third countries. On animal welfare, they relate exclusively to conditions at slaughter to ensure that establishments exporting meat to the EU apply equivalent welfare standards. The annual inspection programme does not establish a fixed frequency for the audits ([2]).

4. The non-compliances are reflected in the inspection reports and the competent authorities of the inspected countries are requested to take corrective actions. The inspection reports and the action plan with corrective actions are published in the website mentioned in point 3.

5. The EU strategy for the Protection and Welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([3]) includes, as a key objective, support for international cooperation. The Commission is very active in the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and in the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

6. Mercosur legislation on animal welfare is very limited. The Commission aims at including collaboration on animal welfare in the SPS Chapter of the future EU-Mercosur Agreement.

7. The Commission aims at incorporating provisions on collaboration on animal welfare matters in all trade agreements with trade partners.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/docs/aw_strategy_19012012_en.pdf
([2]) The programmes and the inspection reports are published at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm.
([3]) COM(2012) 6 final/2 of 15.2.2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002400/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Steigende Armutsraten in Europa

Die Europäische Union hat sich immer wieder mit der Thematik der Armut in den Mitgliedstaaten auseinandergesetzt, wie beispielsweise in den Erklärungen des Rates Laeken 2001 und Lissabon 2007.

Eines der Ziele der Strategie Europa2020 lautet, dass sich bis zum Jahr 2020 „mindestens 20 Millionen Bürgerinnen und Bürger weniger in Armut oder Armutsgefahr" befinden sollen. Im Jahr 2010 war in der Union einer von vier Bürgern von Armut betroffen. Die wesentlichen Gründe sind Arbeitslosigkeit, das Lebensalter sowie geringe Löhne. Als Ergebnis zählen aktuell 8 Prozent aller Beschäftigten in Europa zur Klasse der sogenannten „working poor" („arbeitenden Armen"). Gerade vor dem Hintergrund der schwierigen wirtschaftlichen Situation in vielen Mitgliedstaaten und insbesondere die zum Teil erschreckend hohen Jugendarbeitslosigkeitsraten (Griechenland, Italien, Spanien etc.) ist davon auszugehen, dass die Armutsrate in Europa in den kommenden Jahren stark ansteigen wird.

1. Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission zur Bekämpfung dieses sozialen Problems unternommen?

2. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass die bisherigen Maßnahmen ausreichen, insbesondere vor dem oben geschilderten Hintergrund der hohen Jugendarbeitslosigkeit?

3. Welche zusätzlichen Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission ggf. im kommenden MFF zu initiieren?

4. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass das Thema „Armut in Europa" eine eigenständige Haushaltslinie zur Bekämpfung der Armut in Europa erforderlich macht?

5. Wann wird die Kommission eine erste detaillierte Evaluierung dazu vorlegen, ob die in der Strategie Europa 2020 zum Thema Armut gesteckten Ziele erreicht werden?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(23. April 2012)

Die Kommission bekämpft Armut und soziale Ausgrenzung in der EU mit verschiedensten Maßnahmen.

Mit der Strategie Europa 2020 bekämpft sie die Armut und zielt auf eine Erhöhung der Beschäftigung sowie auf eine Stärkung des sozialen Zusammenhalts ab.

Im laufenden europäischen Semester untersucht die Kommission, welche Fortschritte die Mitgliedstaaten in diesen Bereichen erzielt haben, auch bei der Umsetzung der Ziele der Strategie 2020. Bei Bedarf wird sie länderspezifische Empfehlungen abgeben.

In der europäischen Plattform gegen Armut und soziale Ausgrenzung sind Maßnahmen zur Armutsbekämpfung gebündelt. Die Kommission hat sich in ihrem Arbeitsprogramm für 2012 vorgenommen, eine Empfehlung zum Thema Kinderarmut sowie einen Bericht über die Umsetzung der Strategien für eine aktive Eingliederung anzunehmen.

Auch die Finanzierungsprogramme der EU leisten einen Beitrag zur Armutsbekämpfung. Im Zeitraum 2014-2020 stellt die Kommission 84 Milliarden EUR für den Europäischen Sozialfonds bereit. Mindestens 20 % dieser Summe sollen für Maßnahmen zur Förderung der sozialen Eingliederung und zur Armutsbekämpfung aufgewendet werden. Eine wichtige Rolle in diesem Zusammenhang spielt auch der Europäische Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE). Eines der thematischen Ziele der künftigen Verordnung ([1]) zielt auf die Förderung der sozialen Eingliederung und die Armutsbekämpfung ab und wird durch konkrete Investitionsprioritäten untermauert. Aus dem EFRE werden KMU gefördert und damit Arbeitsplätze geschaffen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2014/proposals/regulation/general/general_proposal_de.pdf

Präsident Barroso hat die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit zur politischen Priorität erklärt. Mit der Initiative „Chancen für junge Menschen“ ([2]) unterstützt die Kommission dringliche Maßnahmen zugunsten arbeitsloser junger Menschen, die keine weiterführende Aus- oder Weiterbildung absolvieren. Ziel ist es, die hohen Jugendarbeitslosigkeitsquoten in der EU in den Griff zu bekommen. Am 18. April 2012 hat die Kommission ein Beschäftigungspaket angenommen, mit dem auch die Beschäftigung junger Menschen gefördert werden soll.

([2]) Siehe die Mitteilung der Kommission: Initiative „Chancen für junge Menschen” (KOM(2011)933 endg. vom 20. Dezember 2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002400/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Rising poverty rates in Europe

The European Union has frequently addressed the issue of poverty in the Member States, as for example in the Council statements made in Laeken in 2001 and Lisbon in 2007.

One of the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy is that there should be 'at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty' by 2020. In 2010, one in four Union citizens was affected by poverty. The main reasons for this are unemployment, age and low wages. As a result, at present 8 % of all those in employment in Europe belong to the so-called 'working poor'. Against the background of the difficult economic situation in many Member States and, in particular, the shockingly high rates of youth unemployment in some countries (Greece, Italy, Spain, etc.), the poverty rate in Europe is likely to rise significantly in the years ahead.

1. What steps has the Commission taken to deal with this social problem?

2. Does the Commission believe that the steps taken to date are sufficient, in particular in the light of the high levels of youth unemployment, as described above?

3. Which further measures does the Commission intend to initiate, for example in the forthcoming MFF?

4. Does the Commission believe that the issue of 'poverty in Europe' requires a separate budget line to fund measures to combat European poverty?

5. When does the Commission expect to present an initial detailed assessment of whether the poverty targets set in the Europe 2020 strategy will be met?

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

The Commission has mobilised various instruments to tackle poverty and social exclusion in the EU.

Through the Europe 2020 strategy, it is working to reduce poverty and increase employment and social cohesion.

During the current European Semester, it will review the Member States' progress in these areas, including their efforts to meet the Europe 2020 targets, and where appropriate will propose country-specific recommendations.

The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion draws together policies that contribute to reducing poverty. The Commission's work programme for 2012 foresees the adoption of a recommendation on child poverty and a report on the implementation of active inclusion strategies.

EU funding programmes also contribute to reducing poverty. For the 2014-20 period, the Commission has proposed a budget of EUR 84 billion for the European Social Fund, at least 20 % of which should go towards promoting social inclusion and combating poverty. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) also plays an important role here. One of the thematic objectives proposed in the future Regulation ([1]) focuses on social inclusion and combating poverty, and is also supported by concrete investment priorities. The ERDF creates employment through support for SMEs.

President Barroso has made youth unemployment a political priority. The Youth Opportunities Initiative ([2]) adopted by the Commission focuses on urgent action to support young people not in education, employment or training with a view to tackling high unemployment among young people across the EU. On 18 April 18 2012, the Commission adopted an Employment package, which includes measures to support the employment of young people.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2014/proposals/regulation/general/general_proposal_en.pdf
([2]) See Commission communication 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' (COM(2011) 933 final of 20 December 2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002401/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Vorratsdatenspeicherungsrichtlinie — neue Studien aus Deutschland

Eine aktuelle Studie des deutschen Bundeskriminalamts bestätigt was Kritikern schon lange klar ist: Es bestehe kein Bedarf langfristiger Vorratsdatenspeicherung, insbesondere was Telefonverkehrsdaten betrifft. Auch das renommierte Max-Planck Institut für internationales Strafrecht widerlegte in einem Gutachten klar die Behauptung, dass das Kippen der Vorratsdatenspeicherungspflicht durch das deutsche Bundesverfassungsgericht zu einer erheblichen Schutzlücke bei der Verfolgung von Straftaten geführt hätte. Die pauschale und anlasslose Speicherung von Verbindungsprotokollen ist damit für Ermittler keinesfalls unverzichtbar. Sie steht zudem im Widerspruch zum datenschutzrechtlichen Grundsatz der Zweckbindung und letztlich auch zum rechtsstaatlichen Prinzip. Durch den damit einhergehenden Eingriff in die Grundrechte der Bürger besteht die Gefahr eines allgemeinen Vertrauensverlustes in moderne Kommunikationstechniken, was wiederum bedeutet, dass Meinungen weniger frei ausgetauscht werden. Dies führt schließlich zu einem Abbau von Pluralismus, Bürgerbeteiligung und Demokratie in unserer Gesellschaft.

1. Die Kommission hat angekündigt im Sommer einen Neuentwurf der Vorratsdatenspeicherungsrichtlinie vorzulegen. Wird die Kommission die oben erwähnten Studien zur grundsätzlichen Erforderlichkeit der Vorratsdatenspeicherung für die Strafverfolgung als Grundlage heranziehen?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, selbst eine diesbezügliche europaweite Studie in den Mitgliedstaaten durchzuführen? Wenn ja, wann werden die Ergebnisse veröffentlicht?

3. Offenbar existieren gelindere Mittel als die pauschale Vorratsdatenspeicherung, um Straftaten effizient zu verfolgen. Stehen die Ergebnisse der gegenständlichen Studien im Widerspruch zum Verhältnismäßigkeitsgrundsatz?

4. Wird die Kommission die Ergebnisse des anhängigen Verfahrens vor dem EuGH zur Vorratsdatenspeicherung als Grundlage für den Neuentwurf verwenden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

Die Kommission berücksichtigt im nationalen und im europäischen Kontext geäußerte Meinungen zum Nutzen der Vorratdatenspeicherung für die Strafjustiz. Dazu zählt auch die Rechtsprechung. In ihrem Bericht über die bisherigen Erfahrungen mit der Vorratsdatenspeicherungsrichtlinie (KOM(2011)225 endg.) kommt die Kommission zu dem Schluss, dass die Fakten für die Verfügbarkeit von Verbindungsdaten zum Zweck der Untersuchung und strafrechtlichen Verfolgung von schweren Straftaten sprechen.

Die Kommission hält sich alle Optionen offen, um sicherzustellen, dass Justiz und Polizei über die nötigen Mittel zur Verbrechensbekämpfung und insbesondere zur Bekämpfung der grenzüberschreitenden Kriminalität verfügen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002401/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: The Data Retention Directive — new studies from Germany

A recent study by the German 'Bundeskriminalamt' (Federal CID) confirms something that critics have known for some time: there is no need for long-term data retention, in particular in relation to telephone data. In an assessment, the renowned Max Planck Institute for International Criminal Law has likewise clearly refuted the claim that the German Federal Constitutional Court's overturning of mandatory data retention requirements had led to a significant lack of security in the prosecution of criminal activity. The generalised retention of call records without cause is thus by no means indispensable for investigators. It also runs contrary to the data protection principle of purpose limitation and to the principle of the rule of law. The associated encroachment upon the basic rights of citizens also runs the risk of a general loss of trust in modern communication technology, which in turn means that opinions are less freely exchanged. In the final analysis, this leads to a decline in pluralism, civic participation and democracy in our society.

1. The Commission has announced its intention to present a new draft of the Data Retention Directive this summer. Does the Commission intend to base its decisions on the aforementioned studies concerning the fundamental need for data retention in criminal prosecutions?

2. Does the Commission itself intend to carry out a Europe-wide study with regard to this in the Member States? If so, when are the results to be published?

3. Obviously, there are less draconian ways to prosecute criminality effectively than generalised data retention. Do the results of the above studies contradict the principle of proportionality?

4. Does the Commission intend to use the results of the case currently before the European Court of Justice in relation to data retention as a basis for the new draft?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The Commission takes into account views expressed both at national and European level, including relevant case law, on the value of data retention as a measure for ensuring criminal justice. The Commission, as stated in its evaluation report on the Data Retention Directive (COM(2011) 225 final), considers that the evidence highlights the need to guarantee the availability of communications data for investigating and prosecuting serious crimes.

The Commission will consider all options for EU action to ensure that the judicial system and the police have the necessary tools for fighting crime — and cross-border crime in particular.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002403/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Common provisions for monitoring and assessing Member States' draft budgetary plans

Regarding the proposed Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on common provisions for monitoring and assessing draft budgetary plans and ensuring the correction of excessive deficit of the Member States in the euro area:

Has the Commission conducted a cost analysis for the establishment and operation of the suggested new 'Committee on Budgetary Timeline'?

How many staff members will be required to run this committee?

Answer given by VP Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

There is no suggestion to set up any such new 'Committee on Budgetary Timeline' or similar body, in the context of the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on common provisions for monitoring and assessing draft budgetary plans and ensuring the correction of excessive deficit of the Member States in the euro area.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002405/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Misspent CAP funding

It has been brought to my attention that the UK is being asked to repay approximately EUR 30 million to the Commission for failing to enforce EU environmental rules for farmers in the period between 2007 and 2010.

Can the Commission:

1. Confirm this amount for repayment?

2. Clarify what these fines were explicitly for?

3. Clarify how many audit checks were involved and in what regions of the UK they were carried out?

4. Confirm that no repayments are required with respect to Welsh farming practices?

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

By Commission Decision 2012/89/EU ([1]) of 14 February 2012, an amount of UK's agricultural expenditure of around EUR 29.5 million has been excluded from the EU financing.

The grounds for this exclusion are the shortcomings found, in the framework of a cross-compliance audit performed in 2008, in the cross-compliance system implemented in England.

The major weaknesses revealed during the cross-compliance audit in England were:

— certain Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition standards (GAEC) and Statutory Management Requirements (SMR) were either not defined or ineffectively controlled;

— there were cases of non-compliance not leading to reductions; and

— the evaluation and sanctioning system was too lenient.

This financial correction does not concern Wales.

([1]) OJ L 43, 16.12.2012, p. 23.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002408/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(1 maart 2012)

Betreft: Energy roadmap

Ik dank commissaris Oettinger voor zijn antwoorden op mijn vragen over de „energy roadmap 2050" (E-000124/2012).

Ik ben verheugd dat de Commissie in haar antwoord aangeeft dat de energy roadmap 2050 de basis vormt voor een technologieneutraal langetermijnkader om haar doelstellingen te bereiken. De Commissie geeft hiermee te kennen geen voorkeur te hebben voor de te gebruiken technologie. De consequentie hiervan is dat de Commissie afziet van het verlenen van subsidies aan (het ontwikkelen van) bepaalde technologieën en het fiscaal belasten van andere technologieën afwijst. De markt kan immers zelf het beste bepalen welke technologieën het meest geëigend zijn om de doelstellingen van de Commissie te bereiken.

Kan de Commissie aangeven met welke maatregelen zij technologieneutraliteit wil afdwingen bij het bereiken van haar doelstellingen?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(17 april 2012)

Het Stappenplan Energie 2050 vormt geen vervanging van de nationale, regionale en lokale inspanningen om de energievoorziening te moderniseren, maar heeft tot doel een Europees technologieneutraal kader voor de lange termijn te bieden waarbinnen het beleid op nationaal, regionaal en lokaal niveau doeltreffender kan worden gemaakt. De technologieneutraliteit van het Europese energiesysteem is ook een gevolg van het feit dat de lidstaten de centrale verantwoordelijkheid voor de keuze van hun energiemix behouden.

Wat de ontwikkeling van de energietechnologieën betreft, wordt in het stappenplan gesteld dat de EU moet bijdragen tot wetenschappelijke projecten en onderzoeks- en demonstratieprogramma's, waarbij moet worden voortgebouwd op het SET-plan (Strategisch plan voor energietechnologie) en het komende meerjarig financieel kader, met name Horizon 2020, om te investeren in partnerschappen met de bedrijfssector en de lidstaten teneinde op grote schaal nieuwe, zeer efficiënte technologieën te ontwikkelen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002408/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Energy Roadmap

I would like to thank Commissioner Oettinger for his answers to my questions about the 'Energy Roadmap 2050' (E-000124/2012).

I am delighted that the Commission indicates in its answer that the Energy Roadmap 2050 is the basis for a long-term technology-neutral framework to meet its objectives. The Commission thus indicates that it has no preference regarding the technology to be used. The consequence of this indication is that the Commission abandons the provision of subsidies for (the development of) certain technologies and rejects the taxation of other technologies. After all, the market can best determine for itself which technologies are the most suitable for attaining the Commission's objectives.

Can the Commission indicate the measures by means of which it intends to enforce technology neutrality in the attainment of its objectives?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Energy Roadmap 2050 does not replace national, regional and local efforts to modernise energy supply, but seeks to develop a long-term European technology-neutral framework in which these policies will be more effective. Technology-neutrality of the European energy system is also a consequence of the fact that Member States have the key responsibility for the choice of their energy mix.

As regards the development of technologies, the Roadmap states that the EU should contribute to scientific projects and research and demonstration programmes, building on the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan) and the next Multiannual Financial Framework, and in particular Horizon 2020, to invest in partnerships with industry and Member States to demonstrate and deploy new, highly efficient energy technologies on a large scale.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002410/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κατασκευή υποβρυχίων για το πολεμικό ναυτικό του Ισραήλ

Οι Times του Λονδίνου αναφέρουν ότι το Ισραήλ κατασκευάζει στα ναυπηγία HDW στη Γερμανία υποβρύχιο με δυνατότητα μεταφοράς πυρηνικών πυραύλων.Το υποβρύχιο είναι τύπου Dolphin και θα ενσωματωθεί σε έναν στόλο τριών υποβρυχίων που θα μεταφέρουν επίσης πυρηνικά όπλα. Ανταποκρίνεται η κατασκευή από γερμανικά ναυπηγεία υποβρυχίων ικανών να μεταφέρουν πυρηνικούς πυραύλους για λογαριασμό χωρών στη Μέση Ανατολή με τη θέση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης που τάσσεται κατά της διάδοσης των πυρηνικών όπλων; Κατά τη γνώμη της Επιτροπής η συγκεκριμένη παραγγελία δεν αυξάνει τον κίνδυνο για πολεμική σύρραξη στη Μέση Ανατολή, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι το Ισραήλ αρνείται μέχρι στιγμής ότι είναι κάτοχος πυρηνικών όπλων;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Το εν λόγω θέμα δεν εμπίπτει στις αρμοδιότητες της Επιτροπής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002410/12
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Construction of submarines for the Israeli navy

The Times reports that Israel is having a submarine built by the HDW shipyards in Germany which is capable of carrying nuclear missiles. The Dolphin class submarine will be incorporated into a fleet of three submarines all carrying nuclear weapons. Is the construction by German shipyards of submarines capable of carrying nuclear missiles for Middle Eastern countries compatible with the European Union's position against nuclear proliferation? Does the Commission agree that this order increases the risk of armed conflict in the Middle East, considering that Israel is continuing to deny that it possesses nuclear weapons?

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

The matter in question it is not within the Commission's remit.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002411/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Να τερματιστεί η Νατοϊκή Κατοχή στο Αφγανιστάν

Από τις 23 του Φλεβάρη, σε πολλές πόλεις του Αφγανιστάν, χιλιάδες λαού διαμαρτύρονται για την κατοχή και την απαράδεκτη συμπεριφορά των δυνάμεων του ΝΑΤΟ-ISAF. Είναι δεκάδες οι νεκροί και πολλοί οι τραυματίες, μεταξύ των οποίων και μικρά παιδιά, ως αποτέλεσμα της καταστολής από τις δυνάμεις του ΝΑΤΟ, της αστυνομίας και των δυνάμεων ασφαλείας του Αφγανιστάν. Η ΕΕ εκπαιδεύει, στα πλαίσια της αποστολής EUPOL Afghanistan, τμήματα της αστυνομίας για την καταπολέμηση μόνον του οργανωμένου εγκλήματος.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

— Πώς συνάδει η καταστολή των διαδηλωτών από τις δυνάμεις του ΝΑΤΟ και τις δυνάμεις ασφαλείας του Αφγανιστάν με τις δεσμεύσεις της ΕΕ στα πλαίσια της «Στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για το Αφγανιστάν» και της εντολής για τη δύναμη EUPOL Afghanistan;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Όσον αφορά την κατάσταση των συμμαχικών δυνάμεων στην περιοχή, τα ευρωπαϊκά θεσμικά όργανα δεν έχουν καμία αρμοδιότητα σχετικά με τις στρατιωτικές επιχειρήσεις των κρατών μελών στο πλαίσιο του Οργανισμού του Βορειοατλαντικού Συμφώνου (ΝΑΤΟ) και, ως εκ τούτου, δεν διαθέτουν πληροφορίες σχετικά με τη συμμετοχή του ΝΑΤΟ στα περιστατικά που αναφέρονται. Το σχέδιο δράσης της ΕΕ για το Αφγανιστάν προβλέπει τη χορήγηση βοήθειας και σε τομείς που συνδέονται με το κράτος δικαίου και την παροχή ειδικής στήριξης στην αφγανική αστυνομία για σκοπούς όπως η ανάπτυξη ικανοτήτων και η μεταρρύθμιση.

Η EUPOL AFGHANISTAN συμπληρώνει αυτές τις μεταρρυθμιστικές προσπάθειες όσον αφορά το επιχειρησιακό σκέλος, ιδίως συνδέοντας τις μεταρρυθμίσεις στον αστυνομικό τομέα με αυτές στο ευρύτερο σύστημα της ποινικής δικαιοσύνης, υπό αφγανική ευθύνη. Ο ρόλος της EUPOL στο πλαίσιο αυτό είναι να παρέχει εξειδικευμένη κατάρτιση και κατάρτιση αξιωματούχων ώστε να ενισχυθεί η ικανότητα του Αφγανιστάν όσον αφορά την περιφρούρηση του κράτους δικαίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002411/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Ending the NATO occupation of Afghanistan

Since 23 February, thousands of people have been protesting in many cities in Afghanistan against the occupation and the unacceptable conduct of NATO-ISAF forces. Dozens of people have died and many have been injured, among them young children, as a result of the suppression of these demonstrations by the NATO troops and the Afghan police and security forces. As part of the EUPOL Afghanistan mission, the EU is training police units solely to combat organised crime.

Can the High Representative state:

— How does the suppression of protesters by NATO and Afghan security forces comply with EU commitments under the 'EU strategy for Afghanistan' and the mandate given to the EUPOL Afghanistan force?

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

With regards to the situation of the allied forces in the region, the European institutions have no competence regarding Member States' military operations in the context of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and, therefore, do not possess information regarding NATO involvement in the incidents referred to. The EU's Action Plan for Afghanistan foresees assistance including in areas relating to the rule of law and specific support to the Afghan police, which includes capacity building and reform.

EUPOL Afghanistan complements these reform efforts on the operational side, notably by linking reforms in the police sector to those in the wider criminal justice system under Afghan ownership. EUPOL's role in this respect is to provide specialised and leadership training in order to enhance Afghan capacity to uphold the rule of law.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002412/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σχέδιο προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία

Το σχέδιο προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία απευθύνεται σε παιδιά που φοιτούν σε εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα, από νηπιαγωγεία μέχρι σχολεία δευτεροβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης. Τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να επιλέγουν τα ίδια συγκεκριμένη ηλικιακή ομάδα και να εστιάζουν σε περιοχές/σχολεία με κοινωνικοοικονομικές δυσκολίες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποιο βαθμό έχει η Ελλάδα αξιοποιήσει το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα; Σε σύγκριση με τους ευρωπαίους εταίρους της, αξιοποιεί ικανοποιητικά τις δυνατότητες που προσφέρει το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα;

— Καθώς, εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης, αυξάνονται τα κρούσματα μαθητών που δεν έχουν πρόσβαση σε βασικά διατροφικά αγαθά, μεταξύ των οποίων και τα φρούτα, είναι στις σκέψεις της Επιτροπής να διευρύνει τη χρηματοδότηση του προγράμματος προς τα κράτη μέλη, και ιδίως προς εκείνα που αντιμετωπίζουν τα μεγαλύτερα προβλήματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Ελλάδα συμμετέχει στο σχέδιο προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία από την έναρξή του, το σχολικό έτος 2009-2010.

Κατά το σχολικό έτος 2010-2011 δαπάνησε το 56,6 % του κονδυλίου της (1,86 εκατ. ευρώ). Κατά τη διάρκεια του ίδιου σχολικού έτους, 14 κράτη μέλη εκ των 24 συμμετεχόντων στο σχέδιο δαπάνησαν αναλογικά περισσότερα, αλλά τα στοιχεία είναι ακόμη προσωρινά.

Στις προτάσεις μεταρρύθμισης της ΚΓΠ για το 2020 η Επιτροπή πρότεινε να αυξηθεί όχι μόνο ο συνολικός προϋπολογισμός του σχεδίου αλλά και το όριο της συγχρηματοδότησης εκ μέρους της ΕΕ, καθώς και να επεκταθούν οι επιλέξιμες για ενωσιακή ενίσχυση δαπάνες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002412/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: School Fruit Scheme

The School Fruit Scheme is aimed at children in educational establishments, from nurseries to secondary schools. Member States are able to choose on their own a specific age group and focus on regions/schools with socioeconomic difficulties.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— To what extent has Greece made use of this programme? Compared to its European partners, is it making adequate use of the possibilities offered by the programme?

— Since, due to the economic crisis, the number of pupils without access to basic foodstuffs, including fruit, is rising, is the Commission intending to extend the funding of the scheme to Member States, and particularly to those facing the greatest problems?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

Greece has been participating in the School Fruit Scheme since its beginning in 2009/2010 school year.

In 2010/2011 school year it has spent 56.6 % of its envelope (EUR1.86 million). For the same school year, 14 Member States out of the 24 participating to the Scheme have spent more in proportion but data are still provisional.

In its CAP 2020 proposals, the Commission has proposed to increase not only the total budget of the Scheme but also the level of EU co-financing and to extend the costs eligible to the EU aid.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002413/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παροχή τυχερών παιγνίων μέσω διαδικτύου από μεταβατικώς αδειοδοτημένους παρόχους στην Ελλάδα

Με το νόμο 4002/2011 η Ελλάδα επέτρεψε την παροχή τυχερών παιγνίων μέσω διαδικτύου από μεταβατικώς αδειοδοτημένους παρόχους. Με Απόφαση του Υπουργού Οικονομικών προσδιορίστηκε φορολογικό καθεστώς στο οποίο θα πρέπει να ενταχθούν όσοι επιθυμούν να αδειοδοτηθούν μεταβατικώς. Με αυτό επιβάλλεται η αναδρομική φορολόγηση κερδών των χρήσεων 2010 και 2011, προερχόμενων από παίκτες εγκατεστημένους στην Ελλάδα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ενημερωθεί σχετικά με το χρόνο διάρκειας του μεταβατικού καθεστώτος;

2. Η υποχρέωση ένταξης σε καθεστώς αναδρομικής φορολόγησης είναι συμβατή με την αρχή της ελεύθερης παροχής υπηρεσιών εντός της ΕΕ και τη σχετική νομολογία του ΔΕΕ;

3. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή αν η Ελλάδα έχει εκπονήσει σχέδιο για την προστασία της δημόσιας τάξης, του καταναλωτή, της καταπολέμησης του εθισμού κ.λπ.;

4. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή τι προτίθεται να κάνει η Ελλάδα σχετικά με την αδειοδότηση εταιριών που δεν εντάχθηκαν στο ειδικό φορολογικό καθεστώς, δεδομένου ότι η μη ένταξη τους έχει ως αποτέλεσμα την απώλεια φορολογικών εσόδων, αλλά και την απειλή ποινών σε νόμιμα εγκατεστημένους στην ΕΕ παρόχους;

5. Αρχικά η Τρόικα είχε υπολογίσει ότι τα έσοδα από την απελευθέρωση της αγοράς θα ανέρχονταν στα 700 εκ ευρώ. Κατά νεότερες εκτιμήσεις, το ποσό αυτό έχει περιοριστεί στα 300 εκ. ευρώ. Πιστεύει η Επιτροπή ότι για την απόκλιση ευθύνεται ο τρόπος με τον οποίο αντιμετωπίστηκε το άνοιγμα της σχετικής αγοράς;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαΐου 2012)

Οι πρόσφατες μεταρρυθμίσεις των κανονισμών σχετικά με τα τυχερά παίγνια στην Ελλάδα, συμπεριλαμβανομένων του καθεστώτος αναθεωρήσεων και της αναδρομικής φορολόγησης τα οποία αναφέρει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, έχουν κοινοποιηθεί στην Επιτροπή. Οι εν λόγω μεταρρυθμίσεις εξετάζονται επί του παρόντος από την Επιτροπή. Για το σκοπό αυτό, η Επιτροπή κάλεσε τις ελληνικές αρχές να κοινοποιήσουν πρόσθετες πληροφορίες σχετικά με διάφορα θέματα περιλαμβανομένων εκείνων που καλύπτονται από τα ερωτήματα 1-4 που τέθηκαν από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου. Η διεξαγόμενη ανάλυση των απαντήσεων σε αυτά τα ερωτήματα αναμένεται να βοηθήσει την Επιτροπή να εκτιμήσει τη συμμόρφωση του νομοθετικού πλαισίου της Ελλάδας για τα τυχερά παίγνια με το δίκαιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Σύμφωνα με τον Νόμο 3986/2011 ([1]), τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία που είναι έτοιμα για ιδιωτικοποίηση πρέπει να πωληθούν με βάση τις ισχύουσες αγοραίες τιμές. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες που υποδηλώνουν ότι την αξία των περιουσιακών στοιχείων που σχετίζονται με τα τυχερά παίγνια έχει μειωθεί από 700 εκατ. ευρώ σε 300 εκατ. ευρώ. Εάν όντως ισχύει αυτό ενδέχεται να οφείλεται στις δυσχερείς συνθήκες της αγοράς και στην έλλειψη ενδιαφέροντος εκ μέρους των επενδυτών για την αγορά στην Ελλάδα περιουσιακών στοιχείων που προορίζονταν για ιδιωτικοποίηση. Όπως αντιλαμβάνεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, η εκτιμώμενη αξία εκάστου συγκεκριμένου περιουσιακού στοιχείου αποτελεί εμπορικά ευαίσθητη πληροφορία και δεν επιτρέπεται στην Επιτροπή να αποκαλύπτει τις εκτιμώμενες τιμές που παρέχονται από το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών ή/και το ΤΑΙΠΕΔ ([2]).

([1]) ΦΕΚ Α/152/01.07.2011.
([2]) Ταμείο Ανάπτυξης Περιουσιακών Στοιχείων της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002413/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Providing online gaming through provisionally licensed providers in Greece

Through Law No 4002/2011, Greece has authorised the provision of online gaming by provisionally licensed providers. Following a decision by the Finance Minister, a tax regime has been established in which anyone seeking to obtain a provisional licence must be listed. Taxation is imposed retrospectively on profits for the 2010 and 2011 tax years by players residing in Greece.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it been informed of the duration of the provisional regime?

2. Is the obligation to be included in a retrospective taxation regime compatible with the principle of the freedom to provide services within the EU and the related case-law of the European Court of Justice?

3. Does it know whether Greece has prepared a plan to protect public order and consumers and combat addiction, etc?

4. Does it know what Greece intends to do about licensing companies which remain outside the special tax regime, given that their non-incorporation leads to a loss of tax revenue and also to the threat of penalties against providers operating legally in the EU?

5. The Troika initially calculated that the revenue from the deregulation of the market would amount to EUR 700 million. More recent estimates have reduced this sum to EUR 300 million. Does the Commission believe that this discrepancy is attributable to the way the deregulation of this market has been handled?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2012)

The recent reforms of the Greek gambling regulations, including the introduction of the provisional regime and the retroactive taxation issue referred to by the Honourable Member, have been brought to the Commission's attention. The Commission is currently examining these reforms. To that end, the Commission invited the Greek authorities to provide additional information on a number of issues including those covered by questions 1 to 4 raised by the Honourable Member. The ongoing analysis of answers to these questions should help the Commission to assess the compliance with European Union law of the Greek legal framework for gambling.

According to Law 3986/2011 ([1]), assets ready for privatisation have to be sold at prevailing market prices. The Commission has no information suggesting that gaming-related assets have lost their value from EUR 700 million to EUR 300 million. Should there be such a discrepancy, this could be explained by the difficult market conditions and the lack of interest from investors in purchasing Greek assets planned for privatisation. As the Honourable Member understands, the estimated price of each specific asset is market sensitive information and the Commission is not allowed to reveal the estimated prices provided by the Ministry of Finance and/or the HRADF ([2]).

([1]) Government Gazette A' 152/01.07.2011.
([2]) Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002414/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μείωση ερευνητικών κέντρων στην Ελλάδα

Με πρόσφατη απόφαση του, το Υπουργείο Δια Βίου Μάθησης και Θρησκευμάτων στην Ελλάδα αποφάσισε συγχωνεύσεις ερευνητικών κέντρων και αλλαγή του νομοθετικού πλαισίου για την έρευνα. Τα ερευνητικά κέντρα θα μειωθούν από 56 σε 31 και η Ακαδημία Αθηνών θα μείνει με δύο κέντρα έρευνας από 14 που είχε έως σήμερα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εκτιμά πως η απόφαση αυτή θα έχει επιπτώσεις στους στόχους που έχει θέσει η Ελλάδα, στο πλαίσιο της Στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» για αύξηση των δαπανών για την έρευνα στο 3 % του ΑΕΠ αλλά και για μεγαλύτερη συνεισφορά της έρευνας στην οικονομική ανάπτυξη των κρατών μελών;

2. Σε επίπεδο ΕΕ παρατηρείται αυξητική τάση στον αριθμό των ερευνητικών κέντρων τα τελευταία χρόνια;

Απάντηση της κ. Geoghegan-Quinn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Για να αυξηθούν οι επιδόσεις στον τομέα της καινοτομίας και να καταστεί πλήρως δυνατή η έξυπνη, βιώσιμη και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς ανάπτυξη σε όλες τις περιφέρειες, η στρατηγική «ΕΕ 2020» ενθαρρύνει την έξυπνη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση, ήτοι τη διατήρηση υψηλού επιπέδου επενδύσεων στην εκπαίδευση, την έρευνα και την καινοτομία στο πλαίσιο της μείωσης των δημόσιων οικονομικών, την αύξηση της αποδοτικότητας της δημόσιας έρευνας και τη βελτίωση του επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος. Τα μέσα επίτευξης του εν λόγω στόχου εξαρτώνται από κάθε κράτος μέλος. Το κατά πόσο η μείωση του αριθμού των ερευνητικών κέντρων θα συμβάλει στην επίτευξη όλων των ανωτέρω στόχων εξαρτάται από τους ακριβείς όρους της μεταρρύθμισης. Εάν η εν λόγω μείωση συνδέεται με συγκέντρωση πόρων και όχι με περιορισμό τους, καθώς και με αύξηση της αποδοτικότητας, τότε ο αντίκτυπος μπορεί πράγματι να είναι θετικός.

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να απαντήσει στο ερώτημα, καθώς δεν υπάρχουν διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002414/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Reduction in research centres in Greece

The Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs in Greece decided in a recent resolution, to merge a number of research centres and change the legal framework governing research. The number of research centres will be reduced from 56 to 31 and the Academy of Athens will be left with 2 of its previous 14 research centres.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission believe that this decision will affect the objectives, set by Greece in the Europe 2020 strategy, to raise expenditure on research to 3 % of GDP and ensure a greater contribution by research to economic growth in Member States?

2. Has there been in an increase, at an EU level, in the number of research centres in recent years?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

1. In order to raise innovation performance and to fully enable smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in all regions, the EU 2020 strategy encourages smart fiscal consolidation, i.e. preserving a high level of investment towards education, research and innovation in a context of reduced public finances, increasing the efficiency of public research and improving the business environment. The means to achieve this depend on each Member State. Whether the reduction of the number of research centres will contribute to achieve all this will depend on the precise modalities of the reform. If that reduction is coupled with a concentration of resources, rather than their depletion, and an increase in efficiency, then the impact might indeed be positive.

2. The Commission cannot answer the question as there is no information available.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002415/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Γραφειοκρατία και ΑΕΠ στην Ελλάδα

Η Ειδική Ομάδα (Task Force) για την Ελλάδα επικουρεί τις ελληνικές αρχές στον προσδιορισμό μέτρων για τη μείωση της δυσκίνητης και χρονοβόρου γραφειοκρατίας, καθώς και στη χρησιμοποίηση τεχνικής βοήθειας για τη διευκόλυνση της εφαρμογής των σχεδίων όποτε απαιτηθεί. Πρόσφατα ο επικεφαλής της ομάδας διαπίστωσε σημαντικές γραφειοκρατικές καθυστερήσεις, οι οποίες επιφέρουν και σημαντικές επιπτώσεις στο ΑΕΠ της χώρας, σε μία κρίσιμη οικονομική περίοδο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία σχετικά με τις εκτιμώμενες απώλειες στο ΑΕΠ της Ελλάδας εξαιτίας της υψηλής γραφειοκρατίας στην χώρα; Ποια είναι η εικόνα της Ελλάδας σε σχέση με τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο;

2. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ειδικά και η τρόικα γενικότερα, έχουν καταθέσει συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις με μετρήσιμα αποτελέσματα για την μείωση της γραφειοκρατίας στην Ελλάδα; Θεωρεί πως η μέχρι σήμερα παρουσία της Ειδικής Ομάδας στην χώρα έχει συμβάλει σε αυτή την κατεύθυνση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο στην Ελλάδα είναι αρκετά πολύπλοκο, πράγμα που επηρεάζει όλες τις πτυχές της ελληνικής διοίκησης και της οικονομίας. Συν τω χρόνω έχουν συσσωρευτεί πολλοί νόμοι, κανονισμοί και τυπικές διαδικασίες που έχουν διαμορφώσει τη σημερινή λειτουργία της δημόσιας διοίκησης της χώρας και τον τρόπο άσκησης επιχειρηματικών δραστηριοτήτων.

Το κόστος αυτού του «νομοθετικού φορμαλισμού» είναι δύσκολο να εκτιμηθεί σε όρους ΑΕΠ. Ωστόσο, πολλοί διεθνείς οργανισμοί όπως η Παγκόσμια Τράπεζα, ο ΟΟΣΑ και το Παγκόσμιο Οικονομικό Φόρουμ δημοσιεύουν συγκριτικά στοιχεία για τις δραστηριότητες που επηρεάζονται από τη γραφειοκρατία, όπως στοιχεία όσον αφορά τη σύσταση επιχειρήσεων, την υποβολή αιτήσεων για τη χορήγηση αδειών κλπ. Παρόλο που η ακριβής κατάταξη της Ελλάδας εξαρτάται από τους δείκτες που χρησιμοποιούνται από υφιστάμενους διεθνείς οργανισμούς όπως αυτοί που προαναφέρθηκαν, η Ελλάδα κατατάσσεται εν γένει αρκετά κάτω από τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο όταν λαμβάνονται υπόψη τέτοιου είδους δείκτες. Παραδείγματος χάρη, η Παγκόσμια Τράπεζα αναφέρει ότι χρειάζονται κατά μέσο όρο 20 ημέρες για την εξαγωγή προϊόντων από την Ελλάδα, σε σύγκριση με 10 ημέρες κατά μέσο όρο σε άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ

2. Στο Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης που εγκρίθηκε τον Μάρτιο του 2012, οι ελληνικές αρχές δεσμεύτηκαν να εφαρμόσουν σημαντικές διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις πολλές από τις οποίες θα έχουν άμεσες επιπτώσεις στο επίπεδο γραφειοκρατίας της χώρας ([1]). Όταν αυτό ζητείται από τις ελληνικές αρχές, η Επιτροπή, μέσω της Ομάδας Δράσης για την Ελλάδα (TFGR), συντονίζει την τεχνική συνδρομή στους αντίστοιχους τομείς. Περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες υπάρχουν στη δεύτερη τριμηνιαία έκθεση της Ομάδας Δράσης προς την Επιτροπή και τις ελληνικές αρχές ([2]).

([1]) Παραδείγματος χάρη, η απλοποίηση της σύστασης επιχειρήσεων, η διευκόλυνση των διαδικασιών δημόσιων συμβάσεων, η διευκόλυνση των διαδικασιών εξαγωγής και των τελωνειακών διαδικασιών, κ.λπ.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002415/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Bureaucracy and GDP in Greece

The Task Force for Greece is helping the Greek authorities to reduce cumbersome and time-consuming bureaucracy and is offering technical assistance to facilitate implementation of these plans where required. Recently, the head of the Task Force noted significant bureaucratic delays, which are having significant repercussions on the country's GDP, in a critical economic period.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission have data regarding the estimated cost to Greece in terms of GDP of its high level of bureaucracy? How does Greece compare to the European average?

2. The European Commission in particular and the Troika in general have submitted specific proposals with measurable outcomes for reducing bureaucracy in Greece. Does the Commission consider that the presence of the Task Force in the country has made any contribution towards this?

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

1. The legal framework in Greece is rather complex and this impacts all aspects of the Greek administration and the economy. Many laws, regulations and formal processes have accumulated over time and shape today the work of its public administration and the ease of doing business in the country.

The costs of this 'legal formalism' are difficult to measure in terms of GDP. However, many international organisations such as the World Bank, the OECD or the World Economic Forum publish comparative data for activities impacted by bureaucracy, such as data for starting up a business, applying for permits etc. Although the precise ranking of Greece depends on indicators used by existing international organisations as mentioned, Greece generally scores well below the European average taking into account this kind of indicators. For example, the World Bank indicates that it takes 20 days on average to export goods from Greece, compared to a 10 day average in other EU Member States.

2. In the memorandum of understanding adopted in March 2012, the Greek Authorities have committed to implementing significant structural reforms, many of which will have a direct impact on the level of bureaucracy in the country ([1]). When requested by the Greek Authorities, the Commission, through the Task Force for Greece (the TFGR), coordinates technical assistance in the relevant areas. More details can be found in the second quarterly report of the TFGR to the Commission and the Greek authorities ([2]).

([1]) For example the simplification for starting up businesses, the facilitation of procurement procedures, the facilitation of export and customs procedures, etc.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002416/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αποτελέσματα του αιτήματος του ελληνικού Υπουργείου Προστασίας του Πολίτη για την τεχνική συνδρομή για την επιτάχυνση της απορρόφησης των ευρωπαϊκών πόρων

Σε απάντηση της Επιτροπής σε προηγούμενη ερώτησή μου (E-012327/2011), η Επιτροπή επιβεβαιώνει πως το Υπουργείο Προστασίας του Πολίτη έχει ζητήσει τεχνική συνδρομή για την επιτάχυνση της απορρόφησης των ευρωπαϊκών πόρων για τους οποίους φέρει ευθύνη στον τομέα αυτό, δηλαδή των πόρων του ταμείου εξωτερικών συνόρων και του ευρωπαϊκού ταμείου επιστροφής. Με τη στήριξη των δύο αυτών ταμείων, το Υπουργείο Προστασίας του Πολίτη έχει προγραμματίσει την κατασκευή κέντρων ελέγχου μεταναστών κοντά στα εξωτερικά σύνορα, την ανακαίνιση κέντρων προετοιμασίας του επαναπατρισμού λαθρομεταναστών και τη βελτίωση των συνθηκών διαβίωσης στα κέντρα κράτησης.

Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή για τα αποτελέσματα που μέχρι σήμερα έχει η παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας προς την Ελλάδα για τα παραπάνω ζητήματα; Παρατηρείται επιτάχυνση των διαδικασιών κατασκευής και ανακαίνισης των προαναφερθέντων κέντρων καθώς και βελτίωση των συνθηκών διαβίωσης στα κέντρα κράτησης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Ελλάδα ζήτησε τεχνική βοήθεια με στόχο να επιταχυνθεί η απορρόφηση κονδυλίων από το Ταμείο Εξωτερικών Συνόρων και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Επιστροφής. Τον Μάρτιο του 2012, η συσταθείσα από την Επιτροπή Ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα, η οποία συντονίζει την τεχνική βοήθεια για την Ελλάδα, κάλεσε τα κράτη μέλη να προσφέρουν σχετική βοήθεια και να προτείνουν την διάθεση ειδικών εμπειρογνωμόνων.

Ενώ οι ελληνικές αρχές δεν ζήτησαν συγκεκριμένη τεχνική βοήθεια για τη βελτίωση των διαδικασιών κατασκευής και ανακαίνισης των κέντρων παράνομων μεταναστών και τη βελτίωση των συνθηκών διαβίωσης στα κέντρα κράτησης, το αίτημα εστιάζεται στην παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας για τη γενική διαχείριση των Ταμείων και για τη βελτίωση των εσωτερικών διαδικασιών και διεργασιών που αναμένεται να έχουν θετικό αντίκτυπο σε ό,τι αφορά την πρόοδο των έργων που χρηματοδοτούνται δυνάμει των δύο αυτών Ταμείων.

Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες, το Αξιότιμο Μέλος παραπέμπεται στην δεύτερη τριμηνιαία έκθεση της Ομάδας δράσης ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002416/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Outcome of the request by the Greek Ministry of Citizen Protection for technical assistance to accelerate the take-up of European resources

In its answer to my previous question (E-012327/2011), the Commission confirms that the Ministry of Citizen Protection has requested technical assistance to accelerate the take-up of European funding for which it is responsible, i.e. appropriations from the External Borders Fund and the European Return Fund. With the support of both these funds, the Ministry of Citizen Protection has scheduled the construction of control centres for immigrants near the external borders, the refurbishment of centres preparing illegal immigrants for repatriation and the improvement of living conditions in detention centres.

Is the Commission in a position to say what the results have been to date of the technical assistance provided to Greece in these areas? Has any improvement been observed in the efficiency of procedures for constructing and refurbishing the abovementioned centres and improving living conditions in the detention centres?

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

Greece requested technical assistance to accelerate the take-up of appropriations from the External Borders Fund and the European Return Fund. In March 2012, the Commission's Task Force for Greece, which is coordinating technical assistance for Greece, invited Member States to offer relevant assistance and to propose the deployment of dedicated experts.

While the Greek authorities did not ask for particular technical assistance to improve efficiency of procedures for constructing and refurbishing the centres for illegal migrants and improving living conditions in the detention centres, the request focuses on technical assistance for the general management of the funds and the improvement of internal procedures and processes which is expected to have a positive impact on the advancement of projects financed under the two funds.

For further information, the Honourable Member is referred to the Task Force's second quarterly report ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002417/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ενδεχόμενο ανεξαρτητοποίησης του ιρακινού Κουρδιστάν

Στην τουρκική εφημερίδα Ραντικάλ υπάρχει δημοσίευμα περί πιθανής ανεξαρτητοποίησης του ιρακινού τμήματος του Κουρδιστάν, όπως σχεδιάζει η τοπική κυβέρνηση στις 21 Μαρτίου του τρέχοντος έτους. Μια τέτοια εξέλιξη δεν μπορεί παρά να επισφραγίσει σε διεθνές επίπεδο ένα de facto καθεστώς.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

— Θεωρεί πιθανή μια τέτοια εξέλιξη;

— Έχει ερευνήσει το πώς θα αντιδράσει σε ένα τέτοιο ενδεχόμενο, ώστε να βοηθηθεί η νέα κρατική οντότητα κατά τα πρώτα της βήματα στο διεθνές περιβάλλον;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιουνίου 2012)

Από το 2004 και μετά, σε πολλά συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου για το Ιράκ, η ΕΕ έχει ταχθεί υπέρ της δημιουργίας ενός ασφαλούς, σταθερού, ενοποιημένου, ευημερούντος και δημοκρατικού Ιράκ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002417/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Possible declaration of independence by Iraqi Kurdistan

The Turkish newspaper *Radikal* has published an article on the possible declaration of independence of the Iraqi part of Kurdistan, scheduled by the regional government for 21 March this year. This development will merely confirm at the international level a situation that already exists *de facto*.

In view of the above, will the High Representative say:

— Is such a development is possible?

— Has she considered how to react to this eventuality, so that the new State can be helped in taking its first steps on the international stage?

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

The EU has expressed itself in numerous Council conclusions on Iraq since 2004, in favour of the development of a secure, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002418/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προκλήσεις της κυβέρνησης της ΠΓΔΜ

Σύμφωνα με δημοσίευμα της εφημερίδας Best στις 26.2.2012, οι πινακίδες των αυτοκινήτων στη ΠΓΔΜ μετά από κυβερνητική απόφαση θα φέρουν την ένδειξη ΜΚ.

Προβληματισμός των κατοίκων της ΠΓΔΜ θα υπάρχει μόνο σε περίπτωση που επιθυμούν να επισκεφτούν ή να διασχίσουν την ελληνική επικράτεια, αφού θα τοποθετείται επικαλυπτικό αυτοκόλλητο με την ένδειξη FYROM, το οποίο θα αφαιρούν με την έξοδο από το ελληνικό έδαφος.

Η απόφαση της κυβέρνησης της εν λόγω χώρας καταδεικνύει εσκεμμένη κλιμάκωση των προκλήσεών της προς την Ελλάδα και μεγιστοποιεί τη δυσαρέσκεια των Ελλήνων πολιτών έναντι της υπερθνικιστικής πολιτικής των Σκοπίων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι ενήμερη για την παρούσα αλλαγή στην ΠΓΔΜ και θεωρεί ότι είναι νόμιμη η χρήση της συγκεκριμένης πινακίδας σε εδάφη των χωρών μελών της ΕΕ;

— Θεωρεί ότι η αναθεωρητική και υπερεθνικιστική πολιτική της κυβέρνησης Γκρουέφσκι είναι αξιόπιστη και μπορεί να οδηγήσει σε οριστική επίλυση του προβλήματος ονομασίας με την Ελλάδα και να διευκολύνει τις ενταξιακές διαπραγματεύσεις;

— Θεωρεί τη στάση της ΠΓΔΜ σωστή και καθόλα ευρωπαϊκή αφού όντας υποψήφια προς ένταξη χώρα προκαλεί συστηματικά την Ελλάδα που αποτελεί χώρα μέλος της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για τις αλλαγές των πινακίδων κυκλοφορίας αυτοκινήτων στην πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβική Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας. Το ζήτημα αυτό δεν εμπίπτει στο κεκτημένο της ΕΕ στον κλάδο των μεταφορών και, επομένως, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να το σχολιάσει.

Η Επιτροπή έχει τακτικό διάλογο με τις εθνικές αρχές της πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβικής Δημοκρατίας της Μακεδονίας για όλα τα θέματα που έχουν σχέση με την προσχώρηση της χώρας στην ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή έχει επανειλημμένα εγείρει το ζήτημα των σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας. Η πρόοδος που έχει επιτευχθεί στον τομέα αυτό θα αξιολογηθεί για άλλη μια φορά στο πλαίσιο της έκθεσης προόδου που θα εκδοθεί το φθινόπωρο του 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002418/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Acts of provocation by the FYROM government

According to an article published in the newspaper *Best* on 26 February 2012, following a government decision, the registration plates on FYROM vehicles will henceforth carry the letters MK.

This will only cause difficulties for FYROM residents wishing to visit or pass through Greek territory, since a 'FYROM' sticker will be placed over the registration plates which they will remove when they leave Greek territory.

This decision by the government of this country is a calculated escalation of its acts of provocation towards Greece and intensifies the irritation felt by Greek citizens with Skopje's ultra-nationalistic policies.

Will the Commission say:

— Is it aware of this change by FYROM and does it believe that the use of these registration plates is legal on the territory of EU Member States?

— Does it believe that the Gruevski government's revisionary, ultra-nationalistic policy is credible and can lead to a definitive solution to the name problem with Greece and facilitate accession negotiations?

— Does it believe that FYROM is justified and that this course of action is in any way European in spirit, given that FYROM, a candidate country for accession to the EU, is continuing systematically to provoke Greece, an EU Member State?

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

The Commission is aware of the changes of vehicle registration plates in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This issue does not fall under EU transport *acquis* and the Commission is therefore in no position to comment on this issue.

The Commission maintains a regular dialogue with the national authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on all issues pertaining to the country's EU accession. The issue of good neighbourly relations has been regularly brought up by the Commission. Progress made in this field will be evaluated once again in the progress report to be issued in the autumn 2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002419/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Άρνηση της Κίνας να συμμορφωθεί προς τους ευρωπαϊκούς κανόνες αεροπλοΐας

Μετά την ανακοίνωση από κινεζικής πλευράς με την οποία καλεί τους κινεζικούς αερομεταφορείς να μην πληρώσουν τους προβλεπόμενους φόρους, αψηφώντας την ευρωπαϊκή απειλή προστίμων ή ακόμη και απαγόρευσης λειτουργίας στην ΕΕ για όσους δεν συμμορφωθούν, υπάρχει ανησυχία για το που μπορεί να οδηγήσει αυτή η αντιδικία.

Συγκεκριμένα, επικαλούμενη απόφαση του υπουργικού συμβουλίου, η κινεζική Υπηρεσία Πολιτικής Αεροπορίας ανακοίνωσε ότι δεν θα επιτραπεί στις αεροπορικές εταιρίες της χώρας να πληρώσουν το φόρο ή να τον μετακυλήσουν στους επιβάτες αυξάνοντας π.χ. τις τιμές των εισιτηρίων. Άφησε έτσι να εννοηθεί ότι η Κίνα σκέπτεται το ενδεχόμενο αντιποίνων· το επίσημο ειδησεογραφικό πρακτορείο Xinhua μετέδωσε επίσης ότι «θα εξετάσει την υιοθέτηση των απαραίτητων μέτρων για την προάσπιση των συμφερόντων φυσικών προσώπων και επιχειρήσεων, ανάλογα με το πώς θα εξελιχθεί το ζήτημα».

Εκτός από την Κίνα όμως, και οι Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες και η Ινδία αντιτίθενται σθεναρά στην επιβολή τέτοιου φόρου, με αποτέλεσμα να εκφράζονται φόβοι ακόμη και για εμπορικό πόλεμο.

Η Ένωση Αερομεταφορών Κίνας (CATA) εκτιμά ότι μόνο φέτος ο φόρος άνθρακα θα στοίχιζε στους αερομεταφορείς της χώρας 123 εκατομμύρια δολάρια. Τέσσερις μεγάλες κινεζικές αεροπορικές εταιρίες έχουν προαναγγείλει ότι δεν θα πληρώσουν τον φόρο. Η Κίνα υποστηρίζει ότι η επιβολή φόρου άνθρακα σε αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες είναι παράλογη και ζητά το κόστος της μείωσης των εκπομπών διοξειδίου του άνθρακα να επιβαρύνει τους αεροναυπηγικούς ομίλους.

Η πρωτοκαθεδρία στη προστασία του περιβάλλοντος δια του παραδείγματος δε μπορεί να έχει ουσιαστικό αποτέλεσμα χωρίς τη συνεργασία των άλλων -και κυρίως των μεγάλων- κρατών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει υπάρξει συνεργασία με τη Κίνα προκειμένου να επιλυθεί το πρόβλημα;

2. Ερευνάται το ενδεχόμενο να μειωθεί ο φόρος άνθρακα για να βρεθεί μια ενδιάμεση λύση;

Απάντηση της κας Hedegaard εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-1681/2012 του κ. Rossi ([1]).

2. Είναι σημαντικό να διευκρινιστεί ότι το ενωσιακό σύστημα εμπορίας δικαιωμάτων εκπομπής αερίων θερμοκηπίου (ΣΕΔΕ της ΕΕ) είναι ένα σύστημα που καθορίζει ανώτατο όριο συνολικών εκπομπών και δεν αποτελεί φόρο. Ενώ η Επιτροπή εμμένει στη θέση της ότι οι φορείς εκμετάλλευσης αεροσκαφών άλλων κρατών, που επιλέγουν να εκτελούν πτήσεις προς και από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, οφείλουν να τηρούν τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ, η νομοθεσία για το ΣΕΔΕ της ΕΕ παρέχει ευελιξία όσον αφορά την απαλλαγή των εισερχόμενων πτήσεων, χωρίς διακρίσεις, προκειμένου να λαμβάνονται υπόψη τα μέτρα τρίτων χωρών. Επίσης, η εν λόγω νομοθεσία ενδέχεται να τροποποιηθεί, αν επιτευχθεί παγκόσμια συμφωνία στο επίπεδο των Ηνωμένων Εθνών. Ως προς αυτό, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση που έδωσε στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-2256/2012 της κας Werthmann ([2]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002419/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: China's refusal to comply with European aviation rules

Following China's announcement that Chinese air carriers should not pay the taxes currently being projected, thoroughly disregarding the European threat of fines or even an operating ban in the EU for airlines refusing to comply, there is concern over where this dispute could lead.

Specifically invoking a decision by the State Council, the Civil Aviation Administration of China announced that it will not permit the country's airlines to pay the tax or to pass on the costs to passengers, for example, by raising the price of air tickets. It suggested that China is considering counter-measures; the official Chinese news agency Xinhua also indicated that the Chinese Government 'would examine the possibility of implementing the necessary measures to protect the interests of people and businesses, depending on how the issue develops'.

In addition to China, the United States and India are both vehemently opposed to the imposition of such a tax, with fears being expressed about a trade war.

The China Air Transport Association estimates that, for this year alone, carbon tax will cost the country's airlines USD 123 million. Four major Chinese airlines have warned that they will not pay the tax. China maintains that imposing carbon tax on developing countries is unreasonable and demands that the cost of reducing carbon dioxide emissions should be borne by aircraft manufacturers.

Leading by example, when protecting the environment, cannot have any real effect without the cooperation of other countries, first and foremost the major ones.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. Has there been any collaboration with China to solve this problem?

2. Has there been investigation into the possibility of reducing the carbon tax and finding a compromise solution?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1681/2012 by Mr Rossi ([1]).

2. It is important to clarify that the EU Emission Trading Scheme (EU ETS) is a system which defines a ceiling ('cap') for total emissions and is not a tax. While the Commission remains firm in its position that operators from other States who choose to fly to and from the European Union must respect EU legislation, the EU ETS legislation provides flexibility to exempt incoming flights on a non-discriminatory basis to take into account action by third countries. It also may be amended if a global agreement at UN level is reached. In this matter, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-2256/2012 by Mrs Werthmann [(1)].

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002420/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μέτρα προστασίας του Ιστορικού Κάστρου της Κορώνης

Στο Νομό Μεσσηνίας βρίσκεται το Ιστορικό Βενετσιάνικο Κάστρο της Κορώνης του οποίου ο Νότιο-Ανατολικός Προμαχώνας, κινδυνεύει με περαιτέρω βύθιση είτε ακόμα και με ολική κατάρρευση.

Επιστήμονες, κάτοικοι και φορείς της περιοχής του Νομού Μεσσηνίας έχουν εκφράσει επανειλημμένα την ανησυχία τους για την κατάσταση στην οποία βρίσκεται το εν λόγω Κάστρο, το οποίο αποτελεί ιστορικό μνημείο και σύμβολο της ευρύτερης περιοχής της Πελοποννήσου.

Δεδομένου ότι η Κορώνη έχει ενταχθεί στο δίκτυο της άυλης πολιτιστικής κληρονομίας της UNESCO, ότι η προστασία της πολιτιστικής κληρονομίας αποτελεί προτεραιότητα της ΕΕ, ότι το Κάστρο αποτελεί πόλο έλξης για πολλούς επισκέπτες στην περιοχή, και με δεδομένη τη δύσκολη οικονομική κατάσταση που περνάει η Ελλάδα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπάρχουν κοινοτικοί πόροι που θα μπορούσαν να χρηματοδοτήσουν την πλήρη αποκατάσταση των ζημιών και τη συντήρηση του Κάστρου της Κορώνης; Αν ναι, ποιοι συγκεκριμένα;

2. Έχει γίνει αίτηση από τις αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές, ώστε να χρηματοδοτηθεί η αποκατάσταση και συντήρηση του εν λόγω Κάστρου;

3. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να πάρει ώστε να υπάρξει ένα ολοκληρωμένο πρόγραμμα αποκατάστασης των ζημιών και συντήρησης του σημαντικού αυτού ιστορικού μνημείου;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Το ΕΤΠΑ χορήγησε για παρεμβάσεις στον τομέα του πολιτισμού στην Ελλάδα, για την περίοδο 2007-2013, ποσό ύψους 483 εκατ. ευρώ το οποίο μπορεί να κατανεμηθεί ως εξής: 284 εκατ. ευρώ για την προστασία και τη διατήρηση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, 160 εκατ. ευρώ για την ανάπτυξη πολιτιστικών υποδομών και 39 εκατ. ευρώ για τη βελτίωση των πολιτιστικών υπηρεσιών.

2. Ένα έργο με τίτλο «Στερέωση και αποκατάσταση τμημάτων του Κάστρου Κορώνης» είχε συγχρηματοδοτηθεί κατά την περίοδο 2000-2006 μέσω του προγράμματος «Πελοπόννησος 2000-2006» με ποσό ύψους 600 000 ευρώ. Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες από τις ελληνικές αρχές, δεν έχει υποβληθεί αίτηση για παρόμοιο σχέδιο μέχρι σήμερα για την περίοδο 2007-2013.

3. Σύμφωνα με την αρχή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης που εφαρμόζεται για τη διαχείριση της πολιτικής συνοχής, οι εθνικές και περιφερειακές αρχές είναι αρμόδιες για την εφαρμογή των προγραμμάτων. Σ' αυτή την αρμοδιότητα περιλαμβάνεται ο καθορισμός των στόχων των προγραμμάτων, καθώς και η επιλογή και η εφαρμογή των σχεδίων που είναι επιλέξιμα για συγχρηματοδότηση από την ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002420/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Measures for protecting the historic castle of Koroni

In the prefecture of Messinia there is a historic Venetian castle, the castle of Koroni, whose south-eastern parapet is at risk from further subsidence or even total collapse.

Experts, local residents and organisations of the Messinia prefecture have repeatedly expressed concern at the condition of the castle in question, which is a historical monument of symbolic significance for the wider Peloponnese region.

Given that Koroni has been included in Unesco's cultural heritage network, that protection of cultural heritage is a priority for the EU, that the castle is a visitors' attraction in the area, and given Greece's current difficult economic situation, will the Commission please answer the following:

1. Are there Community resources that could be used to fund the full restoration of the damage and the preservation of the castle of Koroni? If so, what are these specific resources?

2. Has an application been submitted by the responsible Greek authorities for the funding of the restoration and preservation of the castle in question?

3. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that there is a comprehensive programme for damage restoration and preservation of this important historical monument?

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

1. EUR 483 million of Greece's ERDF funding for 2007-2013 has been allocated for cultural interventions and can be broken down as follows: EUR 284 million for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage; EUR 160 million for the development of cultural infrastructure; and EUR 39 million to improve cultural services.

2. A project entitled 'Mounting and restoring of parts of the Koroni castle' was co-financed under the 2000-2006 period through the 'Peloponnese 2000-2006' Programme with an amount of EUR 600 000. According to information received from the Greek authorities, there is no similar project application so far for the 2007-2013 period.

3. In line with the principle of shared management used for the administration of cohesion policy, national and regional authorities are responsible for the implementation of the programmes. This includes setting the objectives of the programmes as well as the selection and implementation of eligible projects to receive EU co-financing.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-002421/12
à Comissão
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(1 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Aplicação do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1311/2011 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho de 13 de dezembro de 2011

A Comissão Europeia transferiu para Portugal verbas resultantes da aplicação do n.° 2 do art. 77.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1083/2006 (modificado pelo Regulamento (UE) n.° 1311/2011 de 20 de dezembro de 2011), para o pagamento retroativo de despesa declarada a partir de 24 de maio de 2011 para vários Programas Operacionais, onde se inclui o «Proconvergência».

De acordo como n.° 8 do art. 77.° do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1311/2011, o montante correspondente ao aumento dos pagamentos intermédios «deve ser posto à disposição da autoridade de gestão o mais rapidamente possível». Tendo o Estado Português recebido essas verbas em janeiro, por que razão é que ainda não as disponibilizou à autoridade de gestão dos fundos do Programa Operacional «ProconvergênciaA», a Direção Regional do Planeamento e Fundos Estruturais do Governo regional dos Açores, uma vez que já estamos em março?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2012)

O Regulamento (CE) n.° 1083/2006 do Conselho, de 11 de julho de 2006, que estabelece disposições gerais sobre o Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, o Fundo Social Europeu e o Fundo de Coesão ([1]) foi alterado em 20 de dezembro de 2011 a fim de autorizar o aumento de 10 % do reembolso das despesas no âmbito dos fundos estruturais aos Estados-Membros beneficiários de assistência financeira. A verba correspondente ao aumento de 10 % do reembolso foi transferida para Portugal em janeiro de 2012. Segundo o Regulamento de alteração (UE) n.° 1311/2011, de 20 de dezembro de 2011 ([2]), o reembolso adicional «deve ser posto à disposição da autoridade de gestão o mais rapidamente possível, e só pode ser utilizado para efetuar pagamentos no âmbito da execução do programa operacional». A Comissão está em contacto com o Estado-Membro no sentido de obter as informações necessárias sobre o modo como o Regulamento (UE) n.° 1311/2011, de 20 de dezembro de 2011, foi executado.

([1]) JO L 210 de 31.7.2006.
([2]) JO L 337 de 20.12.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002421/12
to the Commission
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1311/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011

The Commission has transferred funds to Portugal resulting from the implementation of Article 77(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (as amended by Regulation (EU) No 1311/2011 of 20 December 2011), for the back payment of expenditure declared from 24 May 2011 for various operational programmes, including the 'Proconvergência' programme.

In accordance with Article 77(8) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/20006, the increased interim payments 'shall be made available as soon as possible to the managing authority'. Given that the Portuguese Government received these funds in January, why have they not yet been made available to the managing authority responsible for 'Proconvergência' operational programme funding, namely the Azorean Regional Planning and Structural Funds Department, bearing in mind that we are now in March?

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

Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund ([1]), was amended on 20 December 2011, in order to allow an additional 10 % reimbursement on Structural Funds expenses to Member States under financial assistance. The transfer of the additional 10 % reimbursement to Portugal was made in January 2012. According to the amending Regulation (EU) No 1311/2011 of 20 December 2011 ([2]), the additional reimbursement 'shall be made available as soon as possible to the managing authority and shall only be used for making payments in the implementation of the operational programmes'. The Commission is in contact with the Member State in order to obtain the necessary information on how the regulation No 1311/2011 of 20 December 2011 had been implemented.

([1]) OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.
([2]) OJ L 337, 20.12.2011.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002422/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(1. marts 2012)

Om: Anvendelsen af offentlige midler i Agenturet for Grundlæggende Rettigheder

I hvilket omfang har Kommissionen kontrol med de penge, som EU's Agentur for Grundlæggende Rettigheder disponerer over?

EU-agenturet ledes, som det vil være Kommissionen bekendt, af den danske direktør Morten Kjærum. Den danske Rigsrevision har nu afsløret, at der under Morten Kjærums ledelse af det danske Institut for Menneskerettigheder 2002-2008 har været omfattende regnskabsfusk, og at offentlige midler med Morten Kjærums viden er blevet anvendt i strid med gældende lov og formålsbeskrivelse.

Under hensyntagen til, at EU's Agentur for Grundlæggende Rettigheder disponerer over et langt større budget end det danske institut, bør de afdækkede forhold fra tiden, hvor Morten Kjærum bestyrede Institut for Menneskerettigheder i Danmark, foranledige en omfattende revision af pengeanvendelsen i EU's agentur, herunder om den ulovlige omgang med offentlige midler er fortsat i EU.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(20. april 2012)

1. EU-agenturet for Grundlæggende Rettigheder er et EU-organ med status som juridisk person. Agenturets direktør har ansvar for gennemførelse af dets budget under tilsyn fra dets bestyrelse og i overensstemmelse med retsakten om agenturets oprettelse.

2. EU-agenturet for Grundlæggende Rettigheder har de seneste år været genstand for jævnlige revisioner, som er blevet gennemført af Kommissionens interne revisionstjeneste på vegne af agenturet og Revisionsretten. For regnskabsårene 2008-2010 erklærede Revisionsretten således bl.a., at de underliggende transaktioner i forbindelse med agenturets årsregnskaber i enhver henseende var lovlige og formelt rigtige.

3. Agenturets bestyrelse, hvor Kommissionens to repræsentanter og de uafhængige personer, der er udpeget af hver medlemsstat, har stemmeret i budgetanliggender, vedtager desuden agenturets årlige budgetforslag og endelige budgetter.

4. Der er også mulighed for, at OLAF kan intervenere, hvis der er tilstrækkeligt begrundet mistanke om svig, korruption eller uregelmæssigheder, der kan være til skade for EU's finansielle interesser.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002422/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Use of public funds in the Agency for Fundamental Rights

To what extent does the Commission monitor the money at the disposal of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights?

This EU agency is headed, as the Commission will be aware, by its Danish director Morten Kjærum. *Rigsrevisionen* (the National Audit Office of Denmark) has now revealed that there was a widespread incidence of false accounting while Mr Kjærum was head of the Danish Institute for Human Rights between 2002 and 2008, and that public funds were used, with Mr Kjærum's knowledge, contrary to applicable law and their intended use.

Bearing in mind that the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has a much larger budget than the Danish body, the circumstances uncovered in relation to Mr Kjærum's period in charge of the Danish Institute for Human Rights should give rise to a comprehensive audit of the use of resources at the EU agency, *inter alia* to see whether the unlawful use of public funds has continued at EU level.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

1. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights is a Union body with legal personality. Its Director is responsible for the implementation of its budget, under the control of its Management Board, in accordance with the basic act establishing the Agency.

2. Over the past years, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights has been subjected to regular audits, by the Internal Audit Service of the Commission acting on behalf of the Agency and the EU Court of Auditors. In particular, for the financial years 2008 to 2010, the latter stated that the transactions underlying the annual accounts of the Agency had been, in all material respects, legal and regular.

3. In addition to these controls, the Management Board of the Agency, where the two Commission representatives and the independent persons appointed by each Member States have voting rights in budget matters, adopt the Agency's annual draft and final budgets.

4. OLAF may also intervene whenever there are sufficiently serious suspicions of fraud, corruption or irregularities detrimental to EU financial interests.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002424/12
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Forcierung des Sojaanbaus in der EU

Die Europäische Union ist mit einem eklatanten Proteindefizit konfrontiert und ist vor allem im Futtermittelbereich in einem hohen Ausmaß von Importen abhängig. Bekanntlich fokussiert die Eiweißversorgung primär auf Sojaprodukte, die überwiegend aus genetisch veränderten Organismen (GVO) hergestellt werden und aus den Erzeugerländern USA, Argentinien und Brasilien stammen. Ein GVO-freier Sojaanbau in der EU braucht mittel- bis langfristig eine europäische Sojabohnenzüchtung und -forschung.

Welche Bestrebungen gibt es im Rahmen der Reform der GAP, die Importabhängigkeit zu reduzieren und die europäische Eiweißlücke mit Eigenproduktion zu schließen?

Welche Initiativen gibt es seitens der EU, den eklatanten Eiweißmangel bei der Tierfütterung zu reduzieren?

Gibt es konkrete Initiativen in den Mitgliedstaaten, die Eiweißversorgung zu verbessern?

Gibt es Initiativen, den Sojaanbau zu forcieren? Wenn ja, in welchen Ländern?

Wie sind der Stand und die Perspektive des Sojaanbaues in jenen Ländern der EU, die bereits Soja anbauen?

Gibt es Forschungsprogramme für eine europäische Sojabohnenzüchtung, die mittelfristig besonders entscheidend würde, wenn die Versorgung mit GVO-freiem Material aus Übersee nicht mehr gegeben sein sollte?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(20. April 2012)

Es gab bereits zahlreiche Regelungen zur Förderung der einheimischen Erzeugung von pflanzlichem Eiweiß für die Mischfuttermittelindustrie. Diese Maßnahmen waren teuer und haben weder zu einem nennenswerten Wachstum der europäischen Erzeugung noch zu einer Effizienzsteigerung des betreffenden Sektors geführt. Die europäische Landwirtschaft muss in erster Linie auf die Nachfrage der Märkte reagieren. Dieser Ansatz sieht keine allgemeinen gekoppelten Stützungsmaßnahmen vor ([1]). Gemäß den GAP-Reformvorschlägen von Oktober 2011 gibt es begrenzte Möglichkeiten für die Mitgliedstaaten, als Reaktion auf spezifische sektorale und regionale Erfordernisse gekoppelte Stützungsmaßnahmen vorzusehen.

Nebenprodukte der Lebensmittel-, Getränke- und Biokraftstoffindustrie gewinnen zunehmend an Bedeutung für die Versorgung der EU mit Eiweißfuttermitteln. Die EU-Zulassungsregelung für Futtermittelzusatzstoffe erlaubt die uneingeschränkte Nutzung dieser Futtermittel-Ausgangserzeugnisse, indem sie für eine optimale Ernährung beigemischt werden. Außerdem erleichtert die neue Verordnung über das Inverkehrbringen von Futtermitteln ([2]) den Zugang von Eiweißfuttermitteln zum EU-Markt, da das Zulassungsverfahren für sogenannte Bioproteine vor ihrem Inverkehrbringen, das sich als Hindernis erwiesen hat, abgeschafft wird.

Die Kommission finanziert im Zuge ihres 7. Rahmenprogramms das Projekt LEGUME FUTURES, mit dem die Bedeutung von Leguminosen für landwirtschaftliche Produktionssysteme bewertet und neuartige, auf Leguminosen basierende Anbausysteme für unterschiedliche Klimabedingungen entwickelt werden sollen. Sie prüft die Möglichkeit, Forschungsarbeiten zur Züchtung und Bewirtschaftung von Leguminosen (ausgenommen Soja) für Lebens- und Futtermittel zu fördern.

([1]) Zurzeit führen nur Frankreich, Polen, Finnland und Spanien besondere Stützungsmaßnahmen für Ölsaaten und Eiweißpflanzen gemäß Artikel 68 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 73/2009 des Rates durch.

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 767/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 13. Juli 2009 über das Inverkehrbringen und die Verwendung von Futtermitteln, ABl. L 229 vom 1.9.2009, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002424/12
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Stepping up soya farming in the EU

The European Union is faced with an extreme protein deficit and is very much dependent on imports in the area of animal feed in particular. It is well-known that protein provision focuses primarily on soya products, which are mainly made from genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and originate in the US, Argentina and Brazil. GMO-free soya farming in the EU requires, in the medium to long term, a European soya bean cultivation and research programme.

What efforts are being made as part of the CAP reform to reduce Europe's dependence on imports and to close the European protein deficit gap with EU production?

What EU initiatives are there to reduce the extreme lack of animal feed protein?

Are there specific initiatives in the Member States to improve protein supply?

Are there initiatives to step up soya farming? If so, in which countries?

What is the current position with regard to soya farming, and what are its prospects, in those EU countries that already cultivate soya?

Are there research programmes for European soya bean cultivation, which would be particularly important in the medium term if the supply of GMO-free material from overseas were to end?

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

In the past numerous schemes existed to support domestic production of plant protein for the compound feed industry. These measures were costly and had not induced a major growth of European production and of efficiency of the related sector. Europe's agriculture has first to react to markets demands. This approach implies no general coupled support measures ([1]). The October 2011 CAP reform proposals foresees some limited possibilities for Member states to provide coupled support to answer to specific sectorial and regional needs.

By-products of the food-, drink- and biofuel-industry are increasingly important in the EU-supply with protein feed. The EU authorisation regime for feed additives allows to fully valorise these feed materials by supplementing them to obtain the optimal diet. Further, the new Feed Marketing Regulation ([2]) facilitates the entry of protein feed to the EU market by abandoning the prohibitive pre-market authorisation procedure for the so called bio-proteins.

The Commission is funding under its 7th Framework Programme (FP7) project LEGUME FUTURES to assess the wider role of legumes in farming systems and to design novel legume based cropping systems for different climatic conditions. The Commission is considering the possibility to support research on breeding and management of legume crops (excluding soya) for food and feed.

([1]) Currently only France, Poland, Finland and Spain have implemented a specific support for oilseeds and protein crops under Article 68 of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 767/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on the placing on the market and use of feed OJ L 229, 1.9.2009, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002425/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Vermisste Personen auf Zypern

Der Hohen Vertreterin ist die Problematik um die vermissten Personen auf Zypern im Zusammenhang mit der Militärinvasion vom Juli 1974 sicherlich bekannt. Das Schicksal dieser Menschen ist nach wie vor ungeklärt.

Bis heute warten viele der betroffenen Familien und Eltern auf Nachricht und Informationen darüber, was damals mit ihren Familienmitgliedern geschah.

1. Was hat die Hohe Vertreterin bisher unternommen, damit diese Problematik aufgeklärt wird und den betroffenen Familien Informationen über ihre vermissten Familienangehörigen zugänglich gemacht werden?

2. Was ist die Strategie, und wie gedenkt die Europäische Union, die betroffenen Familien zu unterstützen und damit die seit vielen Jahren überfällige Aufklärung der damaligen Vorfälle sowie eine gegebenenfalls erforderliche Wiedergutmachung voranzutreiben?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2012)

Die Kommission ist sich durchaus der menschlichen Dimension der Folgen der tragischen Ereignisse, auf die die Frau Abgeordnete Bezug nimmt, für die Bevölkerung der gesamten Insel bewusst.

Die Kommission unterstützt auch weiterhin umfassend die Arbeit des unter der Schirmherrschaft der Vereinten Nationen stehenden Ausschusses für die Vermissten in Zypern. Das Mandat dieses Ausschusses, den Verbleib der Vermissten festzustellen, ist rein humanitärer Natur. Der Ausschuss versucht nicht, die Todesursachen oder die für den Tod vermisster Personen verantwortlichen Personen zu ermitteln.

Die EU ist mit einem Gesamtbeitrag von 6,5 Mio. EUR größter Einzelgeber für den Ausschuss für die Vermissten. Davon gehen 5 Mio. EUR auf die Initiative des Parlaments zurück.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002425/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Missing persons in Cyprus

The High Representative is no doubt aware of the problem of missing persons in Cyprus in the context of the military invasion of July 1974. The fate of these people is still unclear.

Many of the affected families and parents are still waiting to this day for information about what happened to their family members at that time.

1. What steps has the High Representative taken to date to ensure that this problem is resolved and that the families concerned are granted access to information about their missing relatives?

2. What overall approach is the EU taking to this problem, and how does it intend to support the families concerned in their efforts to secure a long overdue investigation of the events of that time and, where appropriate, compensation?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The Commission is very sensitive to the human dimension of the consequences of the tragic events referred to by the Honourable Member for the population throughout the island.

The Commission continues to fully support the work of the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) in Cyprus operating under the auspices of the United Nations. The mandate of the CMP is purely humanitarian, to establish the fate of the missing persons. The Committee does not attempt to establish the cause of death or attribute responsibility for the death of missing persons.

The EU is the largest single contributor to the Committee on Missing Persons with a total contribution of EUR 6.5 million, of which EUR 5 million were at the initiative of Parliament.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002426/12
an den Rat
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1. März 2012)

Betrifft: Rückgabe von Kunstwerken

Das kulturelle Erbe der EU und ihrer Mitgliedstaaten hat im Laufe der Jahrhunderte infolge von Kriegen, Invasionen und Kolonisierung gelitten.

Zu viele Kunstwerke befinden sich auch heute noch nicht an ihrem ursprünglichen Platz, sondern an anderen Orten in Europa oder auf anderen Kontinenten.

Das Schicksal des künstlerischen Erbes Europas darf nicht der Willkür oder der Großzügigkeit von Privatleuten überlassen werden.

Ebenso ist es nicht akzeptabel, dass manche nationale Organisationen Geld aufbringen müssen, um ihre Kunst zurückzukaufen.

Der Grundsatz der Solidarität scheint mit der oben beschriebenen Situation und den durch die wirtschaftliche Lage Europas verursachten wirtschaftlichen Zwängen nicht in Einklang zu stehen.

Wie beabsichtigt der Rat dafür zu sorgen, dass Kunstwerke zur Förderung des gemeinsamen kulturellen Erbes Europas in die Mitgliedstaaten, aus denen sie stammen, zurückgeführt werden?

Antwort
(30. April 2012)

Der Rat möchte darauf hinweisen, dass die Rückgabe von Kunstwerken durch die Richtlinie 93/7/EWG des Rates vom 15. März 1993 über die Rückgabe von unrechtmäßig aus dem Hoheitsgebiet eines Mitgliedstaats verbrachten Kulturgütern ([1]) und durch die Verordnung (EWG) Nr. 116/2009 des Rates vom 18. Dezember 2008 über die Ausfuhr von Kulturgütern ([2]) geregelt ist. Ziel war die Einführung einer Regelung der Europäischen Union zum Schutz der Kulturgüter der Mitgliedstaaten ([3]). Zu diesem Zweck ist in der Richtlinie 93/7/EWG des Rates ein Verfahren für die Rückgabe von unrechtmäßig aus dem Hoheitsgebiet eines Mitgliedstaats verbrachten Kulturgütern ([4]) und ein diesbezüglicher Mechanismus für die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten ([5]) vorgesehen.

Die Kommission übermittelt dem Europäischen Parlament, dem Rat und dem Europäischen Wirt-schafts- und Sozialausschuss alle drei Jahre einen Bericht mit einer Bewertung der Durchführung der Richtlinie 93/7/EWG ([6]). Gemäß Artikel 16 Absatz 3 überprüft der Rat die Wirksamkeit dieser Richtlinie und nimmt auf Vorschlag der Kommission die erforderlichen Anpassungen vor. In diesem Zusammenhang möchte der Rat die Frau Abgeordnete darauf aufmerksam machen, dass die Kommission im Hinblick auf eine mögliche Überarbeitung der Richtlinie 93/7/EWG im November 2011 eine öffentliche Anhörung eingeleitet hat ([7]). Erhält der Rat einen diesbezüglichen Vorschlag von der Kommission, wird er die Frage eingehend prüfen.

([1]) ABl. L 74 vom 27.3.1993, S. 74 (geändert durch die Richtlinie 96/100/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 17. Februar 1997 und die Richtlinie 2001/38/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 5. Juni 2001).
([2]) ABl. L 39 vom 10.2.2009, S. 1.
([3]) Richtlinie 93/7/EWG des Rates, letzter Erwägungsgrund.
([4]) Ebenda, Artikel 2.
([5]) Ebenda, Artikel 4.
([6]) Ebenda, Artikel 16 Absatz 2.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002426/12
to the Council
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Restitution of art pieces

The cultural heritage of the EU and its Member States has suffered over the centuries from the consequences of wars, invasions and colonisation.

Far too many art pieces are still found at different locations both in and outside the EU.

The fate of Europe's art heritage cannot be left to chance or to the generosity of private bidders.

It is equally unacceptable that some national organisations have to collect money to re-purchase their countries' art.

The above situation and the economic constraints arising from the economic situation facing the EU would appear to be at odds with the principle of solidarity.

How does the Council intend to ensure that art pieces are returned to their Member State of origin, so as to promote Europe's common cultural heritage?

Reply
(30 April 2012)

The Council would recall that the return of art objects is regulated by Council Directive 93/7/EEC of 15 March 1993 on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State ([1]) and Council Regulation (EC) No 116/2009 of 18 December 2008 on the export of cultural goods ([2]). The aim was to introduce a European Union system to protect Member States' cultural objects ([3]). To this end, Council Directive 93/7/EEC sets out the procedure for the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State ([4]) and establishes for this purpose a cooperation mechanism between Member States' authorities ([5]).

The Commission shall send the European Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee, every three years, a report reviewing the application of Directive 93/7/EEC ([6]). According to Article 16(3), the Council shall review the effectiveness of the directive and, acting on a proposal from the Commission, make any necessary adaptations. In this regard, the attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the public consultation, launched by the Commission in November 2011, on a possible revision of Directive 93/7/EEC ([7]). When the Council receives a proposal from the Commission in this regard, it will examine it with due attention.

([1]) OJ L 74, 27.3.1993, p. 74 (amended by Directive 96/100/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 February 1997 and by Directive 2001/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2001).
([2]) OJ L 39, 10.2.2009, p. 1.
([3]) Council Directive 93/7/EEC, last recital.
([4]) Idem, Article 2.
([5]) Idem, Article 4.
([6]) Idem, Article 16(2).
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002428/12
alla Commissione
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Global Intelligence Files di WikiLeaks, attività generalizzate di data mining da parte degli Stati Uniti e dell'UE, e profiling di cittadini dell'UE

Il 27 febbraio 2012 WikiLeaks ha lanciato «The Global Intelligence Files», da cui è emerso che:

1. Le autorità di contrasto statunitensi si avvalgono di aziende private al fine di monitorare, analizzare e contrastare le attività di attivisti e manifestanti pacifici, ad esempio tramite Stratfor, un'azienda che fornisce servizi riservati di intelligence a grandi società e alle agenzie governative interessate, con le quali l'azienda intrattiene relazioni strette (ex dipendenti del governo USA lavorano adesso per la Stratfor) così come le intrattiene con importanti imprese mediatiche (tra cui la Reuters).

2. Palantir, una società fondata dall'azienda della CIA In-Q-Tel ([1]), fornisce alle autorità statunitensi i software per collegare i dati provenienti da diverse basi dati (dati sul codice di prenotazione, dati bancari, dati relativi a trasferimenti finanziari, dati sull'ubicazione e sulle comunicazioni) con dati da fonte aperta (quali Twitter e Facebook) al fine di individuare, sulla base di modelli di un non meglio definito «comportamento sospetto», le persone che presentano un «rischio».

3. Facebook, a quanto si afferma, è finanziato dalla CIA tramite altre aziende e amministratori che hanno ricevuto o ricevono fondi per mezzo di In-Q-Tel.

Inoltre il Dipartimento per la Sicurezza interna (DHS) ha dato incarico all'azienda privata General Dynamics di monitorare i media e i social media al fine di attuare la propria politica ([2]); ciò ha determinato, ad esempio, l'arresto, l'interrogatorio e l'espulsione di due innocenti turisti dell'UE, Leigh Van Bryan ed Emily Bunting, per via di alcune battute su Twitter ([3]).

Viene riferito che Europol impiega intelligence da fonte aperta e processi di data mining

(estrazione di dati) e di profiling (profilazione) basati sui pacchetti software I2 e Themis ([4]), ed è cliente di Orgnet.com, un'azienda che fornisce «software e servizi per l'analisi dei social network». Inoltre, in relazione alla revisione del regolamento su Europol, un funzionario della Commissione ha annunciato progetti volti a consentire operazioni che comportano «ricerche su Internet» da parte di Europol.

È la Commissione a conoscenza delle questioni summenzionate?

Ritiene che le situazioni descritte siano compatibili con la direttiva 95/46/CE, del 24 ottobre 1995, con la Carta dei diritti fondamentali e con la Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo?

Quali provvedimenti intende adottare per garantire che i dati personali dei cittadini dell'UE non siano oggetto di abusi da parte di aziende private statunitensi e autorità di contrasto mediante attività generalizzate di data mining e profiling?

Intende chiedere informazioni circa i criteri applicati e le persone che sono considerate un «pericolo», nonché difendere i diritti dei cittadini dell'UE?

Che cosa ha fatto per difendere i diritti dei cittadini europei Leigh Van Bryan ed Emily Bunting?

Intende esprimere la sua preoccupazione in merito a tale incidente?

Ritiene che la proposta di estensione del mandato di Europol sia compatibile con i trattati?

Quali provvedimenti intende adottare per garantire che Europol e gli Stati membri non seguano questa prassi preoccupante di spiare segretamente le vite private dei cittadini?

([1]) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palantir_Technologies.
([2]) http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/privacy/privacy_pia_ops_publiclyavailablesocialmedia.pdf
([3]) http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2093796/Emily-Bunting-Leigh-Van-Bryan-UK-tourists-arrested-destroy-America-Twitter-jokes.html#ixzz1nmxPbsDQ.
([4]) http://www.statewatch.org/news/2012/feb/eu-profiling-and-europol-question.pdf

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(11 maggio 2012)

La Commissione non è in possesso di cifre riguardanti le aziende private che forniscono software o altri servizi alle autorità di contrasto statunitensi.

Tuttavia la Commissione ritiene che, nel caso in cui un'autorità governativa degli Stati Uniti necessiti di informazioni che non sono soggette alla sua giurisdizione, il canale adeguato per ottenere i dati in questione debba consistere nei meccanismi di cooperazione giudiziaria vigenti con gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea in cui si trovano i dati. Fra tali strumenti si annoverano gli accordi bilaterali di assistenza giudiziaria reciproca e, più specificamente, l'accordo sottoscritto in materia tra l'Unione europea e gli Stati Uniti d'America.

La Commissione ritiene altresì che sia di importanza fondamentale rafforzare la cooperazione tra le autorità di contrasto UE-USA attraverso un quadro giuridico globale e coerente per la protezione dei dati, che preveda la possibilità per ogni soggetto di far valere i propri diritti di protezione dei dati e di presentare un ricorso giudiziario. La Commissione sta attualmente negoziando tale quadro giuridico, dopo aver ricevuto un mandato in tal senso dal Consiglio dei ministri ([5]).

Sia il sistema protetto di scambio di informazioni (*secure information exchange network application* — SIENA) che il sistema di informazione Europol (*Europol Information System* — EIS), sono applicazioni sviluppate internamente ([6]). Europol non è un cliente di Orgnet.com ([7]). La Commissione non intende ampliare il mandato di Europol, ma piuttosto aiutare a migliorarne il quadro di intelligence assicurando al contempo il rispetto delle disposizioni in materia di protezione dei dati.

Fatti salvi i poteri della Commissione in qualità di custode dei trattati, il controllo e l'applicazione della normativa per la protezione dei dati, incluso le indagini di eventuali casi di violazione o l'imposizione di sanzioni ai responsabili del trattamento dei dati, sono di competenza delle autorità nazionali, segnatamente delle autorità di controllo preposte alla protezione dei dati negli Stati membri. La Commissione è fiduciosa che tali autorità adotteranno le misure necessarie nei casi che rientrano nella loro giurisdizione e in cui è applicabile il diritto dell'Unione in materia di protezione dei dati.

([5]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/it/jha/118842.pdf
([6]) Le principali applicazioni utilizzate nelle attività operative sono fornite dalle seguenti aziende: I2 per i software di analisi e data mining, Themis per i pacchetti di text mining e Open Text per il sistema di gestione dei documenti.
([7]) Orgnet.com ha solamente fornito una formazione introduttiva ad alcuni analisti di Europol nel novembre 2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002428/12
to the Commission
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: WikiLeaks Global Intelligence Files, generalised data mining by the US and EU, and profiling of EU citizens

On 27 February 2012 WikiLeaks launched 'The Global Intelligence Files', which reveal that:

1. US law enforcement agencies rely on private companies to monitor, analyse and counter the activities of peaceful activists and protestors, for instance via the company Stratfor, a provider of confidential intelligence services to large corporations and law enforcement government agencies, with whom the company has close connections (former US personnel are now working for Stratfor), as it does with major media companies (including Reuters);

2. Palantir, a firm funded by the CIA company In-Q-Tel ([1]), provides US agencies with software to connect data from different databases (passenger name records, bank data, financial transfer data and location and communication data) and open-source data (from networks such as Twitter and Facebook) in order to identify, on the basis of patterns of undefined 'suspicious behavior', individuals who present a 'risk';

3. Facebook is allegedly financed by the CIA via other companies and board members, who receive, or have received, funding via In-Q-Tel.

Furthermore, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has hired the private company General Dynamics to provide media and social media monitoring in order to implement DHS policy ([2]); this led, for instance, to the arrest, interrogation and expulsion of two innocent EU tourists, Leigh Van Bryan and Emily Bunting, on account of Twitter jokes ([3]).

Europol is reported as using open-source intelligence, data mining and profiling processes based on the I2 and Themis software packages ([4]), and is a client of Orgnet.com, a company providing 'social network analysis software and services'. In connection with the revision of the Europol regulation, a Commission official has also announced plans to allow operations involving 'searching on the Internet' by Europol.

Is the Commission aware of the above issues?

Does it think the situations outlined above are compatible with Directive 95/46/EC of 24 October 1995, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights?

What will it do to ensure that EU citizens' personal data are not misused by private US companies and law enforcement agencies through generalised data mining and profiling activities?

Will it enquire as to which criteria and people are considered to constitute a 'risk', and defend the rights of EU citizens?

What did it do to defend the rights of EU citizens Leigh Van Bryan and Emily Bunting?

Will it express its concerns about that incident?

Does it think that the proposed broadening of Europol's mandate is compatible with the Treaties?

What will it do to ensure that Europol and the Member States do not embark on this worrying path of secretly snooping into people's private lives?

([1]) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palantir_Technologies.
([2]) http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/privacy/privacy_pia_ops_publiclyavailablesocialmedia.pdf
([3]) http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2093796/Emily-Bunting-Leigh-Van-Bryan-UK-tourists-arrested-destroy-America-Twitter-jokes.html#ixzz1nmxPbsDQ.
([4]) http://www.statewatch.org/news/2012/feb/eu-profiling-and-europol-question.pdf

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 May 2012)

The Commission does not have figures regarding private companies providing software or other services to United States (US) law enforcement authorities.

The Commission considers, however, that when a US government authority realises that necessary information is outside its jurisdiction, the appropriate channel to obtain the data should be the legal cooperation mechanisms that are in place with European Union (EU) Member States where those data are located. Such instruments are, among others, the bilateral Mutual Legal Assistance agreements and, more specifically, the EU-US Mutual Legal Assistance agreement.

The Commission also believes that it is of the utmost importance to underpin the EU-US law enforcement cooperation with a general and coherent data protection legal framework, with enforceable data protection rights and judicial redress for every individual, which the Commission is currently negotiating, upon receiving a mandate from the Council of Ministers ([5]).

The secure information exchange system (SIENA) as well as the Europol Information System (EIS) are in-house developed applications ([6]). Europol is not a client of Orgnet.com ([7]). The Commission does not intend to broaden Europol's mandate, but rather to help it improve its intelligence picture whilst ensuring compliance with the data protection requirements.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation including to investigate possible cases of non-compliance or to impose penalties to data controllers falls under the competence of national authorities, in particular, data protection supervisory authorities in the Member States. The Commission is confident that such authorities will take the necessary measures in cases falling under their jurisdiction and when EU data protection law is applicable.

([5]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/118183.pdf
([6]) The main applications used for the operational work are provided by the following companies: I2 for analysis and data mining software, Themis for text mining packages and Open text for the Document Management System.
([7]) Orgnet.com only provided introductory training to some Europol analysts in November 2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002429/12
alla Commissione
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Azioni degli Stati Uniti contro WikiLeaks, Assange e i presunti attivisti di Anonymous

Il 27 febbraio 2012, WikiLeaks ha lanciato «The Global Intelligence Files», da cui emerge che le autorità di contrasto statunitensi hanno segretamente formulato dei capi d'imputazione — a quanto pare per terrorismo e associazione per delinquere — contro Julian Assange e persone collegate a WikiLeaks; esse stanno esercitando pressioni per ottenere l'estradizione di Assange negli Stati Uniti, e intendono applicare nei confronti suoi e di altre persone collegate a WikiLeaks la stessa linea che gli USA hanno adottato nei confronti di Al Qaeda. In seguito alla pubblicazione, anche tramite media internazionali, dei file Stratfor in possesso di una «CIA parallela», l'Interpol ha effettuato una serie di arresti di presunti attivisti di Anonymous di età compresa tra i 16 e i 40 anni.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questi fatti?

Ritiene che essi siano compatibili con i trattati, con la Carta dei diritti fondamentali e con la Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo?

Che cosa intende fare per garantire che Assange, gli attivisti di WikiLeaks e le persone legate ai media non siano perseguitati o estradati negli Stati Uniti, dove rischierebbero di essere sottoposti a procedure segrete che comportano persecuzioni, torture e trattamenti inumani o degradanti, ivi compresa la detenzione a Guantanamo, com'è accaduto e accade ad altri?

È in grado di confermare che la convenzione di estradizione UE-USA non consente tali estradizioni?

In relazione agli attivisti di WikiLeaks, ad Assange e ai presunti attivisti di Anonymous, che cosa intende fare la Commissione per garantire che la libertà d'informazione, la segretezza delle fonti giornalistiche, la libertà di espressione e di manifestazione, il diritto a un processo equo e il diritto a non essere estradati in un paese in cui le persone rischiano di essere perseguitate, torturate o sottoposte a trattamenti inumani o degradanti, tra cui la detenzione in isolamento e i processi militari, siano rispettati nell'UE come previsto dai trattati, dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali e dalla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente del caso menzionato e lo sta seguendo da vicino, ma non è a conoscenza di alcuna richiesta di una possibile estradizione di Julian Assange negli Stati Uniti.

Qualora venisse presentata in futuro una richiesta di estradizione dalla Svezia agli Stati Uniti, ciò sarebbe unicamente possibile con il consenso dello Stato Membro che effettua la consegna, in questo caso il Regno Unito. In effetti, in base all'art. 28 della decisione quadro del Consiglio del 13 giugno 2002 relativa al mandato d'arresto europeo (MAE), la persona che è stata consegnata a seguito di un mandato d'arresto europeo non è estradata verso uno paese terzo senza l'assenso delle autorità competenti dello Stato membro che ha provveduto alla consegna.

Il rispetto dei diritti fondamentali nell'applicazione delle leggi dell'Unione da parte di uno Stato membro, sancito dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, è della massima importanza per la Commissione. Ciò vale anche per l'ambito delle procedure di estradizione, tra Stati membri e ancor di più verso un paese terzo.

La decisione quadro del Consiglio sul mandato d'arresto europeo ([1]) contiene garanzie specifiche volte a evitare la consegna in caso di rischio di mancato rispetto di tali diritti.

([1]) Decisione quadro del Consiglio del 13 giugno 2002 relativa al mandato d'arresto europeo e alle procedure di consegna tra Stati membri (2002/584/GAI), considerando 13: Nessuna persona dovrebbe essere allontanata, espulsa o estradata verso uno Stato allorquando sussista un serio rischio che essa venga sottoposta alla pena di morte, alla tortura o ad altri trattamenti o pene inumane o degradanti.

L'accordo sull'estradizione tra l'Unione europea e gli Stati Uniti d'America ([2]) integra i trattati bilaterali esistenti. Esso ricorda nel preambolo il diritto dell'estradato a un processo equo nonché il diritto ad una sentenza pronunciata da un tribunale imparziale costituito a norma di legge, e chiarisce che l'estradizione può essere rifiutata qualora il reato per cui si chiede l'estradizione sia punibile con la pena di morte.

La Commissione europea sta valutando con attenzione le possibili implicazioni che le recenti leggi USA sul terrorismo potrebbero avere sulla cooperazione giudiziaria.

([2]) Entrato in vigore nel febbraio 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002429/12
to the Commission
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: US actions against WikiLeaks, Julian Assange and alleged Anonymous activists

On 27 February 2012 WikiLeaks launched 'The Global Intelligence Files', which reveal that US law enforcement agencies have secretly indicted — apparently for terrorism and conspiracy — Julian Assange and people connected to WikiLeaks; they are pushing for Assange's extradition to the US, and wish to apply to him and other people connected to WikiLeaks the same policy as that adopted by the US in respect of al-Qa'ida. Following the publication, including via international media, of the Stratfor files held by a 'parallel CIA', Interpol has carried out a series of arrests of alleged Anonymous activists aged between 16 and 40.

Is the Commission aware of these facts?

Does it think they are compatible with the Treaties, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights?

What will the Commission do to ensure that Assange, WikiLeaks activists and people connected with the media are not persecuted or extradited to the US, as they risk being subjected to secret procedures leading to persecution, torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, including imprisonment in Guantanamo, as has been the case for others?

Can it confirm that the EU-US Extradition Convention does not allow for such extraditions?

In relation to WikiLeaks activists, Assange and alleged Anonymous activists, what will the Commission do to ensure that freedom of information, secrecy of journalistic sources, freedom of expression and demonstration, the right to a fair trial and the right not to be extradited to a country where people are at risk of being persecuted, tortured or subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment, including incommunicado detention and military trials, are respected in the EU as provided for in the Treaties, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

The Commission is fully aware of this case and following it closely. The Commission is not aware of any request regarding the potential extradition of Mr Assange to the United States.

Should there be a request in the future for his extradition from Sweden to the United States, this could only happen with the consent of the surrendering Member State, which would be the United Kingdom in this case. Indeed, pursuant to Article 28 of the Council Framework Decision establishing the European Arrest Warrant (EAW), a person who has been surrendered pursuant to a European Arrest Warrant shall not be extradited to a third State without the consent of the competent authority of the Member State which surrendered the person.

The respect of fundamental rights, when Member States implement EC law, as set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, is of utmost importance for the Commission, including in the domain of extradition procedures, both between Member States and even more so in relation to third countries.

The framework Decision on the European Arrest Warrant ([1]) contains specific safeguards to prevent surrender when such rights are at risk.

([1]) Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant and the surrender procedures between Member States (2002/584/JHA) — Recital 13: No person should be removed, expelled or extradited to a State where there is a serious risk that he or she would be subjected to the death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The Agreement on Extradition between the European Union and the United States of America ([2]) supplements existing bilateral treaties. It recalls in its preamble the right of an extradited person to a fair trial, including the right to adjudication by an impartial tribunal established under law, and clarifies that extradition may be denied in cases in which capital punishment may be imposed to the person sought.

The European Commission is carefully assessing the possible implications of recent US counter-terrorism legislation on judicial cooperation.

([2]) Which entered into force in February 2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002430/12
alla Commissione
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Intimazioni degli Stati Uniti a società private che detengono dati di cittadini dell'UE

Le autorità statunitensi hanno emesso un'intimazione («subpoena») nei confronti di SWIFT, imponendole di fornire dati finanziari, presumibilmente a fini di antiterrorismo; ciò ha provocato una controversia con l'UE, in seguito alla quale è stato negoziato e adottato un trattato internazionale mirante a disciplinare tale accesso e a tentare di garantire che le autorità statunitensi non facciano un uso scorretto dei dati per scopi diversi, ad esempio per controllare le aziende dell'UE a fini commerciali e industriali o per spiare i dati finanziari dei cittadini dell'UE. È possibile che siano state oggetto di intimazioni analoghe altre società private che sono in possesso di dati privati di carattere personale di cittadini dell'UE, quali società emittenti di carte di credito, aziende di telecomunicazioni, fornitori di apparecchiature mobili, fornitori di servizi Internet, banche, fornitori di motori di ricerca Internet e di altre applicazioni, e società di media o social media. Ciò sarebbe in contrasto con la tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali prevista dalla direttiva 95/46/CE [1] del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 ottobre 1995, nonché con la Carta dei diritti fondamentali e con la Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

La Commissione è in possesso di informazioni, di qualsiasi fonte, in merito ad altre intimazioni («subpoena») emesse dalle autorità statunitensi nei confronti di aziende private che detengono dati di cittadini dell'UE?

In caso affermativo, come giudica la compatibilità di tali richieste statunitensi con i trattati, con la Carta dei diritti fondamentali e con la legislazione dell'UE sulla protezione dei dati, tra cui la direttiva 95/46/CE, e che cosa intende fare se tale comportamento risulta contrario ai valori, ai principi e all'ordinamento dell'UE?

Se la Commissione non è al corrente di altre intimazioni («subpoena»), intende chiedere alle autorità statunitensi di fornire tali informazioni alle autorità dell'UE? E quale azione intende adottare qualora tale trattamento di dati personali sia contrario al diritto dell'UE?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(23 aprile 2012)

L'applicazione extraterritoriale di leggi di paesi terzi che disciplinano attività di trattamento dei dati soggette alla giurisdizione degli Stati membri può violare il diritto internazionale e può ledere i diritti fondamentali delle persone fisiche nell'Unione europea.

Per quanto riguarda la protezione dei dati, la Commissione ritiene che, nel caso in cui un'autorità di contrasto degli Stati Uniti necessiti di informazioni che non sono soggette alla sua giurisdizione, il canale adeguato per ottenere il trasferimento dei dati in questione debba consistere nei meccanismi di cooperazione vigenti con gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea in cui si trovano i dati. Fra tali strumenti si annoverano gli accordi bilaterali di mutua assistenza giudiziaria e, più specificamente, quelli tra Unione europea e Stati Uniti d'America.

Le proposte di direttiva e regolamento sulla protezione dei dati, presentate dalla Commissione il 25 gennaio 2012 [2], riconoscono che tali meccanismi di cooperazione sono necessari in particolare per consentire lo scambio di dati personali per motivi di interesse pubblico rilevante, ad esempio per le autorità competenti a fini di prevenzione, indagine, accertamento e perseguimento di reati.

Quando rispondono direttamente a richieste emesse da autorità statunitensi al di fuori dei canali attualmente stabiliti, le imprese potrebbero violare le norme nazionali di attuazione della direttiva 95/46/CE. Le autorità nazionali di controllo, specialmente quelle competenti per la protezione dei dati, devono garantire che i trasferimenti e le divulgazioni siano effettuati nel rispetto della legge. A tale scopo, i responsabili del trattamento dei dati possono consultare tali autorità.

La Commissione europea non è in grado di impartire istruzioni a tali autorità nazionali indipendenti. Laddove però risulti che uno Stato membro non rispetta gli obblighi che gli incombono in virtù dei trattati, la Commissione europea può valutare la necessità di azioni appropriate.

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[1] GU L 281 del 23.11.1995, pag. 31.
[2] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0011:FIN:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002430/12
to the Commission
Gianni Vattimo (ALDE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: US subpoenas on private companies holding EU citizens' data

US authorities have issued a subpoena requiring SWIFT to provide financial data, allegedly for the purpose of countering anti-terrorism; this has caused contention with the EU and led to the negotiation and adoption of an international treaty with the aim of regulating such access and trying to ensure that data are not misused by the US authorities for other reasons, such as monitoring EU companies for commercial and industrial purposes or snooping on EU citizens' financial data. Other private companies holding the private personal data of EU citizens may have been the subject of subpoenas, including credit card companies, telecommunication companies, providers of mobile devices, Internet service providers, banks, Internet search engines, providers of other applications, and media or social media companies. This would be at odds with the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data, as provided by Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995, as well as with the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights.

Has the Commission received information from any source about other subpoenas issued by the US authorities on private companies holding EU citizens' data?

If so, what is its view on the compatibility of such US requests with the Treaties, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and EU legislation on data protection, including Directive 95/46/EC, and what will it do if such treatment is contrary to EU values, principles and laws?

If the Commission is not aware of any other subpoenas, will it ask the US authorities to provide the EU authorities with such information, and what action will it take if such treatment of personal data is contrary to EC law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

The extraterritorial application of laws of third countries regulating data processing activities that fall under the jurisdiction of Member States may be in breach of international law and may affect the fundamental rights of individuals in the Union.

As regards data protection, the Commission considers that when a law enforcement authority in the US realises that necessary information is outside its jurisdiction, the appropriate channel to obtain the data transfer should be the cooperation mechanisms that are in place with EU Member States where that data are located. Such instruments are, among others, the bilateral Mutual Legal Assistance agreements and, more specifically, the EU-US Mutual Legal Assistance agreement.

The Commission proposals for a directive and a regulation on data protection of 25 January 2012 ([2]) acknowledge that such cooperation mechanisms are particularly necessary to allow the exchange of personal data on important grounds of public interest, e.g. for authorities responsible for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crime.

Outside the currently established channels, when replying directly to requests originating by US authorities, companies may be in breach of national rules implementing Directive 95/46/EC. The national supervisory authorities, most notably the data protection authorities, have to ensure that transfers and disclosures are made lawfully. For this purpose, the data controllers can consult them.

The European Commission is not in a position to instruct these independent national authorities. When there is an indication that a Member State does not comply with its obligations under the Treaties, the European Commission may assess the need for appropriate action.

([1]) OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0011:FIN:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002431/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Mobile air conditioning

1. Further to my Questions E-012657/2011, E000509/2011 and others of previous years, will the Commission state what action it has taken in response to the limited supply of HFC1234yf available to vehicle manufacturers?

2. Does this action permit some manufacturers not to comply with the legislative requirement that from 1 January 2011 no new type-approval can be granted for vehicles with a mobile air-conditioning system using, as a refrigerant, fluorinated greenhouse gases with a global warming potential higher than 150?

3. When was the European Parliament informed of this action?

4. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that the supply problem is resolved, and how long does it expect this to take?

5. From what date will the Commission insist upon compliance with the requirements of the legislation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2012)

1. The Commission has analysed the situation and, among the possible options, decided on a course of action that addresses the objective of safeguarding the functioning of the internal market in the best way whilst minimising the impact on the environment ([1]).

2. This course of action confirms that, in line with the provisions of Directive 2006/40/EC, new types of vehicles will only be type-approved if they are fitted with MAC systems that use refrigerant HFO-1234yf. However, as long as this refrigerant is not available (but not later than 31 December 2012), manufacturers may continue to use the old refrigerant to fill production vehicles. Member States will be informed of this approach.

3. The Commission considers that this approach gives a transparent solution to the problem, and has informed the Parliament immediately after its endorsement.

4. The industry gave assurance that the supply problem will be resolved in the last quarter of 2012 and consequently these exceptional measures will end on 31 December 2012.

5. The Commission never ceased to insist on the compliance with the requirements of the legislation, and notably on the fitting of vehicles with MAC systems that are compatible with Directive 2006/40/EC. It is only because of exceptional circumstances that, for a temporary period, the Commission will refrain from launching infringement procedures regarding non-conformity of vehicles manufactured before 31 December 2012 with the approval requirements.

([1]) Communication of Vice-President Tajani to the College of Commissioners of 30 March 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002432/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Eco-Design Directive

Is the Commission able to demonstrate that the directive has led to improvements in the energy efficiency of products, and reduced operating costs for consumers, that go beyond what might have been expected in the normal course of technological development and the commercial meeting of public demand? If so, can the Commission provide examples by way of illustration?

What, if any, negative impacts on European manufacturers or for consumers have resulted from the application of the directive?

Does the Commission accept that the application of the directive has proven less extensive and slower than was envisaged when the legislation came into force, and that progress of late has slowed further?

What is the Commission's estimate of the potential for further benefits that could be realised within the next decade if the directive is applied with full vigour?

What steps will the Commission take to speed up application of the directive, and does it intend to propose raising and extending the standards currently in force?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Ecodesign Directive has led to improvements in the energy efficiency of products over the normal course of technological development and to market transformation. The 17 adopted implementing measures ([1]) are expected to deliver savings of some 385 TWh (above 80 Mtoe).

The Commission is currently carrying out a study evaluating Ecodesign, its effectiveness and efficiency. This study will contribute to the review of the directive in the future. The study is not finalised as yet but first draft reports can be found at http://www.cses.co.uk/ecodesign_evaluation/home/. The Commission intends to further assess the impact of the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Directives in 2013-2014; by which time a substantial number of measures will have begun to have an impact on the market.

As measures are adopted, the workload of implementation, including communication, standardisation and market surveillance activities, increases, putting pressure on the resources available for the development of further measures. Nevertheless, three implementing measures ([2]) are set to be completed in the coming months and seven more ([3]) are in the final stages of preparation.

The Commission intends to review, and to revise if proven necessary, 11 existing implementing measures by the end of 2014.

([1]) 12 ecodesign measures + 5 energy labelling measures.
([2]) Ecodesign regulations on airconditioners and comfort fans and on electric water pumps and Energy Labelling delegated act on tumble driers.
([3]) Ecodesign regulations on tumble driers, heaters, water heaters and domestic lighting and Energy Labelling delegated acts on heaters, water heaters and domestic lighting.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002433/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(1er mars 2012)

Objet: Intoxications alimentaires dans l'Union européenne

77,7 milliards de dollars, c'est le coût estimé des intoxications alimentaires aux États-Unis pour l'année 2011. L'université de l'État de l'Ohio estime que les 48 millions de toxi-infections alimentaires recensées coûtent en moyenne 1 600 dollars chacune. Les hospitalisations sont au nombre de 128 000, dont 3 000 décès. Les cas d'intoxications liés à Escherichia coli ont diminué de moitié en quinze ans, alors que les cas de salmonelles n'ont pratiquement pas varié. Depuis quelques années, d'intenses efforts ont été entrepris aux États-Unis pour coordonner les nombreuses agences de surveillance et maîtriser les risques alimentaires.

La Commission connaît-elle le nombre d'intoxications alimentaires dans l'Union européenne pour l'année 2011, leurs origines et les coûts chiffrés qui en découlent?

Des statistiques visant à mettre en évidence une évolution dans la sécurité alimentaire de nos approvisionnements ont-elles été réalisées?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(18 avril 2012)

En 2010, *Salmonella* a été la cause de 30,5 % de tous les foyers signalés (présence de plusieurs cas sans doute liés à une même source), devant les virus d'origine alimentaire et *Campylobacter*, responsables respectivement de 15 % et 8,9 % des foyers. Parmi d'autres agents pathogènes zoonotiques abordés en détail dans le rapport signalé en note, on citera la tuberculose, *Listeria*, *Echinococcus*, *E. coli* vérotoxinogène et *Trichinella* ([1]).

Les cas humains de salmonellose dans les pays de l'Union européenne sont passés de 108 614 en 2009 à 99 020 en 2010. Le recul observé, qui a même vu le nombre de cas diminuer de moitié environ ces 5 dernières années, s'explique par le succès des programmes de contrôle de *Salmonella* dans les populations de volaille, et notamment chez les poules pondeuses. Une étude récente estimait le coût annuel de la salmonellose humaine à l'échelle de l'UE à environ 600 millions d'euros.

D'un point de vue quantitatif, la campylobactériose est restée l'infection zoonotique la plus fréquemment signalée chez l'homme, avec 212 064 cas en 2010. Dans les denrées alimentaires, on l'a trouvée essentiellement dans la viande de volaille crue. L'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments a publié un avis scientifique sur les mesures possibles pour réduire les risques tout au long de la chaîne de production de volaille ([2]). La Commission réalise actuellement une analyse des coûts et avantages des mesures de contrôle proposées.

([1]) EFSA Journal 2012;10(3):2598 (http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2598.htm).
([2]) EFSA Journal 2011; 9(4):2105 (http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2105.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002433/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Food poisoning in the European Union

The estimated cost of food poisoning to the United States in 2011 was USD 77.7 billion. Ohio State University estimates that the 48 million recorded foodborne illnesses each cost USD 1 600 on average, with 128 000 hospital admissions and 3 000 deaths. The number of cases of food poisoning linked to Escherichia coli (E. coli) has halved over 15 years, while the number of cases of salmonella has remained virtually the same. For several years, intense efforts have been made in the United States to coordinate the numerous supervisory agencies and to control dietary risks.

Does the Commission know how many cases of food poisoning occurred in the European Union in 2011, what caused them and what were the quantified costs associated with them?

Have statistics showing trends in the food safety of our supplies been collected?

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

In 2010, Salmonella was responsible for 30.5 % of all reported outbreaks (more than one case probably linked to the same source) followed by foodborne viruses and Campylobacter which accounted for 15.0 % and 8.9 % of the outbreaks. Other zoonotic pathogens covered in detail by the referred report are Listeria, Echinococcus, Tuberculosis, verotoxigenic E. coli and Trichinella ([1]).

In the EU, cases of human salmonellosis dropped from 108 614 in 2009 to 99 020 cases in 2010. This reduction, with about half of the cases in the last five years, is linked to successful Salmonella control programmes in poultry, particularly in laying hens. The total annual costs for human salmonellosis in the EU were estimated to be approximately EUR 600 million in a recent study.

In terms of numbers, campylobacteriosis remained the most reported zoonotic infection in humans with 212 064 cases in 2010. In foodstuffs it was mostly found in raw poultry meat. The European Food Safety Authority has published a scientific opinion on possible risk mitigation options along the poultry production chain ([2]). The Commission is currently carrying out a cost-benefit analysis on the proposed control options.

([1]) *EFSA Journal* 2012; 10(3):2598 (http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2598.htm).
([2]) *EFSA Journal* 2011; 9(4):2105 (http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2105.htm).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002434/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1º marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Importata la clonazione?

Il 30 luglio del 2010 l'International Herald Tribune ha pubblicato un articolo con il seguente titolo: «La clonazione avanza silenziosamente in Europa». Vi si narrava di un pugno di allevatori che, in Svizzera, Gran Bretagna e forse in altri Paesi, avevano importato dagli USA sperma ed embrioni provenienti da animali clonati o dalla loro progenie, per creare bestiame più grasso e produttivo.

A distanza di due anni dalla notizia, la Commissione è in grado di dirci:

1. se l'avanzata della clonazione in Europa è continuata ed in quali Paesi;

2. come si concilia questa notizia con la votazione del Parlamento europeo per la messa al bando nell'UE di carni e latticini derivati da animali clonati;

3. qual è l'opinione dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) sugli alimenti provenienti da animali clonati;

4. chi è competente per i controlli doganali all'importazione di questi prodotti; e

5. con l'abolizione delle frontiere, chi controlla gli eventuali prodotti clonati in arrivo dalla Gran Bretagna?

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

1. Durante la preparazione della relazione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio sulla clonazione degli animali per scopi di produzione alimentare ([1]), la Commissione ha chiesto agli Stati membri di fornire informazioni sull'uso della tecnologia della clonazione. Essi hanno risposto che tale tecnologia è usata soltanto a fini di ricerca. Nel contesto della preparazione della valutazione d'impatto in vista di un'eventuale proposta legislativa la Commissione si adopererà per aggiornare tale informazione.

2. I prodotti alimentari provenienti da animali clonati rimangono sottoposti al requisito di un'autorizzazione pre-commercializzazione in forza del regolamento (CE) n. 258/97 sui nuovi prodotti alimentari ([2]) poiché la tecnica della clonazione è una nuova tecnica di allevamento. Finora non è stata presentata nessun domanda relativa ad alimenti provenienti da cloni e pertanto non è stata concessa nessuna autorizzazione alla commercializzazione di tali prodotti nell'UE.

3. Il parere ([3]) e le dichiarazioni ([4]) dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare concludono che gli alimenti derivati dai cloni e dalla loro progenie non sono diversi dagli alimenti ottenuti in via convenzionale per quanto concerne la sicurezza alimentare.

4-5. Le autorità competenti degli Stati membri sono responsabili del controllo degli alimenti importati o prodotti nell'UE. Tuttavia, come menzionato sopra, gli alimenti ottenuti da cloni non possono essere importati o commercializzati nell'UE senza un'autorizzazione pre-commercializzazione.

([1]) COM(2010)585 definitivo del 19.10.2010.
([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 258/97 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 27 gennaio 1997, sui nuovi prodotti e i nuovi ingredienti alimentari, GU L 43 del 14.2.1997.
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902019540.htm
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Statm_of_Efsa/sc_statementej_RN319_en.pdf?ssbinary=true.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002434/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: Has cloning been imported?

On 30 July 2010, the *International Herald Tribune* published an article entitled: 'Cloning moves quietly into Europe'. It told of a handful of farmers who, in Switzerland, Great Britain and perhaps other countries, had imported sperm and embryos from cloned animals or their offspring from the United States to create fatter, more productive animals.

Two years after publication of this news, is the Commission able to say:

1. Whether the progress of cloning in Europe has continued and if so, in which countries?

2. How does this news relate to the vote by Parliament to ban meat and dairy products from cloned animals in the EU?

3. What is the opinion of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on food products obtained from cloned animals?

4. Who is responsible for customs inspections when these products are imported?

5. With the abolition of borders, who checks any cloned products that may arrive from Great Britain?

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

1. During the preparation of the report to the Parliament and the Council on all aspects of animal cloning for food production ([1]), the Commission requested Member States to provide information on the use of the cloning technology. They reported that it is used only for research purposes. In the context of the preparation of the impact assessment in view of a possible legislative proposal, the Commission will seek to update this information.

2. Food products from cloned animals remain subject to a pre-market authorisation under the Novel Food Regulation (EC) No 258/97 ([2]) as the cloning technique is a new breeding technique. No application for food from clones has been submitted so far and therefore no authorisation granted for the marketing of these products in the EU.

3. The European Food Safety Authority opinion ([3]) and statements ([4]) conclude that the food derived from clones and their offspring does not differ from conventional food as regards food safety.

4 and 5. The competent authorities in the Member States are responsible for the control of food imported or produced in the EU. Nevertheless, as mentioned above the food from clones is not allowed to be imported or marketed in the EU without a pre-market authorisation.

([1]) COM(2010) 585 final of 19.10.2010.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 258/97 of Parliament and of the Council of 27 January 1997 concerning novel foods and novel food ingredients, OJ L 43, 14.2.1997.
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902019540.htm
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Statm_of_Efsa/sc_statementej_RN319_en.pdf?ssbinary=true.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002435/12
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Implementation of Area-based premia

With respect to the Land Parcel Identification System/Geographical Information System (LPIS-GIS) and the implementation of the Area-based premia for the claim years 2007, 2008 and 2009 in Scotland, can the Commission confirm:

1. the exact date on which the Commission first notified the Scottish Government of its concerns as to Scotland's compliance with the scheme;

2. the exact date on which the Commission notified the Scottish Government of the possibility of financial correction in accordance with Article 31 of Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005;

3. the exact date on which the Commission notified the Scottish Government of the financial figure of this financial correction;

4. the exact dates on which the Scottish Government acknowledged to the Commission receipt of these communications?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2012)

Regarding the Honourable Member's question on the date of communications concerning Land Parcel Identification System/Geographical Information System (LPIS-GIS) and the implementation of the area-based premia for the claim years 2007, 2008 and 2009 in Scotland, the answers are as follows:

1. The communication pursuant to Article 11(1) of Regulation (EC) No 885/2006 ([1]) was sent to the Member State authorities on 7 September 2009.

2. The abovementioned communication of 7 September 2009 ([2]) also made reference to the possibility of financial correction in accordance with Article 31 of Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005.

3. The communication pursuant to Articles 11(2) third subparagraph of Regulation (EC) No 885/2006 ([3]) was sent to the Member State authorities on 17 January 2012.

4. The clearance of accounts procedure does not require Member States to provide the Commission with an official acknowledgement regarding the receipt of these communications.

([1]) OJ L 171, 23.6.2006, p. 90.
([2]) OJ L 209, 11.8.2005, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 171, 23.6.2006, p. 90.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-002436/12
до Комисията
Димитър Стоянов (NI)
(2 март 2012 г.)

Относно: Контрол, оказван от Комисията върху компаниите — естествени монополисти в България

Икономическата теория определя естествения монопол като ситуация, при която на пазара има една компания, която може да задоволи потребителското търсене при по-ниски производствени разходи, отколкото биха се генерирали, ако на същия пазар оперират повече компании. По начало естествените монополисти се считат полезни за държавната икономика дотолкова, доколкото те осигуряват стоки и услуги, които са от първостепенно значение за гражданите. За съжаление, в голям брой случаи тези компании злоупотребяват с монополното си положение, като завишават цената на предлаганите от тях крайни продукти или понижават качеството на услугите си. За да контролират отрицателните ефекти от естествения монопол, държавите членки се намесват чрез регулация. Макар регулирането у нас да е на високо ниво, резултатът, който то дава, не би могъл да се сравни с положителния ефект, който естествените пазарни механизми и конкурентната среда биха оказали върху монополистите. В България естествен монопол върху съответните пазари имат електроразпределителните и топлофикационните дружества, както и мобилните оператори. Услугите, предоставяни и в трите сектора, не са с достатъчно добро качество. Потребителите на топлинна и електроенергия ежедневно депозират жалби за завишени сметки. Основните компоненти, по които се формира крайната сметка в тези сектори, са недостатъчно ясни на потребители. Подобно е и ситуацията при мобилните оператори. Поради срив в информационната си система в продължение на месеци мобилният оператор „Мобилтел“ не можеше да предоставя на клиентите част от услугите си, забавяше издаването на фактури и завишаваше сметките по тях. Предвид изложеното се обръщам към Вас с въпросите:

1. Счита ли Комисията, че естественият монопол е полезен за единния европейски пазар, и как Комисията защитава интересите на конкурентните фирми, които желаят да навлязат в монополизиран пазарен сектор?

2. Как оценява Комисията действията на естествените монополисти в България, а именно топло- и електроразпределителните дружества и мобилните оператори?

3. Как Комисията контролира качеството на услугите, предоставяни от естествените монополисти във всички държави членки?

Отговор, даден от г-н Алмуня от името на Комисията
(10 май 2012 г.)

Съгласно Договора за функционирането на Европейския съюз е забранено предприятия, които заемат господстващо положение на даден пазар за стоки или услуги (включително т. нар. естествени монополи), да злоупотребяват с това господстващо положение в ущърб на потребителите. За спазването на тези разпоредби се грижат Комисията ([1]) и националните органи за защита на конкуренцията.

Когато обаче даден естествен монопол съществува поради структурни бариери за навлизане на пазара, регулирането може да е необходимост. Така например в някои сектори като енергетиката и далекосъобщенията, Европейският парламент и Съветът са приели вторично законодателство, задължаващо държавите членки да либерализират тези сектори ([2]). Съгласно това законодателство държавите членки трябва да гарантират недискриминационен достъп до мрежите за всички ползватели и да се погрижат за допълнително регулиране на национално ниво, за да гарантират непрекъснатото предоставяне на публични услуги и за да защитят потребителите като направят необходимото за съществуването на прозрачно ценообразуване в сектора на енергетиката.

Комисията не разполага с информация за бариери за навлизане на пазара, които да продължават да съществуват в сектора на далекосъобщенията в България. Три мобилни оператора имат лиценз да предоставят далекосъобщителни услуги на цялата територия на страната, което означава, че не съществуват естествени или фактически монополи в сектора на мобилните съобщителни услуги в България.

([1]) Така например Комисията наскоро прие решение за налагане на глоба на Telekom Polska за злоупотреба с господстващо положение (случай COMP/39.525).

([2]) Законодателните пакети за енергетиката и далекосъобщенията са изменяни няколко пъти. За последните изменения вж. Директива 2009/140/ЕО за изменение на Директиви 2002/21/ЕО относно общата регулаторна рамка за електронните съобщителни мрежи и услуги, 2002/19/ЕО относно достъпа до електронни съобщителни мрежи и тяхната инфраструктура и взаимосвързаността между тях, и 2002/20/ЕО относно разрешението на електронните съобщителни мрежи и услуги, ОВ на ЕС [2009] L 337/37; Директива 2009/72/ЕО относно общите правила за вътрешния пазар на електроенергия и за отмяна на Директива 2003/54/ЕО, ОВ на ЕС [2009] L 211/55.

По въпроса за електроенергията, на четири предприятия е възложено в съответствие с българското законодателство да предоставят електроенергия на клиенти на регулирани цени, като всяко предприятие действа в определена географска област. Същевременно обаче Комисията счита, че предприятия, които желаят да предоставят електроенергия на клиенти на свободно договорени цени в тези географски области, имат право да кандидатстват за лиценз.

За гарантирането на това, че предприятията, действащи на техните пазари, спазват специалната секторна уредба, включително правилата за защита на конкуренцията, са отговорни на първо място националните регулаторни органи.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002436/12
to the Commission
Dimitar Stoyanov (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Commission monitoring of natural monopolies in Bulgaria

Economic theory defines a natural monopoly as a situation in which a single company on the market can meet consumer demand at lower production costs than would be generated were more than one company operating on the same market. In general, natural monopolies are regarded as beneficial to the state economy insofar as they provide goods and services which are of prime importance to the public. Unfortunately, in a large number of cases, these companies abuse their monopoly position by raising the price of the finished products supplied by them or by lowering the quality of their services. In order to control the adverse impact of a natural monopoly, Member States intervene through regulation. Although there is a high degree of regulation in Bulgaria, the result achieved could not compare with the positive impact which natural market mechanisms and the competitive environment would exert on monopoly companies. In Bulgaria, electricity distributors and heating companies, as well as mobile operators, have a natural monopoly on their respective markets. The services provided in all three sectors are not of sufficiently good quality. Heating and electricity consumers file daily complaints about high bills. The main items on which the final bill is based in these sectors are not clear enough to consumers. There is also a similar situation with mobile operators. Due to its IT system being down for months, the mobile phone operator Mobiltel was unable to supply some of its services to customers, delayed the issuing of invoices and increased the bills for them. Given the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission consider that natural monopolies are beneficial for the Single European Market, and how does the Commission defend the interests of companies wishing to enter a monopoly market to and compete?

2. How does the Commission view the conduct of natural monopolies in Bulgaria, and in particular, heating and electricity distribution companies and mobile phone operators?

3. How does the Commission monitor the quality of the services provided by natural monopolies across the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2012)

Under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, undertakings that hold a dominant position in a market for goods or services (including so-called natural monopolies) are prohibited from abusing their dominance to the detriment of consumers. These provisions are enforced by the Commission ([1]) and national competition authorities.

Where for instance a natural monopoly exists because of structural barriers to entry, regulation may also be necessary. Thus, in certain sectors, such as energy and telecommunications, the European Parliament and the Council have adopted secondary legislation requiring Member States to liberalise the sectors ([2]). Under this legislation, Member States must ensure non-discriminatory access by all system users to networks and allow for additional national regulation to ensure the continued provision of public services and to protect consumers, such as by ensuring transparent pricing in the energy sector.

The Commission is not aware of barriers to entry that would subsist in the mobile communications sector in Bulgaria. Three mobile operators are licensed to provide mobile telecommunications services throughout the whole territory, so there is no natural or de facto monopoly relating to the provision of mobile communications services in Bulgaria.

([1]) For instance, the Commission recently adopted a decision imposing a fine on Telekom Polska for abuse of dominance (case COMP/39.525).

([2]) The energy and communications legislative packages have been amended several times. See most recently Directive 2009/140/EC amending Directives 2002/21/EC on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services, 2002/19/EC on access to, and interconnection of, electronic communications networks and associated facilities, and 2002/20/EC on the authorisation of electronic communications networks and services, OJEC [2009] L337/37; Directive 2009/72/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC, OJEC [2009] L211/55.

As concerns electricity, four undertakings have been entrusted under Bulgarian law to supply electricity at regulated prices to customers, each in a specific geographical area. However, the Commission's understanding is that undertakings wishing to supply electricity to customers at freely agreed prices in those geographical areas are free to apply for a licence to do so.

National regulatory authorities are primarily responsible for ensuring that undertakings active in their markets comply with sector-specific regulation including consumer protection rules.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-002437/12
до Комисията
Димитър Стоянов (NI)
(2 март 2012 г.)

Относно: Отпускане на по-голямо финансиране от Европейския земеделски фонд за развитие на селските райони на държави членки с финансови затруднения

На 13.12.2011 г. Европейският парламент прие на първо четене изменение в Регламент № 1698/2005, което предвиди временно увеличаване на финансирането, отпускано чрез Европейския земеделски фонд за развитие на селските райони (ЕЗФРСР) на държави членки в затруднено финансово положение. Прие се възможността приносът на ЕЗФРСР да бъде увеличен максимум до 95 % в районите по цел „Сближаване“, в най-отдалечените райони и по-малките острови в Егейско море и до 85 % — в други райони. Същевременно в съображение 13 от регламента беше посочено, че временното увеличаване на съфинансирането трябва да се разглежда в контекста на бюджетните ограничения, пред които държавите членки са изправени. По-високият процент финансиране от ЕЗФРСР е необходим на държавите, които имат бюджетни затруднения, за да могат те да изпълнят задълженията си по съвместно финансиране на европейските програми. Факт е, че икономиката на ЕС ще пострада, ако тези не изпълняват общностните програми през 2012 и 2013 г. Въпреки това остава отворен въпросът дали това увеличено финансиране ще засегне бюджета на ЕЗФРСР като цяло. Затова се обръщам към Вас с въпросите:

1. Ще бъде ли променен бюджетът на ЕЗФРСР за 2012 г. и 2013 г. и ще се отрази ли това на финансирането, което държавите членки с добра финансова дисциплина ще получат?

2. Как Комисията ще определи точния размер на увеличено финансиране, което държавите членки ще получат?

3. С оглед съображение 13 от горепосочения регламент, какво отношение ще имат бюджетните ограничения на държавите членки при определянето на размера на увеличеното съфинансиране?

Отговор, даден от г-н Циолос от името на Комисията
(18 април 2012 г.)

Прилагането на увеличени проценти на съфинансиране от ЕС може да доведе до по-високи възстановявани суми за ограничен брой държави членки. В това отношение Комисията ще продължи да следи прилагането на бюджета за 2012 г. и, ако е необходимо, ще предложи на бюджетния орган корекция в бюджетните кредити за плащания в бюджетния ред за развитие на селските райони. За 2013 г., при изготвянето на проектобюджета, ще бъде отчетен всеки елемент с отражение върху нивото на бюджетните кредити за плащания, необходими за възстановявания на разходи на държавите членки. Изменението на Регламент (ЕО) № 1698/2005 ([1]) няма да повлияе по никакъв начин, положителен или отрицателен, на размера на плащанията за държавите членки, които не се ползват от дерогация.

Държавите членки в трудно финансово положение, които изпълняват условията да се ползват от по-високите проценти на съфинансиране от ЕС трябва да представят на Комисията предложение за изменение на съответната програма за развитие на селските райони. След приемането на изменението новите проценти на съфинансиране от ЕС ще се прилагат към допустимите новозаявени публични разходи.

Бюджетните ограничения във всички държави членки няма да повлияят пряко на определянето на увеличеното съфинансиране, а на продължителността на периода, за който ще се прилага дерогацията за по-високи проценти. Тази дерогация изтича, щом държавите членки престанат да отговарят на изискванията и във всеки случай не може да се прилага за разходи, направени след 31 декември 2013 г. Освен това Комисията отчита бюджетните ограничения на държавите членки и опростява управлението на бюджета с оглед максималното използване на бюджетните кредити в гласувания бюджет, преди да се искат каквито и да е допълнителни ресурси от държавите членки.

([1]) ОВ L 277, 21.10.2005 г.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002437/12
to the Commission
Dimitar Stoyanov (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Increased funding under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development for Member States experiencing financial difficulties

On 13 December 2011, the European Parliament adopted at first reading an amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 which provided for a temporary increase in funding under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) for Member States in a difficult financial situation. A clause was adopted which made it possible for the EAFRD contribution to be increased up to a maximum of 95 % in the regions eligible under the Convergence Objective, in the outermost regions and on the smaller Aegean Islands, and up to 85 % in other regions. At the same time, recital 13 to the regulation states that the temporary increase in co-financing must take account of the budgetary restraints facing Member States. Those states experiencing budgetary difficulties need this higher percentage of EAFRD funding so that they can meet their co-financing obligations for European programmes. The fact is that the EU economy will suffer if these Member States fail to meet their commitments under Community programmes in 2012 and 2013, and it is a moot point whether this increased funding will affect the EAFRD budget as a whole. In view of this, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Will the EAFRD budget for 2012 and 2013 be modified, and will this be reflected in the funding received by Member States demonstrating good financial discipline?

2. How will the Commission determine the exact amount of increased funding that Member States receive?

3. In view of recital 13 to the abovementioned regulation, what bearing will Member States' budgetary restraints have on the determination of the amount of increased co-financing?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The application of increased rates can result in higher reimbursements to a limited number of Member States. In this respect, the Commission will continue to monitor the implementation of Budget 2012 and will, if needed, propose to the Budget Authority an adjustment to payment appropriations on the rural development budget line. For 2013, the preparation of the Draft Budget will take account of any relevant element with an impact on the level of payment appropriations necessary to reimburse Member States. The amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1]) will not have any effect, either positive or negative, on the level of payments to Member States that do not benefit from the derogation.

Member States in difficult financial situation that fulfil the conditions to benefit from higher co-financing rates have to submit to the Commission a proposal to modify the corresponding rural development programme. Once the modification is adopted, the new co-financing rates will be applied to the eligible public expenditure newly declared.

The budgetary constraints in all Member States will not have a direct impact in the determination of the increased co-financing but on the duration of the period where the derogation for higher rates applies. This derogation ends once the Member States no longer fulfil the conditions and, in any case, cannot apply to expenditure incurred after 31 December 2013. Additionally, the Commission takes account of the Member States' budgetary constraints by streamlining budget management to maximise the use of appropriations in the voted budget before calling any additional resources from Member States.

([1]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-002438/12
до Комисията
Димитър Стоянов (NI)
(2 март 2012 г.)

Относно: Въвеждане на единни европейски стандарти относно условията в местата за задържане в ЕС

На 15 декември 2011 г. Европейският парламент прие резолюция относно условията на задържане в ЕС (2011/2897(RSP) ([1])), чрез която призова Комисията да изготви законодателно предложение в тази материя. Предложението следва да съдържа единни европейски стандарти за условията в затворите, както и правила за справедливо обезщетяване на лицата, които са били несправедливо задържани или осъдени. Отговорността за разрешаване на този проблем беше възложена преимуществено на държавите членки, които следва да осигурят и по-високо финансиране на затворите. Инициативата за подобряване на условията в затворите чрез европейска законодателна намеса е ключова за изграждането на стабилна система за сътрудничество по наказателни дела, защото ако тези условия са лоши, то никоя държава членка не би предала свой гражданин на друга държава за целите на наказателното преследване. Затова се обръщаме към Вас с въпросите:

1. Предвижда ли Комисията единен европейски механизъм за контрол относно поддържането на добри условия в затворите във всички държави членки?

2. Предвижда ли Комисията европейско финансиране за подобряване на условията в затворите?

В параграфи 17 и 18 от горепосочената резолюция са засегнати интересите на задържаните деца, като е посочено, че същите трябва да се третират по най-добър начин и да не се ограничава контактът с родителите им. Според българския Наказателен кодекс лишените от свобода непълнолетни изтърпяват наказанието си в поправителен дом — институция, различна от затворите. Тези непълнолетни, които са извършили деяния с по-ниска степен на обществена опасност, могат да бъдат освободени от наказателна отговорност, като им се наложат възпитателни мерки. Една от възпитателните мерки у нас е настаняването във възпитателни училища интернати. В тази връзка бихме искали да Ви попитаме следното:

3. Ще попаднат ли в приложното поле на законодателния акт относно условията в затворите специализираните наказателни институции за непълнолетни, като поправителния дом и възпитателното училище интернат в България, както и техните еквиваленти в други държави членки?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Рединг от името на Комисията
(30 март 2012 г.)

В съответствие с Програмата от Стокхолм ([2]), пътната карта за укрепване на процесуалните права на заподозрени или обвиняеми в рамките на наказателното производство ([3]) и плана за действие за изпълнение на Програмата от Стокхолм ([4]) Комисията публикува Зелена книга относно прилагането на законодателството на ЕС по наказателноправни въпроси в областта на задържането ([5]), в която се разискват начини да се засили взаимното доверие и прилагането на принципа на взаимното признаване в областта на задържането в съответствие с компетентността на ЕС и в нейните рамки.

Комисията се интересува от този въпрос поради голямото значение на принципа на взаимното признаване на съдебни решения за пространството на свобода, сигурност и правосъдие.

Комисията получи над 200 отговора от държави членки, органи и други заинтересовани страни. Както бе заявено от Комисията в Европейския парламент на 14 декември 2011 г., Комисията ще анализира отговорите, въз основа на което ще реши дали съществува възможност за някакво конкретно действие на европейско ниво в светлината на резултатите от този процес на консултации.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2897(RSP).
([2]) ОВ C 115, 04.04.2010 г., стр. 1.
([3]) ОВ C 295, 04.12.2009 г.
([4]) COM (2010) 171, което може да послужи за справка.
([5]) COM (2011) 327, което може да послужи за справка чрез следния линк: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm

Специалните гаранции за заподозрените или обвиняемите, които са уязвими, например децата, са от голямо значение за Комисията. Следвайки пътната карта за укрепване на процесуалните права на заподозрени или обвиняеми в рамките на наказателното производство, Комисията започна проучване относно защитата на уязвимите заподозрени, за да извърши оценка на въздействието на евентуално предложение на Комисията.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002438/12
to the Commission
Dimitar Stoyanov (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Introduction of common European standards in respect of conditions in detention centres in the EU

On 15 December 2011, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on detention conditions in the EU (2011/2897(RSP) ([1])), which calls on the Commission to bring forward a legislative proposal in this field. The proposal is to contain common European standards for prison conditions, as well as rules for providing fair compensation to persons who have been unjustly detained or convicted. Responsibility for resolving this issue was placed mainly with the Member States, which are also to provide increased funding for prisons. The initiative to improve prison conditions through EU legislation is key to creating a stable system for cooperation on criminal matters because, if these conditions are poor, no Member State would hand over its citizens to another state for prosecution. In view of this, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission planning to introduce a common European monitoring mechanism in support of good conditions in prisons in all Member States?

2. Is it planning to provide EU funding for improving prison conditions?

Paragraphs 17 and 18 of the abovementioned resolution deal with the interests of children who have been detained, stating that they must be treated in the best manner possible and have no restrictions placed on contact with their parents. Under the Bulgarian Criminal Code, minors deprived of their freedom must serve their punishment in a youth detention centre, and not a prison. Minors who have committed offences of a less serious nature may be exonerated from criminal responsibility, with re-educational measures being applied. One of those re-educational measures involves attending residential correctional centres. Could the Commission answer the following question in this connection:

3. Will specialised juvenile penal establishments, such as youth detention centres and residential correctional centres, in Bulgaria and in other Member States, fall within the scope of the legislative act on prison conditions?

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

In line with the Stockholm Programme ([2]), the roadmap for strengthening procedural rights of suspected or accused persons in criminal proceedings ([3]), and the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme ([4]) the Commission has published a Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention ([5]) to reflect on ways to strengthen mutual trust and the application of the principle of mutual recognition in the area of detention, in accordance with and within the limits of the EU's competence.

The Commission is interested in this matter due to the central importance of the principle of mutual recognition of judicial decisions for the area of freedom, security and justice.

The Commission received over 200 replies from Member States, authorities and other stakeholders. As the Commission stated at the European Parliament on 14 December 2011 the Commission will analyse the replies and on this basis it will decide whether any specific action at the European level might be considered in the light of the outcome of this consultation process.

Special safeguards for suspected or accused persons who are vulnerable — such as children — are of great importance for the Commission. Following the Roadmap for strengthening procedural rights of suspected or accused persons in criminal the Commission has launched a study in relation to the protection of vulnerable suspects with a view of assessing the impact of a possible Commission proposal.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2897(RSP).
([2]) OJ C 115, 4.4.2010, p. 1.
([3]) OJ C 295, 4.12.2009.
([4]) COM(2010) 171, which can be consulted.
([5]) COM(2011) 327, which can be consulted through the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002440/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(2 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Construcción del megaproyecto EuroVegas en el Bajo Llobregat: despropósito económico, social, medioambiental y legal

Asociaciones ecologistas como «Ecologistas en acción», plataformas ciudadanas y partidos políticos como Esquerra Unida i Alternativa (EUiA) han denunciado recientemente las intenciones de la Generalitat de Catalunya de posibilitar y participar en la construcción del proyecto conocido como «EuroVegas»: un megaproyecto inmobiliario y lúdico-recreativo, consistente en la construcción de una «nueva ciudad» al estilo Las Vegas, situada en el Bajo Llobregat, de alrededor de 500 hectáreas de extensión, que contaría con más de una docena de grandes hoteles, seis megacasinos, centros comerciales, campos de golf, auditorios, estadios, etc.

Este proyecto requiere la construcción de una verdadera ciudad que se quede al margen de la ley española y europea, ya que su puesta en práctica hace necesario modificar más una treintena de leyes, convirtiéndose así en un nuevo paraíso fiscal donde proliferarían, junto a un masivo blanqueo de capital, la ausencia de derechos sociales y laborales y de obligaciones fiscales y la prostitución.

Además de los sinsentidos económicos, sociales y legales intrínsecos a este proyecto, hay que tener en cuenta las negativas consecuencias medioambientales que supondrá si finalmente es llevado a la práctica. El espacio que la Generalitat ha seleccionado para albergarlo hace que su construcción suponga graves alteraciones para zonas medioambientales de espacial protección, incluidas dentro de la Red Natura 2000, como el Delta del río Llobregat (ES000000146), entre otros. Por ello, su construcción conllevaría la desprotección y el más que posible incumplimiento de Directivas europeas como la relativa a la protección de hábitats naturales o de aves. Por otro lado, el proceso ha sido iniciado sin la posibilidad de participación de la ciudadanía recogida en el Convenio de Aarhus, ratificado tanto por España como por la Unión Europea.

¿Está la Comisión informada de la posible ejecución de este proyecto y está ya analizando las consecuencias sociales, económicas y ambientales que supondría? En caso contrario ¿piensa la Comisión investigar este proyecto y las posibles vulneraciones de la legislación comunitaria?

¿Considera la Comisión que este tipo de proyectos son el modelo económico por el que las autoridades españolas deben apostar como vía para salir de la precariedad laboral, salarial y social en la que se encuentran la mayoría de los españoles?

¿Piensa la Comisión que este tipo de proyectos están en la línea de una economía basada en la innovación, la investigación y la sostenibilidad, tal como defiende?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002492/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Posible construcción del megaproyecto EuroVegas en Alcorcón (Madrid): despropósito económico, social, medioambiental y legal

Varias asociaciones ecologistas, plataformas ciudadanas y formaciones políticas, como Izquierda Unida de la Comunidad de Madrid (IU-CM), han denunciado recientemente las intenciones del Gobierno de esta comunidad autónoma de posibilitar y participar en la construcción del proyecto conocido como «EuroVegas»: un megaproyecto inmobiliario y ludo-recreativo, consistente en la construcción de una «nueva ciudad» al estilo de Las Vegas, situada en el término municipal de Alcorcón, de alrededor de 500 hectáreas de extensión, que contaría con más de una docena de grandes hoteles, seis megacasinos, centros comerciales, campos de golf, auditorios, estadios…

Este proyecto requiere la construcción de una verdadera ciudad que quede al margen de la ley española y europea, ya que su puesta en práctica necesita la modificación de más de una treintena de leyes, convirtiéndose así en un nuevo paraíso fiscal donde proliferaría junto a un masivo blanqueo de capital, la ausencia de derechos sociales y laborales y de obligaciones fiscales, así como la prostitución.

Además de los sinsentidos económicos, sociales y legales intrínsecos a este proyecto, hay que tener en cuenta las negativas consecuencias medioambientales que supondrá si finalmente es llevado a la práctica. El espacio que el Gobierno de la Comunidad de Madrid ha seleccionado para albergarlo hace que su construcción suponga graves alteraciones para zonas medioambientales vecinas de especial protección, incluidas dentro de la Red Natura 2000, como la cuenca del Río Guadarrama (ES3110005), entre otras, por lo que su construcción conllevaría la desprotección y el posible incumplimiento de Directivas europeas relativas a la protección de hábitats naturales. Por otro lado, el proceso ha sido iniciado sin la posibilidad de participación de la ciudadanía recogida en el Convenio de Aarhus, ratificado tanto por España como por la Unión Europea.

¿Está informada la Comisión de la posible ejecución de este proyecto? ¿Está ya analizando las consecuencias sociales, económicas y ambientales que supondría? En caso contrario, ¿piensa la Comisión investigar este proyecto y las posibles vulneraciones de la legislación comunitaria? ¿Considera la Comisión que este tipo de proyectos son el modelo económico por el que las autoridades españolas deben apostar como vía para salir de la precariedad laboral, salarial y social en la que se encuentran la mayoría de los españoles? ¿Piensa la Comisión que este tipo de proyectos están en la línea de una economía basada en la innovación, la investigación y la sostenibilidad tal como ella misma defiende?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión

(27 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión no está al corriente del megaproyecto EuroVegas mencionado por Su Señoría, que se prevé desarrollar posiblemente en España, en el área metropolitana de Madrid o Barcelona.

Debe observarse que las decisiones relativas a la utilización del suelo entran en el ámbito de competencia de los Estados miembros. En cualquier caso, la Comisión desea subrayar que, en caso de ser autorizado por las autoridades españolas, este proyecto de ocio y entretenimiento deberá cumplir con todas las disposiciones del derecho medioambiental de la UE.

El proyecto en cuestión está aún siendo objeto de debate y se encuentra en una fase muy preliminar. Por consiguiente, la Comisión no observa ningún indicio de infracción de la legislación de la UE sobre medio ambiente y en estos momentos no se puede tomar ninguna medida.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002440/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Construction of the Euro Vegas megaproject in the Baix Llobregat: an economic, social, environmental and legal absurdity

Environmental associations such as *Ecologistas en acción*, citizens' groups, and political parties such as *Esquerra Unida i Alternativa* (EUiA) have recently criticised the Catalan Government's plan to allow and become involved in the construction of the project known as 'Euro Vegas', a property, leisure and entertainment megaproject, involving the construction of a 'new city' in the style of Las Vegas, on around 500 hectares in the Baix Llobregat, with over a dozen large hotels, six mega-casinos, shopping centres, golf courses, auditoriums, stadiums, etc.

This project calls for the construction of an actual city that will function outside Spanish and European law, as putting it into practice requires changes to more than 30 laws, and which will become a new tax haven, where large-scale money laundering and prostitution will flourish alongside an absence of social and labour rights and tax obligations.

Aside from the inherent legal, social and economic absurdity of this project, the negative environmental impact of its eventual implementation must be taken into account. If it is built on the site selected for it by the Catalan Government, special environmental protection areas included within the Natura 2000 network, including the Llobregat river delta (ES000000146), will be seriously affected. Its construction will deprive them of protection and is highly likely to breach European directives such as those concerning the protection of natural habitats or birds. Moreover, the process has been started with no possibility of citizens' participation, as enshrined in the Aarhus Convention, which has been ratified by both Spain and the European Union.

Is the Commission aware of the possible implementation of this project and is it already examining its social, economic and environmental impact? If not, does the Commission intend to investigate this project and the possible infringement of EU legislation?

Does the Commission consider that projects of this type represent an economic model which the Spanish authorities should be pursuing as a way out of the employment, wages and social insecurity currently affecting most of the Spanish population?

Does the Commission see this type of project as matching its goal of an economy based on innovation, research and sustainability?

Question for written answer E-002492/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Possible construction of the Euro Vegas megaproject in Alcorcón (Madrid): legally, environmentally, socially and economically inappropriate

A number of environmentalist associations, pressure groups and political parties, such as United Left of the Community of Madrid (IU-CM), have recently denounced the Government of the Autonomous Community of Madrid's intention to enable and participate in the construction of the project known as 'Euro Vegas': a property and leisure/recreational megaproject to build a 'new city' in the style of Las Vegas in the municipality of Alcorcón. It would be around 500 hectares in size and would have more than a dozen large hotels, six mega-casinos, shopping centres, golf courses, auditoriums, stadiums, etc.

This project requires construction of a veritable city that escapes Spanish and European law, since putting it into practice requires more than 30 laws to be changed, turning it into a new tax haven where money laundering on a vast scale would proliferate, along with prostitution, and where social and labour rights and tax obligations would be absent.

Aside from the legal, social and economic absurdities inherent to this project, the negative environmental consequences that it would have, were it eventually put into practice, must be taken into account. The area set aside for it by the Government of the Community of Madrid means that its construction would cause major changes to neighbouring special protection areas, including some in the Natura 2000 network, such as the River Guadarrama basin (ES3110005). Construction work would remove protection and could breach European Directives relating to the protection of natural habitats. Furthermore, the process has been started without the opportunity for public participation, as enshrined in the Aarhus Convention ratified by both Spain and the European Union.

Does the Commission have information about the possible implementation of this project? Is the Commission already analysing its social, economic and environmental consequences? If not, is the Commission thinking of investigating this project and possible breaches of EU legislation? Does the Commission consider this type of project an economic model that the Spanish authorities should back as a way out of the job, salary and social insecurity being experienced by the majority of Spanish people? Does the Commission think that this type of project is in line with an economy based on research, innovation and sustainability that it is itself advocating?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the Euro Vegas megaproject mentioned by the Honourable Member, planned to be possibly developed in Spain, either in the metropolitan areas of Madrid or Barcelona.

It should be noted that decisions related to land use fall within the competence of the Member States. In any case, the Commission would like to stress that this leisure and entertainment project, if authorised by the competent Spanish authorities, must comply with all the requirements under EU environmental law.

It appears that the project in question is still under discussion and at a very preliminary stage. Therefore, the Commission can find no evidence of a breach of EU environmental law at this moment and no further action can be taken.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002441/12
an die Kommission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(2. März 2012)

Betrifft: Überarbeitung der Richtlinie über Tabakerzeugnisse (2001/37/EG)

Die Richtlinie über Tabakerzeugnisse wird gerade überarbeitet. Der gemeinsame Entschließungsantrag des Europäischen Parlaments vom 15. September 2011, der im Rahmen der Tagung der Vereinten Nationen zur Prävention und Bekämpfung nicht übertragbarer Krankheiten vorgelegt wurde, legt klar dar, dass das Parlament so schnell wie möglich mit der Arbeit beginnen möchte. Dennoch scheint sich die Vorlage des neuen Vorschlags seitens der Kommission zu verzögern.

1. Wann kann das Europäische Parlament mit einem Vorschlag von der Kommission rechnen?

2. Gibt es einen genauen Zeitplan der Kommission, was die derzeit laufende Folgenabschätzung angeht? Wenn ja, wie sieht dieser aus?

3. Was sind die Gründe dafür, dass die Folgenabschätzung der Kommission so viel Zeit in Anspruch nimmt und sich somit die Vorlage des neuen Vorschlags immer weiter nach hinten verschiebt?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(3. Mai 2012)

Die Kommission plant, im 4. Quartal 2012 einen Vorschlag zur Überarbeitung der Richtlinie über Tabakerzeugnisse ([1]) anzunehmen.

Für die Folgenabschätzung zu diesem Legislativvorschlag mussten komplexe und umfassende Informationen eingeholt und analysiert werden. Dieser Prozess steht nun kurz vor dem Abschluss. Danach wird der Legislativvorschlag ausgearbeitet.

([1]) Richtlinie 2001/37/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 5. Juni 2001 zur Angleichung der Rechts- und Verwaltungsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten über die Herstellung, die Aufmachung und den Verkauf von Tabakerzeugnissen — ABl. L 194 vom 18.7.2001, S. 26.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002441/12
to the Commission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Revision of the Tobacco Products Directive (2001/37/EC)

The Tobacco Products Directive is currently being overhauled. The European Parliament's joint motion for a resolution of 15 September 2011, presented at the United Nations Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, makes it clear that Parliament would like to start work as soon as possible. Nonetheless, the Commission seems to be dragging its heels with the presentation of the new proposal.

1. When can the European Parliament expect a proposal from the Commission?

2. Does the Commission have a detailed timetable in relation to the current impact assessment? If so, what is this timetable?

3. Why is it that the Commission's impact assessment is taking so much time, constantly delaying the presentation of the new proposal?

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

The Commission plans to adopt the legislative proposal for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive 2001/37/EC ([1]) in the fourth quarter of 2012.

The Impact Assessment to support this legislative proposal required the collection and analysis of complex and comprehensive information. This process is now approaching its final phase and the subsequent step will consist in the drafting of the legislative proposal.

([1]) Directive 2001/37/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2001 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products — Commission statement, OJ L 194, 18.7.2001.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002442/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. März 2012)

Betrifft: Zusätzliche Fragen zur Kontrolle von Einfuhren aus Japan auf Radioaktivität

In seiner Antwort auf die Anfragen E-011553/2011, E-011675/2011 und E-011676/2011 von Hans-Peter Martin nimmt Kommissionsmitglied Dalli ausführlich zu Einfuhrkontrollen bei Lebensmitteln und Futtermitteln aus Japan Stellung. Einige Fragen, insbesondere aus der Anfrage E-011676/2011 zur Kontrolle von aus Japan importierten Produkten auf radioaktive Verstrahlung, blieben allerdings noch unbeantwortet. Der Fragesteller bittet darum, diese Fragen noch zu beantworten, insbesondere, da aktuelle Medienberichte aufzeigen, dass in radioaktiv kontaminierten Gebieten um Fukushima beispielsweise wieder Elektrogeräte produziert werden ([1]):

Werden auch andere aus Japan importierte Produkte wie Kleidungsstücke, Spielzeuge, Hygieneprodukte, Möbel oder Elektrogeräte auf radioaktive Verstrahlung untersucht? Wenn ja, welche Ergebnisse brachten diese Untersuchungen? Wenn nicht, sind solche Untersuchungen geplant?

Werden aus Japan importierte Pflanzen in der EU auf radioaktive Verstrahlung untersucht?

Könnte nach Ansicht der Kommission noch von anderen aus Japan importierten Produkten eine Gefahr für Verbraucher in der EU ausgehen?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(23. April 2012)

Als Reaktion auf den Unfall im Kernkraftwerk Fukushima hat die Europäische Kommission zum ersten Mal eine Zollrisikomanagementoperation nach dem Zollrisikomanagementverfahren (CRMS) eingeleitet. Im Rahmen des CRMS wurde eine Kommunikationsplattform eingerichtet, über die die Kommission den Zollverwaltungen alle relevanten Informationen übermitteln kann.

Im Kontext dieses Unfalls haben die europäischen Zollbehörden sehr rasch und gezielt reagiert und wichtige Informationen über die Risikolage aus EU-Perspektive vorgelegt. Vom 11. März bis zum 30. September 2011 haben die Mitgliedstaaten 8 040 Dokumentenprüfungen und 5 025 Warenkontrollen an EU-Grenzen gemeldet. Rund 1 000 der 5 025 Warenkontrollen betrafen Futter- und Lebensmittel aus Japan, bei 4 000 Warenkontrollen ging es um andere Produkte aus Japan, etwa Pflanzen, Spielzeug, Möbel, Kleidung und Elektrogeräte. Bei diesen Kontrollen wurde von spezifischen Risikoprofilen und/oder systematischen Radionuklidmessungen an Containern ausgegangen. Dabei wurden in fünf Fällen Unregelmäßigkeiten festgestellt (zwei Fälle gering kontaminierter Container, zwei Sendungen mit Teeblättern und eine Pkw-Sendung).

Angesichts der Ergebnisse dieser Kontrollen ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass die Einfuhr von anderen Produkten als Futter- und Lebensmittel aus Japan keine Bedrohung für Verbraucher in der EU darstellt.

([1]) Konzern produziert in Japans gesperrter Zone: http://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/produktioniitate100.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002442/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Supplementary questions on the testing for radioactivity of imports from Japan

In his answer to Questions E-011553/2011, E-011675/2011 and E-011676/2011 by Hans-Peter Martin, Commissioner Dalli offered a detailed account of import controls on food and feed from Japan. Some questions, in particular in relation to Question E-011676/2011 on the testing for radioactivity of products imported from Japan, however, remain unanswered. The author requests that these questions be answered, particularly given current reports in the media indicating that electrical equipment is once again being produced in areas around Fukushima contaminated by radiation ([1]):

Are other products imported from Japan, such as clothing, toys, hygiene products, furniture or electrical equipment, also being tested for radioactivity? If so, what have been the results of these tests? If not, are such investigations planned?

Are plants imported into the EU from Japan tested for radioactivity?

In the view of the Commission, could other products imported from Japan pose a threat to consumers in the EU?

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

In response to the Fukushima nuclear incident, the European Commission has activated for the first time a customs crisis management alert through the Customs Risk Management System (CRMS). A platform of communication was opened in CRMS in order to enable the Commission to transmit all relevant information to the customs administrations.

In the context of this incident, European Customs have been very fast and responsive and have provided crucial information on the state of play of the risks from an EU perspective. From 11 March 2011 till 30 September 2011, Member states have reported 8 040 documentary controls and 5 025 physical checks at the EU border. Of the 5 025 physical tests, about 1 000 were performed on feed and food from Japan and about 4 000 physical tests were performed on products other than feed and food from Japan, such as plants, toys, furniture, clothing, electrical equipment. Those controls were carried out on the basis of specific risk profiles and/or systematic radionuclide measurement of containers. They have led to the identification of five irregularities (two cases of low-level contaminated containers, two consignments of tea leaves and one consignment of private cars).

Based on the outcome of these controls, the Commission is of the opinion that the import of products other than feed and food from Japan does not pose a threat to consumers in the EU.

([1]) Company produces goods in Japan's exclusion zone: http://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/produktioniitate100.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002443/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. März 2012)

Betrifft: Einbindung der Haguenau in die transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetze (TEN-V)

Im Oktober 2011 wurden die im Rahmen der transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetze (TEN-V) von der EU geförderten Projekte neu strukturiert und in ein Kernnetzwerk sowie ein ergänzendes flächendeckendes Verkehrsnetz eingeteilt. Im Dezember 2011 gewährte die Europäische Investitionsbank (EIB) ein Darlehen über 40 Mio. EUR zur Finanzierung des Hochgeschwindigkeits-Eisenbahnprojekts „LGV Est-Européenne“ und zur Anpassung des Schienennetzes im Norden Straßburgs. In der zweiten Projektstufe soll damit in den nächsten drei Jahren der Schnellzugbahnhof Vendenheim nördlich von Straßburg ausgebaut und mit dem bereits vorhandenen Bahnhof in Baudrecourt verbunden werden.

Wird das Projekt in der Haguenau im Rahmen der Magistrale Paris-Bratislava von der Europäischen Union gefördert?

Wie möchte die Kommission gewährleisten, dass die wesentlichen Funktionen auch dort rechtlich, organisatorisch und in Bezug auf die Entscheidungsfindung von Eisenbahnunternehmen unabhängig sind, wo dies noch nicht der Fall ist? Sind Sanktionen vorgesehen, wenn diese Unabhängigkeit in Mitgliedstaaten nicht gewährleistet ist?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(17. April 2012)

Das Projekt „LGV Est-Européenne“ ist Teil des bestehenden Transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetzes (vorrangiges Projekt Nr. 17: Eisenbahnverbindung Paris-Straßburg-Wien-Bratislava) und bleibt im Vorschlag der Kommission zu den TEN-T-Leitlinien auch weiterhin als Bestandteil des Kernnetzes bestehen. Aus diesem Grund kommt das Projekt „LGV Est-Européenne“ für eine Unterstützung der Europäischen Union in Form von Finanzhilfen in Betracht.

Die Kommission setzt sich auch weiterhin uneingeschränkt für die Gewährleistung der Trennung der wesentlichen Funktionen des Fahrwegbetreibers von denjenigen der Eisenbahnunternehmen ein und hat deshalb in dieser Frage eine Reihe von Vertragsverletzungsverfahren eingeleitet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002443/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Inclusion of the Haguenau region in trans-European transport networks (TEN-V)

In October 2011, the projects supported by the EU as part of the trans-European transport networks (TEN-V) were restructured, dividing them into a core network and a comprehensive supplementary transport network. In December 2011, the European Investment Bank (EIB) provided a loan for EUR 40 million to finance the 'LGV Est-Européenne' high-speed rail project and the adaptation of the rail network to the north of Strasbourg. In the second phase of the project, over the next three years, the high-speed railway station at Vendenheim, north of Strasbourg, is to be extended and linked to the existing station in Baudrecourt.

Is the project in the Haguenau region being promoted by the European Union as part of the Magistrale high-speed railway corridor between Paris and Bratislava?

How does the Commission intend to ensure that the essential functions remain independent of the railway undertakings in legal, organisational and decision-making terms, where this is not already the case? Are sanctions planned if this independence is not assured in Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The project 'LCV Est — Européenne' is part of the actual Trans-European Transport Network (priority projects No 17: Railway axis Paris-Strasbourg-Wien-Bratislava) and remains in the Commission's TEN-T guidelines proposal as part of the core network. Therefore, the project 'LCV Est — Européenne' shall be eligible for support through EU financial aid.

The Commission remains fully committed to ensure the separation of essential functions of an infrastructure manager from the railway undertakings and therefore has opened a number of infringement procedures on this point.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002444/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. März 2012)

Betrifft: Unabhängigkeit von Infrastrukturunternehmen im Bahnverkehrssystem

In seiner Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-011550/2011 von Hans-Peter Martin zur Trennung von Netzbetreibern und Bahntransportunternehmen schreibt Kommissar Kallas bezüglich der in Estland, Ungarn, Litauen und Luxemburg vorhandenen getrennten Stellen für die wesentlichen Funktionen der Trassenzuweisung und der Erhebung von Trassenzugangsentgelten, dass „in diesen Fällen auch das Verkehrsmanagement von der unabhängigen Stelle wahrgenommen werden" müsse. In Bezug auf Länder wie Österreich, Italien, Deutschland oder Polen mit einer Eisenbahn-Holding, in denen Tochterunternehmen der Holding die wesentlichen Bereiche der Infrastruktur wahrnehmen, schreibt Kommissar Kallas, dass die Unabhängigkeit nach Auffassung der Kommission „in den Fällen nicht gewährleistet [ist], in denen die Holding die Managementkontrolle über diese Tochterunternehmen ausübt".

Wie stellt die Kommission sicher, dass in Estland, Ungarn, Litauen und Polen das Verkehrsmanagement ebenfalls von unabhängiger Stelle wahrgenommen wird? Sind auch Sanktionen für Mitgliedstaaten vorgesehen, die eine solche Trennung nicht vornehmen?

Wie möchte die Kommission gewährleisten, dass die wesentlichen Funktionen auch dort rechtlich, organisatorisch und in Bezug auf die Entscheidungsfindung von Eisenbahnunternehmen unabhängig sind, wo dies noch nicht der Fall ist? Sind Sanktionen vorgesehen, wenn diese Unabhängigkeit in Mitgliedstaaten nicht gewährleistet ist?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(17. April 2012)

In Polen obliegt das Verkehrsmanagement dem Fahrwegbetreiber, der ein Tochterunternehmen der Eisenbahn-Holding ist. Die Kommission hat gegen Polen vor dem Europäischen Gerichtshof Klage erhoben, da sie die Unabhängigkeit dieses Fahrwegbetreibers von der Holding und den von der Holding geführten Eisenbahnunternehmen für nicht ausreichend gewährleistet erachtet.

Estland ist derzeit dabei, die Infrastrukturverwaltung, einschließlich des Verkehrsmanagements, vollständig vom Eisenbahnbetrieb zu trennen.

Die Kommission hat außerdem auch gegen Ungarn vor dem Europäischen Gerichtshof Klage erhoben, da die dortigen Eisenbahnunternehmen immer noch für das Verkehrsmanagement zuständig sind, wohingegen andere Teile der wesentlichen Funktion Trassenzuweisung jetzt bereits von einer unabhängigen Stelle ausgeübt werden.

Die Kommission leitet Verfahren gegen alle Mitgliedstaaten ein, welche die beschriebenen Prinzipien der Unabhängigkeit nicht einhalten.

Sollte der Europäische Gerichtshof die von der Kommission vorgenommene Auslegung der Vorschriften der Richtlinie bestätigen und ein Urteil gegen einen Mitgliedstaat fällen, so muss der Mitgliedstaat die notwendigen Maßnahmen treffen, um der Entscheidung nachzukommen.

Sollte der Mitgliedstaat der Entscheidung nicht nachkommen, so kann die Kommission ein weiteres Vertragsverletzungsverfahren nach Artikel 260 AEUV (ex-Artikel 228 des EUV) einleiten. Die Kommission kann dann den Europäischen Gerichtshof anrufen und um die Verhängung eines Pauschalbetrags und/oder von Zwangsgeldern gegen den Mitgliedstaat ersuchen, bis dieser den Verstoß beendet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002444/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Independence of infrastructure undertakings in the railway system

In his answer to Written Question E-011550/2011 from Hans-Peter Martin on the separation of network operators and railway undertakings, Commissioner Kallas writes in relation to the existing separate bodies for the essential functions of path allocation and track access charging in Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania and Luxembourg that 'in these cases traffic management must also be performed by the independent body'. With reference to countries such as Austria, Italy, Germany or Poland, which have railway holdings in which subsidiaries of the holding are responsible for essential areas of the infrastructure, Commissioner Kallas writes that, in the view of the Commission, independence 'is not guaranteed where the holding exerts management control over these subsidiaries'.

How does the Commission ensure that traffic management is also handled by an independent body in Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania and Poland? Are sanctions also planned for Member States that do not implement this separation?

How does the Commission intend to ensure that the essential functions remain independent of the railway undertakings in legal, organisational and decision-making terms, where this is not already the case? Are sanctions planned if this independence is not assured in Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

In Poland, traffic management is performed by the infrastructure manager which is a subsidiary of the railway holding. The Commission has brought Poland to the Court of Justice because it considers that there is no sufficient independence of this infrastructure manager from the holding and the railway operators controlled by the holding.

Estonia is in the process of completely separating infrastructure management, including traffic management, from railway operation.

The Commission has also brought Hungary to the Court of Justice since the incumbent railway operators are still performing traffic management, although other parts of the essential function path allocation are now performed by an independent body.

The Commission is bringing procedures against all Member States which do not respect the indicated principles of independence.

If the Court confirms the interpretation of the rules of the directive made by the Commission, and rules against a Member State, the Member State must then take the necessary measures to comply with the judgment.

If, despite the ruling, a Member State still fails to act, the Commission may pursue the infringement case further under Article 260 of the TFEU (ex Article 228 of the TEC). The Commission may thus bring the matter before the Court of Justice seeking to have a lump payment and/or periodic penalty payments imposed on the Member State until such time as it puts an end to the infringement.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002445/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. März 2012)

Betrifft: Programm „Kolarctic" für die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen des ENPI

Im Rahmen des Programms „Kolarctic" für die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit 2007-2013 im Rahmen des ENPI werden aus den Mitteln der Europäischen Nachbarschaftshilfe gemeinsame Projekte der Länder Finnland, Schweden, Norwegen und Russland finanziert.

Wurden bisher Projekte finanziert oder sind Projekte geplant, die mittelbar oder unmittelbar mit der Erzeugung oder dem Transport von Energie zusammenhängen? Wenn ja, welche und mit welchen Beträgen?

Wurden bisher Projekte finanziert oder sind Projekte geplant, die mittelbar oder unmittelbar mit Radioaktivität, radioaktiven Abfällen, Atomstromerzeugung oder Kerntechnikforschung zusammenhängen? Wenn ja, welche und mit welchen Beträgen?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2012)

Die EU finanziert im Rahmen des Programms „Kolarctic" das Projekt CEEPRA (Collaboration Network on EuroArctic Environmental Radiation Protection and Research), das auf die Verbesserung der Notfallplanung für Strahlenunfälle abzielt. Die Gesamtkosten des Projekts belaufen sich auf 987 069 EUR, von denen 354 444 EUR von der EU finanziert werden. Die übrigen Kosten werden von Finnland, Schweden, Norwegen und der Russischen Föderation getragen. Dabei werden keinerlei Projekte im Zusammenhang mit der Erzeugung oder dem Transport von Energie finanziert.

Die EU hat mit dem Programm für nukleare Sicherheit im Rahmen von Tacis (Technische Hilfe für die Gemeinschaft Unabhängiger Staaten) Projekte im Bereich nukleare Sicherheit und Entsorgung radioaktiver Abfälle in Russland finanziert. Diese Projekte zielten in der fraglichen Region hauptsächlich auf das Kernkraftwerk in Sosnowy Bor (Kernkraftwerk Leningrad) und das Kernkraftwerk Kola ab. Die Projekte konzentrierten sich auf die Betriebssicherheit sowie auf die Entsorgung und Lagerung radioaktiver Abfälle. Alle Projekte endeten spätestens im Jahr 2011. Insgesamt wurden zwischen 1992 und 2006 Projekte im Umfang von 14 Mio. EUR für das Kernkraftwerk Leningrad bzw. von 33 Mio. EUR für das Kernkraftwerk Kola finanziert.

Im Rahmen des Tacis-Programms für nukleare Sicherheit wurden zudem 40 Mio. EUR für die Nuklearkomponente des mehrseitigen Nuklear- und Umweltprogramms bereitgestellt. Mit diesem Programm wurden Projekte für die Entsorgung abgebrannter Brennelemente und radioaktiver Abfälle aus russischen Militäraktivitäten unterstützt.

Russland hat eine Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen des Instruments für Zusammenarbeit im Bereich der nuklearen Sicherheit abgelehnt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002445/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: 'Kolarctic' Cross Border Cooperation Programme under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)

As part of the 'Kolarctic' Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 under the ENPI, joint projects involving Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia are being financed from European Neighbourhood Policy funds.

Have any projects been financed to date or are there plans for projects that relate directly or indirectly to the generation or transport of energy? If so, what are those projects and what are the amounts involved?

Have any projects been financed to date or are there plans for projects that relate directly or indirectly to radioactivity, radioactive waste, nuclear power generation or nuclear research? If so, what are those projects and what are the amounts involved?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

Under the Kolartic Programme the EU funds one project called 'Collaboration Network on EuroArctic Environmental Radiation Protection and Research' (CEEPRA). This project aims at improving emergency preparedness for radiation accidents. The total costs of the project are EUR 987 069. The EU funding amounts to EUR 354 444. The rest of the project is funded by Finland, Sweden, Norway and the Russian Federation. No projects are funded that are related to the production or transportation of energy.

The EU has funded projects in the field of nuclear safety and nuclear waste management in Russia under the Tacis (Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States) nuclear safety programme. These projects focused in this region mainly on the nuclear power plant of Sosnovy Bor (Leningrad nuclear power plant — LNPP) and the Kola NPP (KNPP). Projects mainly focused on safety of the operation, and management and storage of radioactive waste. All projects finished at the latest in 2011. In total, from 1992 to 2006, projects for EUR 14 million were allocated to LNPP and EUR 33 million to KNPP.

The Tacis nuclear safety programme also provided EUR 40 million to the nuclear window of the Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Programme (MNEPR). The MNEPR has supported projects related to the management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste stemming from the Russian military activities.

Russia declined cooperation under the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002447/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καθιέρωση περιοχών προστατευόμενης αλιείας βάσει του Μεσογειακού Κανονισμού

Σύμφωνα με την αξιολόγηση του 2010 που διεξήχθη από την Επιστημονική, Τεχνική και Οικονομική Επιτροπή Αλιείας, 32 από τους 36 αλιευτικούς πόρους (ιχθυαποθέματα) στη Μεσόγειο, οι οποίοι αξιολογήθηκαν επιστημονικά, υπόκεινται σε υπερεκμετάλλευση. Επιπλέον, το ποσοστό των αλιευτικών πόρων εκτός των ασφαλών βιολογικών ορίων κυμαίνεται από 44 έως 78 τοις εκατό. Η κατάσταση αρκετών ιχθυαποθεμάτων στη Μεσόγειο είναι ανησυχητική. Αυτό θέτει υπό αμφισβήτηση τον βαθμό εφαρμογής του κανονισμού για τη Μεσόγειο (Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1967/2006 του Συμβουλίου της 21ης Δεκεμβρίου 2006). Συγκεκριμένα, το άρθρο 7 απαιτεί από τα κράτη μέλη να καθιερώσουν περιοχές προστατευόμενης αλιείας, στις οποίες θα είναι δυνατή η απαγόρευση ή ο περιορισμός αλιευτικών δραστηριοτήτων με στόχο τη διαφύλαξη και τη διαχείριση των έμβιων υδρόβιων πόρων, τη διατήρηση της καλής κατάστασης των θαλάσσιων οικοσυστημάτων ή τη βελτίωσή της μέχρι το τέλος του 2008.

Σε ποιο βαθμό έχει εφαρμοστεί μέχρι σήμερα το άρθρο 7 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1967/2006 και, συνεπώς, ποιος είναι ο αριθμός και ο τύπος των περιοχών προστατευόμενης αλιείας που έχουν εντοπισθεί, χαρτογραφηθεί και καθιερωθεί από την έναρξη ισχύος του κανονισμού της Μεσογείου;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2012)

Ο κανονισμός για τη Μεσόγειο ([1]) ενσωματώνει την περιβαλλοντική διάσταση στη διαχείριση της αλιείας με στόχο τη βιώσιμη εκμετάλλευση και προωθεί, μεταξύ άλλων, την καθιέρωση προστατευόμενων περιοχών αλιείας, στις οποίες όλες ή συγκεκριμένες αλιευτικές δραστηριότητες μπορούν να απαγορεύονται ή να περιορίζονται προσωρινά ή οριστικά με στόχο τη βελτίωση της εκμετάλλευσης των έμβιων υδρόβιων πόρων ή την προστασία των θαλάσσιων οικοσυστημάτων.

Ως εκ τούτου, εξετάζονται η συμπληρωματικότητα και συνεργία μεταξύ της οδηγίας για τους οικότοπους ([2]), και συγκεκριμένα του δικτύου προστατευόμενων περιοχών στο θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον «Φύση 2000» (Natura 2000), και των διατάξεων σχετικά με τις προστατευόμενες περιοχές αλιείας σε χωρικά ύδατα όπως ορίζονται από τον κανονισμό για τη Μεσόγειο.

Περισσότερες από 80 περιοχές με θαλάσσια διάσταση έχουν συμπεριληφθεί από την αρχή του 2007 στο δίκτυο «Φύση 2000» (Natura 2000) της Μεσογείου και η Επιτροπή εξετάζει τώρα την εφαρμογή των σχετικών διατάξεων σύμφωνα και με τους στόχους και τις υποχρεώσεις που προβλέπει ο κανονισμός για τη Μεσόγειο.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1967/2006 του Συμβουλίου, της 21ης Δεκεμβρίου 2006, σχετικά με τα μέτρα διαχείρισης για τη βιώσιμη εκμετάλλευση των αλιευτικών πόρων στη Μεσόγειο Θάλασσα.

([2]) Οδηγία 92/43/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου της 21ης Μαΐου 1992 για τη διατήρηση των φυσικών οικοτόπων καθώς και της άγριας πανίδας και χλωρίδας (ΕΕ L 206 της 22.7.1992, σ. 7).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002447/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Establishment of fishing protected areas under the Mediterranean Regulation

According to the 2010 assessment by EU's Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries, 32 out of the 36 Mediterranean fish stocks that were scientifically assessed are overexploited. Moreover, the percentage of fish stocks outside safe biological limits ranges from 44 to 78 %. The state of several fish stocks in the Mediterranean is alarming. This calls into question the degree of implementation of the Mediterranean Regulation (Council regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 of 21 December 2006). Specifically, Article 7 requires Member States to establish, by the end of 2008, fishing protected areas in which fishing activities may be banned or restricted in order to conserve and manage living aquatic resources or maintain or improve the conservation status of marine ecosystems.

What is the status of implementation of Article 7 of the regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 and, consequently, what is the number and type of fishing protected areas that have been identified, mapped and established since the Mediterranean Regulation entered into force?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

The Mediterranean Regulation ([1]) incorporates the environmental dimension into fisheries management for sustainable exploitation and promotes, *inter alia*, the establishment of 'fishing protected areas' in which all or certain fishing activities may be temporarily or permanently banned or restricted in order to improve the exploitation of living aquatic resources or the protection of marine ecosystems.

In this respect, complementarities and synergies among the Habitats Directive ([2]), and in particular its Natura 2000 network of protected areas in the marine environment, and the provisions on the fishing protected areas in territorial waters as stipulated by the Mediterranean Regulation are under examination.

More than 80 sites with a marine dimension have been included in the Mediterranean Natura 2000 network since beginning of 2007 and the Commission is examining their implementation vis-à-vis also the objectives and obligations under the Mediterranean Regulation.

([1]) Council Regulation No 1967/2006 of 21 December 2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea.
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002448/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) y Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Referéndum de autodeterminación en el Sáhara Occidental

Vistas las Resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Sáhara Occidental, en particular las Resoluciones 1598 (2005), de 28 de abril de 2005, y 1495 (2003), refrendadas por la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas el 11 de octubre de 2005, así como la Resolución 1871 (2009);

Vista la Resolución 1920 (2010), la más reciente del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas, que amplía el actual mandato de la Misión de las Naciones Unidas para el referéndum en el Sáhara Occidental (Minurso), hasta el 30 de abril de 2012;

¿Podría indicar la Comisión qué acciones políticas específicas va a llevar a cabo la Alta Representante de la Unión Europea para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad con el fin de aplicar las Resoluciones de las Naciones Unidas y luchar por el referéndum de autodeterminación para el pueblo saharaui?

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

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton apoya los esfuerzos del Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas para alcanzar una solución política justa, duradera y mutuamente aceptable, que contemple la autodeterminación del pueblo del Sáhara Occidental, de acuerdo con las Resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad.

Aunque el mandato de la Misión de las Naciones Unidas para el Sahara Occidental (Minurso) no incluye la observación en materia de derechos humanos, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta apoya la resolución 1979 (2011) adoptada por el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas el 27 de abril de 2011, por la que se prorroga un año el mandato de la Minurso en el Sáhara Occidental. La Resolución acoge con satisfacción la creación de un Consejo Nacional de Derechos Humanos en Marruecos y el componente propuesto sobre el Sáhara Occidental, así como el compromiso de Marruecos para garantizar el acceso sin reservas ni obstáculos a todos los procedimientos especiales del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de la ONU.

Los derechos humanos son uno de los aspectos esenciales del diálogo político de la UE con Marruecos y se tratan regularmente en las reuniones de los organismos conjuntos establecidos en virtud del Acuerdo de Asociación. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta considera que, en general, Marruecos avanza hacia un mayor cumplimiento de los principios relativos a los derechos humanos, aunque son necesarias más mejoras. La creación, en virtud de la nueva Constitución, del Consejo Nacional de Derechos Humanos es un ejemplo de esos desarrollos positivos.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta sigue de cerca los acontecimientos relativos al Sáhara Occidental. El estatuto avanzado al que Marruecos ha accedido en sus relaciones con la UE implica que se han registrado avances en materia de respeto de los derechos humanos, y la UE se ha comprometido a asegurar un estrecho seguimiento a ese respecto.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002448/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) et Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 mars 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Référendum sur l'autodétermination du Sahara occidental

Vu les résolutions du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies sur le Sahara occidental, notamment les résolutions 1598 (2005) du 28 avril 2005 et 1495 (2003), approuvées le 11 octobre 2005 par l'assemblée générale des Nations unies et la résolution 1871 (2009),

vu la dernière résolution du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies 1979 (2011), qui prolonge le mandat actuel de la mission des Nations unies pour l'organisation d'un référendum au Sahara occidental (Minurso) jusqu'au 30 avril 2012,

quelles actions politiques particulières la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de l'Union européenne pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité entreprend-elle afin de mettre en œuvre les résolutions des Nations unies et d'organiser le référendum relatif à l'autodétermination du peuple sahraoui?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(20 juin 2012)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton soutient les efforts déployés par le Secrétaire général des Nations unies en vue de parvenir à une solution politique juste, durable et mutuellement acceptable, qui permette l'autodétermination du peuple du Sahara occidental, conformément aux résolutions du Conseil de sécurité.

Bien que le mandat de la mission des Nations unies pour l'organisation d'un referendum au Sahara occidental (Minurso) ne couvre pas l'observation des Droits de l'homme, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante soutient la résolution 1979 (2011) adoptée par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies le 27 avril 2011, qui prolonge d'un an le mandat de la Minurso au Sahara occidental. Cette résolution salue la création d'un Conseil national des Droits de l'homme au Maroc et sa composante envisagée pour le Sahara occidental, ainsi que l'engagement qu'a pris le Maroc d'accorder un accès sans réserves ni restrictions à tous les titulaires de mandats relevant des procédures spéciales du Conseil des Droits de l'homme des Nations unies.

La question des Droits de l'homme est une des problématiques fondamentales du dialogue politique entre l'UE et le Maroc et est régulièrement abordée lors des réunions des structures conjointes établies par l'Accord d'association. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante considère que, globalement, le Maroc progresse dans le respect des principes des Droits de l'homme, bien que des améliorations supplémentaires soient nécessaires. La création, par la nouvelle Constitution, du Conseil national des Droits de l'homme témoigne d'une évolution positive à cet égard.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante suit de près les événements concernant le Sahara occidental. Le statut avancé auquel le Maroc a accédé dans ses relations avec l'UE implique que des progrès soient réalisés dans le domaine du respect des Droits de l'homme et l'UE s'engage à assurer un suivi attentif à cet égard.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002448/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) en Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 maart 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Zelfbeschikkingsreferendum in de Westelijke Sahara

Gezien de resoluties van de Veiligheidsraad van de Verenigde Naties inzake de Westelijke Sahara, in het bijzonder resoluties 1598 (2005) van 28 april 2005 en 1495 (2003), aangenomen door de Algemene Vergadering van de Verenigde Naties op 11 oktober 2005, en resolutie 1871 (2009);

gezien de meest recente resolutie van de Veiligheidsraad van de Verenigde Naties 1979 (2011) die het mandaat van de missie van de Verenigde Naties voor het referendum in de Westelijke Sahara (MINURSO) verlengde tot 30 april 2012;

welke specifieke politieke acties onderneemt de hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid ter implementatie van de VN-resoluties en ter verwezenlijking van het zelfbeschikkingsreferendum voor het Sahrawi-volk?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(20 juni 2012)

Hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton steunt de inspanningen van de secretaris-generaal van de VN om te komen tot een rechtvaardige, duurzame en wederzijds aanvaardbare politieke oplossing die de zelfbeschikking van het volk van de Westelijke Sahara mogelijk maakt in overeenstemming met de resoluties van de VN-Veiligheidsraad.

Hoewel toezicht op de mensenrechten geen deel uitmaakt van het mandaat van de Minurso-missie, steunt de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter de op 27 april 2011 aangenomen resolutie 1979 (2011) van de VN-Veiligheidsraad, waarmee het mandaat van Minurso in de Westelijke Sahara met een jaar wordt verlengd. In de resolutie verheugt de VN-Veiligheidsraad zich over de oprichting van een nationale mensenrechtenraad (Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme) in Marokko en het voorgestelde onderdeel inzake de Westelijke Sahara, alsook over de verbintenis van Marokko om onvoorwaardelijke en vrije toegang voor alle speciale procedures van de Mensenrechtenraad van de VN te garanderen.

De mensenrechten zijn een centraal thema in de politieke dialoog tussen de EU en Marokko en komen regelmatig aan bod tijdens de vergaderingen van de bij de associatieovereenkomst opgerichte gezamenlijke organen. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is van mening dat Marokko over het algemeen vooruitgang boekt inzake de eerbiediging van de mensenrechtenbeginselen, hoewel verdere verbeteringen op dit gebied nodig zijn. In dit verband is de oprichting van de nationale mensenrechtenraad bij de nieuwe grondwet bijvoorbeeld een positieve ontwikkeling.

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter volgt nauwlettend de ontwikkelingen in verband met de Westelijke Sahara. De „geavanceerde status" die Marokko in de betrekkingen met de EU heeft verworven, houdt in dat het land op het gebied van eerbiediging van de mensenrechten vooruitgang boekt en dat de EU deze inspanningen van nabij blijft volgen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002448/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) and Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Self-determination referendum in Western Sahara

Having regard to the resolutions of the UN Security Council on Western Sahara, in particular Resolutions 1598 (2005) of 28 April 2005 and 1495 (2003), endorsed by the UN General Assembly on 11 October 2005, and Resolution 1871 (2009), and having regard to the latest UN Security Council Resolution 1979 (2011) that extended the existing mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 30th April 2012, which specific political actions is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy undertaking to implement UN resolutions and pursue the self-determination referendum for the Sahrawi people?

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

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton supports the efforts of the UN Secretary General with a view to achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in agreement with the Security Council resolutions.

Although the Minurso mission mandate does not include human rights observation, the HR/VP supports the Resolution 1979 (2011) adopted by the UN Security Council on 27 April 2011 extending by one year the mandate of Minurso in Western Sahara. The Resolution welcomes the establishment of a National Council on Human Rights in Morocco and the proposed component regarding Western Sahara, and the commitment of Morocco to ensure unqualified and unimpeded access to all Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council.

Human rights are one of the core issues in the EU-Morocco political dialogue and are regularly addressed in the meetings of the joint bodies established under the Association Agreement. The HR/VP considers that overall Morocco is making progress towards more compliance with the human rights principles, although further improvements are necessary. The creation by the new Constitution of the National Council for Human Rights is an example of a positive development in this regard.

The HR/VP is closely following events with regard to Western Sahara. The Advanced Status, to which Morocco has acceded in its relations with the EU, implies that progress is made in the area of compliance with human rights and the EU is engaged to ensure a close follow up in this regard.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002449/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) y Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental

Vistas las conclusiones del informe del PE y de la delegación *ad hoc* de marzo de 2009, en particular las recomendaciones relativas al respeto y la supervisión de los derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental;

Vista la Declaración de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, de 9 de diciembre de 1998, sobre el derecho y el deber de los individuos, los grupos y las instituciones de promover y proteger los derechos humanos y las libertades fundamentales universalmente reconocidos;

Vistos los informes elaborados por las organizaciones de defensa de los derechos humanos, como Human Rights Watch, la Organización Mundial Contra la Tortura (OMCT) y la Federación Internacional de Derechos Humanos (FIDH), que denuncian las violaciones continuadas de los derechos humanos en los territorios ocupados del Sáhara Occidental, como la represión de los derechos de expresión, de asamblea y asociación en nombre de la autodeterminación para el pueblo saharaui y en nombre de sus derechos humanos, y también por medio de las detenciones arbitrarias, juicios injustos, restricciones a la asociación y asamblea, violencia policial y acoso que quedan impunes;

¿Puede indicar la Comisión qué medidas está tomando la Alta Representante de la Unión Europea para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad para garantizar que Marruecos, un país con el que la UE tiene varios acuerdos, respeta los derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental?

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de si la Alta Representante de la Unión Europea para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad ha conseguido el acceso a los territorios ocupados del Sáhara Occidental para las delegaciones parlamentarias, gubernamentales y de la UE, así como para las organizaciones humanitarias, con el fin de supervisar el respeto de los derechos humanos?

¿Podría aclarar la Comisión si la Alta Representante está dispuesta a apoyar públicamente la postura del Parlamento Europeo, que pide una supervisión internacional de la situación relativa a los derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental —principalmente mediante el recurso a los Relatores Especiales del Consejo de los Derechos Humanos—, una postura expresada en la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo en el 19° periodo de sesiones del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas de 16 de febrero de 2012?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2012)

La Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton apoya los esfuerzos del Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas destinados a alcanzar una solución política justa, duradera y mutuamente aceptable, que permita la autodeterminación de la población del Sáhara Occidental, de acuerdo con las Resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad.

Aunque el mandato de la Misión de las Naciones Unidas para el referéndum del Sáhara Occidental (Minurso) no incluye la observación de los derechos humanos, la AR/VP apoya la resolución 1979 (2011), adoptada por el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas el 27 de abril de 2011, por la que se prorroga por un año el mandato de la Minurso en el Sáhara Occidental. La Resolución acoge con satisfacción la creación de un Consejo Nacional de los Derechos Humanos en Marruecos y los elementos propuestos sobre el Sáhara Occidental, así como el compromiso de Marruecos de garantizar sin reservas el libre acceso a todos los procedimientos especiales del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de la ONU.

Los derechos humanos son uno de los aspectos fundamentales del diálogo político de la UE con Marruecos y se abordan regularmente en las reuniones de los órganos conjuntos establecidos en virtud del Acuerdo de Asociación. La AR/VP considera que, en términos generales, Marruecos está avanzando hacia un mayor respeto de los principios relativos a los derechos humanos, si bien son necesarios nuevos progresos. La creación por la nueva Constitución del Consejo Nacional para los Derechos Humanos es un ejemplo de cambio positivo en este sentido.

La AR/VP sigue de cerca los acontecimientos con respecto al Sáhara Occidental. El Estatuto Avanzado al que Marruecos ha accedido en sus relaciones con la UE implica que se consiguen avances en materia de respeto de los derechos humanos y la UE se ha comprometido a llevar a cabo un estrecho seguimiento al respecto.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002449/12
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) et Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 mars 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Droits de l'homme au Sahara occidental

Vu les conclusions du rapport du mois de mars 2009 de la délégation ad hoc du Parlement européen, et particulièrement les recommandations relatives au respect et au contrôle de la situation des Droits de l'homme au Sahara occidental,

vu la déclaration de l'assemblée générale des Nations unies du 9 décembre 1998 sur le droit des individus, groupes et organes de la société de promouvoir et protéger les Droits de l'homme et les libertés fondamentales universellement reconnus,

vu les rapports d'organisations de protection des Droits de l'homme comme Human Rights Watch, l'Organisation mondiale contre la torture (OMCT) et la Fédération internationale des ligues des Droits de l'homme (FIDH), qui dénoncent les violations des Droits de l'homme récurrentes dans les territoires occupés du Sahara occidental, à savoir la violation des libertés d'expression, de rassemblement et d'association au nom de l'autodétermination du peuple sahraoui et de ses droits fondamentaux, ainsi que les arrestations arbitraires, les procès iniques, les restrictions aux libertés d'association et de rassemblement, la violence et le harcèlement par la police, qui demeurent impunis,

que fait la haute représentante de l'Union européenne pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité afin de veiller à ce que le Maroc, pays avec lequel l'Union européenne a conclu plusieurs accords, respecte les Droits de l'homme au Sahara occidental?

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de l'Union européenne pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité a-t-elle demandé à ce que des délégations parlementaires, gouvernementales et européennes, mais également des organisations humanitaires, puissent se rendre dans les territoires occupés du Sahara occidental afin d'y contrôler le respect des Droits de l'homme?

La haute représentante est-elle disposée à défendre publiquement la position du Parlement européen, qui appelle à un contrôle international de la situation des Droits de l'homme au Sahara occidental, en recourant notamment aux rapporteurs spéciaux du Conseil des Droits de l'homme; — une position que le Parlement européen a exprimée dans sa résolution sur la 19e session du Conseil des Droits de l'homme des Nations unies du 16 février 2012?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(14 juin 2012)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton soutient les efforts déployés par le Secrétaire général des Nations unies en vue de parvenir à une solution politique juste, durable et mutuellement acceptable, qui permette l'autodétermination du peuple du Sahara occidental, conformément aux résolutions du Conseil de sécurité.

Bien que le mandat de la mission des Nations unies pour l'organisation d'un referendum au Sahara occidental (Minurso) ne couvre pas l'observation des Droits de l'homme, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante soutient la résolution 1979 (2011) adoptée par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies le 27 avril 2011, qui prolonge d'un an le mandat de la Minurso au Sahara occidental. Cette résolution salue la création d'un Conseil national des Droits de l'homme au Maroc et sa composante envisagée pour le Sahara occidental, ainsi que l'engagement qu'a pris le Maroc d'accorder un accès sans réserves ni restrictions à tous les titulaires de mandats relevant des procédures spéciales du Conseil des Droits de l'homme des Nations unies.

La question des Droits de l'homme est une des problématiques fondamentales du dialogue politique entre l'UE et le Maroc et est régulièrement abordée lors des réunions des structures conjointes établies par l'Accord d'association. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante considère que, globalement, le Maroc progresse dans respect des principes des Droits de l'homme, bien que des améliorations supplémentaires soient nécessaires. La création, par la nouvelle Constitution, du Conseil national des Droits de l'homme témoigne d'une évolution positive à cet égard.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante suit de près les événements concernant le Sahara occidental. Le statut avancé auquel le Maroc a accédé dans ses relations avec l'UE implique que des progrès soient réalisés dans le domaine du respect des Droits de l'homme et l'UE s'engage à assurer un suivi attentif à cet égard.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002449/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) en Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 maart 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Mensenrechten in de Westelijke Sahara

Gezien de conclusies van het verslag van de ad-hocdelegatie van het EP van maart 2009, in het bijzonder de aanbevelingen betreffende de naleving van en het toezicht op mensenrechten in de Westelijke Sahara;

gezien de verklaring van de Algemene Vergadering van de Verenigde Naties van 9 december 1998 inzake het recht van individuen, groepen en instellingen om universeel erkende mensenrechten en fundamentele vrijheden te bevorderen en te beschermen;

gezien de verslagen van mensenrechtenorganisaties zoals Human Rights Watch, de Wereldorganisatie tegen Foltering (WOAT) en de Internationale mensenrechtenfederatie (FIDH) die de wijdverbreide mensenrechtenschendingen in de bezette gebieden van de Westelijke Sahara veroordelen, namelijk het onderdrukken van de vrijheid van meningsuiting, vergadering en vereniging van mensen ten behoeve van de zelfbeschikking van het Sahrawi-volk en ten behoeve van hun mensenrechten, en tevens via willekeurige arrestaties, oneerlijke processen, beperkingen van verenigingen en vergaderingen, politiegeweld en -intimidatie die onbestraft blijft;

wat doet de hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid om te waarborgen dat Marokko, een land waarmee de EU verscheidene overeenkomsten heeft, de mensenrechten in de Westelijke Sahara respecteert?

Heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid om toegang verzocht tot de bezette gebieden van de Westelijke Sahara voor parlementaire, regerings- en EU-delegaties alsmede humanitaire organisaties teneinde te controleren of de mensenrechten worden gerespecteerd?

Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger bereid publiekelijk zijn steun uit te spreken voor het standpunt van het Europees Parlement waarin wordt opgeroepen tot internationale controle van de mensenrechtensituatie in de Westelijke Sahara, niet in de laatste plaats door een beroep te doen op speciale rapporteurs van de Raad voor de mensenrechten; een standpunt dat tot uitdrukking werd gebracht in de resolutie van het EP op de 19e zitting van de VN-Raad voor de mensenrechten op 16 februari 2012?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(14 juni 2012)

Hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton steunt de inspanningen van de secretaris-generaal van de Verenigde Naties om te komen tot een rechtvaardige, duurzame en voor alle partijen aanvaardbare oplossing die gestalte geeft aan het zelfbeschikkingsrecht van het volk van de Westelijke Sahara in overeenstemming met de resoluties van de VN-Veiligheidsraad.

Hoewel toezicht op de mensenrechten geen deel uitmaakt van het mandaat van de VN-missie voor het referendum in Westelijk Sahara (Minurso), steunt de HV/VV de op 27 april 2011 aangenomen resolutie 1979 (2011) van de VN-Veiligheidsraad, waarmee het mandaat van Minurso in de Westelijke Sahara met een jaar wordt verlengd. In de resolutie verheugt de VN-Veiligheidsraad zcih over de oprichting van een nationale mensenrechtenraad (Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme) in Marokko en het voorgestelde onderdeel voor de Westelijke Sahara, alsook over de verbintenis van Marokko om onvoorwaardelijke en vrije toegang voor alle speciale procedures van de Mensenrechtenraad van de VN te garanderen.

De mensenrechten zijn een centraal thema in de politieke dialoog tussen de EU en Marokko en komen regelmatig aan bod in de vergaderingen van de bij de associatieovereenkomst opgerichte gezamenlijke organen. De HV/VV is van mening dat Marokko over het algemeen evolueert in de richting van een betere naleving van de mensenrechtenbeginselen evolueert, maar dat verdere vooruitgang nodig is. In dit verband is de oprichting van de nationale mensenrechtenraad bij de nieuwe grondwet bijvoorbeeld een stap in de goede richting.

De HV/VV volgt nauwlettend de ontwikkelingen in verband met de Westelijke Sahara. De geavanceerde status die Marokko in de betrekkingen met de EU heeft verworven, houdt in dat het land inzake eerbiediging van de mensenrechten vooruitgang boekt en de EU deze inspanningen van nabij blijft volgen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002449/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) and Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in Western Sahara

Having regard to the conclusions of the report of the EP ad hoc Delegation on March 2009, in particular the recommendations relating to the compliance and monitoring of human rights in Western Sahara;

Having regard to the Declaration of the UN General Assembly of 9 December 1998 on the right of individuals, groups and institutions to promote and protect universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms;

Having regard to reports by human rights organisations such as Human Rights Watch, World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) which denounce widespread human rights violations in the occupied territories of Western Sahara, namely the repression of the right of persons to speak, assemble, and associate on behalf of self-determination for the Sahrawi people and on behalf of their human rights, and also through arbitrary arrests, unfair trials, restrictions on associations and assemblies, police violence and harassment that goes unpunished;

What is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy doing to ensure that Morocco, a country with which the EU has concluded several agreements, respects human rights in Western Sahara?

Has the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy gained access to the occupied territories of Western Sahara for parliamentary, government and EU delegations and also humanitarian organisations to monitor the respect of human rights?

Is the High Representative willing to publicly support the European Parliament position, which calls for international monitoring of the human rights situation in Western Sahara, not least through recourse to Special Rapporteurs from the Human Rights Council; a position which was expressed in the EP's resolution on the 19th Session of the UN Human Rights Council on 16 February 2012?

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

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton supports the efforts of the UN Secretary General with a view to achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in agreement with the Security Council resolutions.

Although the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (Minurso) mission mandate does not include human rights observation, the HR/VP supports the resolution 1979 (2011) adopted by the UN Security Council on 27 April 2011 extending by one year the mandate of Minurso in Western Sahara. The Resolution welcomes the establishment of a National Council on Human Rights in Morocco and the proposed component regarding Western Sahara, and the commitment of Morocco to ensure unqualified and unimpeded access to all Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council.

Human rights are one of the core issues in the EU-Morocco political dialogue and are regularly addressed in the meetings of the joint bodies established under the Association Agreement. The HR/VP considers that overall Morocco is making progress towards more compliance with the human rights principles, although further improvements are necessary. The creation by the new Constitution of the National Council for Human Rights is an example of a positive development in this regard.

The HR/VP is closely following events with regard to Western Sahara. The Advanced Status, to which Morocco has acceded in its relations with the EU, implies that progress is made in the area of compliance with human rights and the EU is engaged to ensure a close follow up in this regard.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002450/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) y Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Derecho internacional en el Sáhara Occidental y las empresas europeas

En una presentación publicada el 28 de enero, la empresa irlandesa San Leon Energy reveló que había efectuado búsquedas de petróleo en los territorios ocupados del Sáhara Occidental ([1]).

Este hecho supone una clara violación del Derecho internacional, ya que en 2002 la Oficina de Asuntos Jurídicos de las Naciones Unidas expresó la opinión de que toda exploración de petróleo en el Sáhara Occidental constituye una violación del Derecho internacional si no se ha consultado previamente a la población local y ésta no obtiene beneficio alguno de las actividades del sector.

Asimismo, la compañía marroquí Nareva y la alemana Siemens firmaron recientemente un contrato para el suministro de 44 turbinas eólicas para la planta de Haouma, cerca de Tánger, en el norte de Marruecos, y para la planta de Foum El Oued, situada cerca de El Aaiún, la capital del Sáhara Occidental ([2]).

¿Puede indicar la Comisión qué medidas va a tomar la Alta Representante de la Unión Europea para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad con el fin de obligar a las empresas europeas a cumplir el Derecho internacional, en concreto, en el Sáhara Occidental?

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

El problema del Sáhara Occidental está siendo abordado en el marco de las Naciones Unidas, bajo la responsabilidad de la Secretaría General. La UE no interviene en la labor de mediación y el Consejo ha señalado en repetidas ocasiones su pleno apoyo a los esfuerzos de dicha organización. Marruecos está ejerciendo *de facto* su autoridad sobre el Sáhara Occidental.

Por lo que se refiere a las actividades económicas realizadas en el Sáhara Occidental por terceros, como es el caso de las empresas mencionadas por Sus Señorías, su actividad no es ilegal *per se*. Sin embargo, esa actividad sí sería ilegal en virtud del Derecho internacional si se lleva a cabo «en detrimento de los intereses y deseos» de la población del Sáhara Occidental.

La UE evoca regularmente la cuestión del Sáhara Occidental en su diálogo con las autoridades marroquíes.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-22/sle_presentation_28.01.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.wsrw.org/a105x2250.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002450/12
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) et Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 mars 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Droit international au Sahara occidental et entreprises européennes

Dans un document publié le 28 janvier, l'entreprise irlandaise San Leon Energy révèle qu'elle a poursuivi des opérations d'exploration pétrolière dans les territoires occupés du Sahara occidental ([1]).

Il s'agit clairement d'une violation du droit international, dans la mesure où le Service juridique des Nations unies a indiqué en 2002 que toute future exploration pétrolière au Sahara occidental contreviendrait au droit international si la population locale n'était pas consultée et si elle ne tirait aucun avantage de cette exploitation.

Parallèlement à cela, le holding marocain Nareva et l'entreprise allemande Siemens ont conclu un contrat pour la livraison d'un total de 44 éoliennes sur le parc éolien d'Haouma, à proximité de Tanger, dans le nord du Maroc, et sur le parc de Foum El-Oued. Ce dernier se trouve en fait à proximité d'El-Aaiún, la capitale du Sahara occidental ([2]).

Que fait la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de l'Union européenne pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité afin d'encourager les sociétés européennes à respecter le droit international, notamment au Sahara occidental?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(8 juin 2012)

La question du Sahara occidental est traitée dans le cadre des Nations unies sous la responsabilité du Secrétaire général. L'Union européenne ne prend aucunement part aux efforts de médiation et le Conseil a réitéré, à plusieurs reprises, son soutien plein et entier aux efforts déployés par les Nations unies. Le Maroc exerce de facto son autorité sur le Sahara occidental.

Pour ce qui est de l'activité économique exercée par des tiers au Sahara occidental, telle que celle des entreprises citées par Mesdames les députés, elle n'est pas illégale en soi. En revanche, une telle activité serait illégale au regard du droit international si elle était exercée «au mépris des intérêts et de la volonté» de la population du Sahara occidental.

L'Union européenne évoque régulièrement la question du Sahara occidental dans son dialogue avec les autorités marocaines.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-22/sle_presentation_28.01.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.wsrw.org/a105x2250.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002450/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) en Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 maart 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Internationaal recht in de Westelijke Sahara en Europese bedrijven

In een op 28 januari gepubliceerde presentatie heeft het Ierse bedrijf San Leon Energy onthuld dat het een zoektocht naar olie in het bezette gebied van de Westelijke Sahara heeft uitgevoerd ([1]).

Dit is duidelijk in strijd met het internationale recht, aangezien de juridische dienst van de Verenigde Naties in 2002 heeft aangegeven dat verdere olie-exploratie in de Westelijke Sahara in strijd is met het internationale recht indien de plaatselijke bevolking niet wordt geraadpleegd en niet van deze industrie profiteert.

Ook hebben het Marokkaanse bedrijf Nareva Holding en het Duitse bedrijf Siemens een contract getekend voor de levering van in totaal 44 windturbines voor de fabriek van Haouma — in de buurt van Tanger in het noorden van Marokko — en de fabriek in Foum El Oued. Laatstgenoemde bevindt zich in feite dicht bij Laayoune, de hoofdstad van de Westelijke Sahara ([2]).

Wat doet de hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid om Europese bedrijven te bewegen tot naleving van het internationale recht, in het bijzonder in de Westelijke Sahara?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(8 juni 2012)

De kwestie van de Westelijke Sahara wordt behandeld door de VN onder de verantwoordelijkheid van de secretaris-generaal. De EU is niet bij de bemiddeling betrokken en de Raad heeft herhaaldelijk bevestigd dat hij volledig achter de inspanningen van de VN staat. Marokko oefent de facto zijn autoriteit uit over de Westelijke Sahara.

Het uitvoeren van economische activiteiten door derde partijen in de Westelijke Sahara, bijvoorbeeld die van de door de geachte Parlementsleden genoemde ondernemingen, is niet per se onwettig. Deze activiteiten zijn evenwel in strijd zijn met het internationaal recht indien ze „tegen de belangen en de wensen" van de inwoners van de Westelijke Sahara indruisen.

De EU stelt de kwestie van de Westelijke Sahara regelmatig aan de orde in haar dialoog met de Marokkaanse autoriteiten.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-22/sle_presentation_28.01.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.wsrw.org/a105x2250.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002450/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) and Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — International law in Western Sahara and European companies

In a presentation published on 28 January 2012, the Irish company San Leon Energy revealed that it has carried out an oil search in the occupied land of Western Sahara ([1]).

This is a clear breach of international law, as the Legal Office of the United Nations expressed the opinion in 2002 that all further oil exploration in Western Sahara would be in violation of international law if the local population were not consulted, and if it did not benefit from the activities of the industry.

Similarly, the Moroccan Nareva Holding company and the German company Siemens have recently signed a contract for the delivery of a total of 44 wind turbines for the plant of Haouma — close to Tanger in the north of Morocco — and the plant at Foum El Oued. The latter is in fact located close to El Aaiun, the capital of Western Sahara ([2]).

What actions is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy undertaking to encourage European corporations to comply with international law, in particular in Western Sahara?

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

The Western Sahara issue is being handled in the UN framework under the responsibility of the Secretary General. The EU does not play a role in the mediation efforts and the Council has on repeated occasions underlined its full support for UN efforts. Morocco is de facto exerting its authority over Western Sahara.

As regards economic activity conducted in Western Sahara by third parties, such as the companies cited by the Honourable Members, this is not per se illegal. However, such activity would be illegal under international law if conducted in 'disregard of the interests and wishes' of the people of the Western Sahara.

The EU regularly raises the issue of Western Sahara in its dialogue with the Moroccan authorities.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-22/sle_presentation_28.01.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.wsrw.org/a105x2250.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002451/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) y Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Actividad agrícola en el Sáhara Occidental

En el contexto del debate sobre el acuerdo de la UE con Marruecos para liberalizar el comercio en materia de agricultura y pesca, el Comisario de Ampliación y Política Europea de Vecindad, Stefan Füle, presentó una ficha informativa que distribuyó entre los miembros del Parlamento Europeo. En este documento se afirmaba que hasta ahora, prácticamente no había habido actividad agrícola alguna en el Sáhara Occidental —únicamente 300 hectáreas cerca de Dakhla— y que tampoco existía explotación de los recursos agrícolas. El propósito de dicha declaración era desestimar el argumento de que el acuerdo afectaría al Sáhara Occidental.

No obstante, al mismo tiempo, Western Sahara Resource Watch (WSRW), presentó un informe titulado *Conflict Tomatoes*, que revelaba la existencia de 11 emplazamientos agrarios en los territorios ocupados del Sáhara Occidental, y ofrecía la ubicación exacta por GPS de todos ellos ([1]).

Según esta investigación, todos los emplazamientos son propiedad del Rey de Marruecos, de poderosas empresas marroquíes o de multinacionales francesas. Ninguna compañía es propiedad de los saharauis, ni siquiera los pequeños colonos marroquíes de la zona son propietarios. Además, según el informe, 646 hectáreas habían sido equipadas para la actividad agrícola, de las cuales 588 ya estaban siendo explotadas. Por último, aunque no por ello menos importante, el Gobierno marroquí pretende aumentar la actividad agrícola en Dakhla en los próximos años. El Plan agrícola regional prevé que se amplíen las zonas de cultivos tempranos y que, de las 588 hectáreas que había en 2008, se alcancen las 2 000 hectáreas para el año 2020. El plan también establece un aumento de la producción en invernaderos, de las 36 000 toneladas del año 2008 a las 80 000 para 2013 y a las 160 000 para 2020. Este aumento de la producción se destinará exclusivamente a la exportación. Se prevé que, para el año 2020, el número de personas que trabajan en la agricultura en la región se haya triplicado.

¿Podría especificar la Comisión cuál es la fuente de los datos ofrecidos sobre los emplazamientos agrícolas en el Sáhara Occidental? ¿Ha iniciado la Comisión una investigación interna para averiguar si dichos datos eran o no correctos?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de mayo de 2012)

El proceso de negociación y la adopción del acuerdo entre la UE y Marruecos para la liberalización del comercio en materia de agricultura y pesca ha durado unos cinco años. Los datos relativos a la actividad agrícola en el Sáhara Occidental utilizados por la Comisión han sido facilitados por la administración marroquí durante ese período.

En los distintos documentos y la presentación (basados en la información proporcionada por las autoridades marroquíes) facilitados al Parlamento Europeo, la Comisión señala que, a su entender, existen unas 500 hectáreas, de las cuales unas 350 ya se están explotando, frente a las 588 hectáreas indicadas por *Western Sahara Resource Watch*. La última cifra facilitada por el Ministerio de Agricultura marroquí es de 520 hectáreas ([2]).

La relación entre la Unión Europea y Marruecos se basa en la confianza mutua. No hemos tenido motivos, en el pasado, para poner en tela de juicio la información facilitada en relación con las tierras agrícolas en el Sáhara Occidental.

Teniendo en cuenta la limitada divergencia de los datos facilitados por las autoridades y las ONG sobre esta cuestión, no se considera necesario llevar a cabo una investigación interna. Sin embargo, la Comisión va a plantear la cuestión a las autoridades marroquíes a fin de comprobar si la información de que dispone es correcta y actualizada.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-13/conflict_tomatoes_14.02.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.ada.gov.ma/Plans_agricoles/plan_agricole_region_oued_eddahab_lagouira/Diagnostic_agriculture.php.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002451/12
à la Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) et Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 mars 2012)

Objet: Activités agricoles au Sahara occidental

Dans le cadre du débat sur l'accord entre l'Union européenne et le Maroc visant à libéraliser le commerce dans les domaines de l'agriculture et de la pêche, Stefan Füle, commissaire pour l'élargissement et la politique européenne de voisinage, a publié une brochure, qui a été distribuée députés au Parlement européen. Ce document contient les propos suivants: «Pour le moment, il n'y a pratiquement aucune activité agricole dans le Sahara occidental (seuls 300 hectares à proximité de Dakhla) et il n'y a aucune exploitation des ressources agricoles». L'objectif de cette déclaration était de battre en brèche l'argument selon lequel l'accord affecterait le Sahara occidental.

Cependant, l'organisation Western Sahara Resource Watch (WSRW) a publié un rapport intitulé «Les tomates du conflit», qui révèle l'existence de 11 sites agricoles dans le Sahara occidental et fournit la situation géographique de chacun d'entre eux ([1]).

Selon ce rapport, «tous les sites sont détenus par le roi du Maroc, par des conglomérats marocains puissants ou par des entreprises multinationales françaises. Aucune entreprise n'est détenue par les Sahraouis de l'endroit, ni même par de petites entreprises de colons marocains présents sur le territoire». Par ailleurs, le rapport souligne que 646 hectares de territoire ont été préparés pour leur exploitation agricole, parmi lesquels 588 hectares sont déjà exploités. Enfin, le gouvernement marocain entend augmenter l'activité agricole à Dakhla dans les années à venir. Son programme agricole régional prévoit d'augmenter la culture des primeurs, en passant des 588 hectares qui y étaient consacrés en 2008 à 2 000 hectares en 2020. Ce programme prévoit également une augmentation de la culture sous serre, qui passera de 36 000 tonnes (en 2008) à 80 000 tonnes en 2013, et 160 000 tonnes en 2020. Cette augmentation de la production sera uniquement destinée à l'exportation. Le nombre de personnes employées dans le secteur agricole de la région est censé tripler d'ici à 2020.

La Commission pourrait-elle indiquer d'où proviennent les données qu'elle a fournies concernant les sites agricoles dans le Sahara occidental? A-t-elle lancé une enquête interne afin de déterminer si ces données étaient exactes?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(23 mai 2012)

Le processus de négociation et d'adoption de l'accord UE-Maroc pour la libéralisation des échanges dans les secteurs de l'agriculture et de la pêche a pris environ cinq ans. Les données utilisées par la Commission pour les activités agricoles au Sahara occidental ont été fournies au cours de cette période par l'administration marocaine chargée des questions agricoles.

Dans les différents documents fournis et la présentation faite au Parlement européen (sur la base des informations des autorités marocaines), la Commission a indiqué que, selon elle, il existe environ 500 hectares, dont environ 350 hectares sont déjà exploités, contre les 588 hectares communiqués par *Western Sahara Resource Watch*. Le chiffre le plus récent communiqué par le ministère de l'agriculture du Maroc est de 520 hectares ([2]).

Les relations entre l'Union européenne et le Maroc sont fondées sur la confiance mutuelle. Dans le passé, nous n'avons eu aucune raison de mettre en cause les informations qui nous ont été fournies sur les terres agricoles au Sahara occidental.

Compte tenu de l'écart limité entre les données fournies par les autorités et les ONG en la matière, une enquête interne n'est pas jugée nécessaire. Toutefois, nous aborderons la question avec les autorités marocaines, afin de vérifier si les informations dont nous disposons sont à la fois exactes et à jour.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-13/conflict_tomatoes_14.02.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.ada.gov.ma/Plans_agricoles/plan_agricole_region_oued_eddahab_lagouira/Diagnostic_agriculture.php.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002451/12
aan de Commissie
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) en Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 maart 2012)

Betreft: Landbouwactiviteit in de Westelijke Sahara

In verband met het debat over de overeenkomst tussen de EU en Marokko over wederzijdse liberalisatiemaatregelen inzake landbouw- en visserijproducten heeft de commissaris voor Uitbreiding en Europees Nabuurschapsbeleid Stefan Füle een „informatieblad" opgesteld dat onder de leden van het Europees Parlement is uitgedeeld. In dit document stond: „Tot dusver is er vrijwel geen landbouwactiviteit in de Westelijke Sahara (slechts 300 hectare in de buurt van Dakhla) en vindt er geen exploitatie van grondstoffen in de landbouw plaats". Een dergelijke bewering diende ertoe het argument af te zwakken dat de overeenkomst gevolgen zou hebben voor de Westelijke Sahara.

Maar tegelijkertijd heeft de Western Sahara Resource Watch (WSRW) het verslag „Conflict Tomatoes" gepubliceerd, dat onthulde dat er in de bezette Westelijke Sahara elf landbouwterreinen waren en dat de GPS-locatie van al die terreinen aangaf ([1]).

Volgens dit onderzoek „waren alle terreinen eigendom van de Marokkaanse koning, machtige Marokkaanse conglomeraten of Franse multinationals. Geen enkel bedrijf is eigendom van de plaatselijke Sahrawi, zelfs niet van kleine Marokkaanse kolonisten in het gebied". Verder wees het verslag erop dat 646 hectare voor landbouwactiviteiten was uitgerust en dat 588 hectare daarvan reeds geëxploiteerd werd. Tot slot is de Marokkaanse regering van plan om de landbouwactiviteiten in Dakhla de komende jaren uit te breiden. Het regionale landbouwplan voorziet in de uitbreiding van gebieden voor vroege gewassen van 588 hectare in 2008 naar 2 000 hectare tegen 2020. Het plan stipuleert tevens een toename van de kasteeltproductie van 36 000 ton (in 2008) naar 80 000 ton in 2013 en 160 000 ton in 2020. Die productietoename zal uitsluitend bestemd zijn voor export. Het aantal werknemers in de landbouw in dit gebied zal naar verwachting tegen 2020 verdrievoudigen.

Kan de Commissie verklaren waar ze de door haar verstrekte informatie over de landbouwterreinen in de Westelijke Sahara vandaan heeft? Heeft ze een intern onderzoek ingesteld om na te gaan of de door haar verstrekte informatie wel juist was?

Antwoord van de heer Cioloş namens de Commissie
(23 mei 2012)

De onderhandelingen over en de vaststelling van de overeenkomst tussen de EU en Marokko over wederzijdse liberalisatiemaatregelen inzake landbouw- en visserijproducten hebben zo'n vijf jaar geduurd. De door de Commissie gebruikte gegevens over de landbouwactiviteit in de Westelijke Sahara zijn in deze periode verstrekt door het Marokkaanse Ministerie van Landbouw.

In de verscheidene aan het Europees Parlement verstrekte documenten en (op basis van informatie van de Marokkaanse autoriteiten) voor het Europees Parlement gehouden presentaties heeft de Commissie meegedeeld dat zij uitgaat van zo'n 500 hectare, waarvan ongeveer 350 hectare reeds wordt geëxploiteerd, tegenover 588 hectare volgens de *Western Sahara Resource Watch*. Het laatste door het Marokkaanse Ministerie van Landbouw meegedeelde cijfer is 520 hectare ([2]).

De betrekkingen tussen de Europese Unie en Marokko zijn gebaseerd op wederzijds vertrouwen. In het verleden waren er geen redenen om te twijfelen aan de informatie die ons over het landbouwareaal in de Westelijke Sahara is verstrekt.

Gezien de beperkte afwijking tussen de door de autoriteiten en door ngo's hierover verstrekte gegevens wordt een intern onderzoek niet nodig geacht. Wij zullen de kwestie evenwel aankaarten bij de Marokkaanse autoriteiten om te controleren of de informatie waarover wij beschikken zowel nauwkeurig als up-to-date is.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-13/conflict_tomatoes_14.02.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.ada.gov.ma/Plans_agricoles/plan_agricole_region_oued_eddahab_lagouira/Diagnostic_agriculture.php.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002451/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE) and Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Agricultural activity in Western Sahara

In the context of the debate on the EU-Morocco agreement for the liberalisation of trade in agriculture and fisheries, the Commissioner for enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy, Stefan Füle, has produced a 'fact sheet', which has been distributed to MEPs. This document states: 'So far there is practically no agricultural activity in Western Sahara (only 300 hectares close to Dakhla) and there is no exploitation of resource in agriculture'. The purpose of this statement was to downplay the argument that the agreement would affect Western Sahara.

However, at the same time the organisation Western Sahara Resource Watch (WSRW) has released a report under the title 'Conflict Tomatoes', which reveals the existence of 11 agricultural sites in occupied Western Sahara and provides a GPS location for all of them ([1]).

According to this research, all these are 'either owned by the Moroccan king, powerful Moroccan conglomerates or by French multinational firms', while 'no firms are owned by the local Sahrawi and not even by small-scale Moroccan settlers in the territory'. Furthermore, the same report states that 646 hectares have been equipped for agricultural activity, out of which 588 hectares are already being exploited. Last but not least, the Moroccan government aims to increase agricultural activity in Dakhla in the years to come. The Regional Agricultural Plan provides for the expansion of the total area devoted to early-season crops, from 588 hectares in 2008 to 2 000 by 2020. This plan also provides for an increase of greenhouse production from 36 000 tonnes in 2008 to 80 000 in 2013 and 160 000 in 2020. That increased production will be destined exclusively for export. The number of people working in agriculture in the region is expected to triple by 2020.

Can the Commission specify the source of the data provided by it concerning agriculture sites in Western Sahara? Has it launched an internal inquiry to find out whether those data were correct or wrong?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2012)

The process of negotiations and adoption of the EU-Morocco agreement for the liberalisation of trade in agriculture and fisheries took around five years. The data used by the Commission for the agricultural activity in Western Sahara was provided by the Moroccan agricultural administration during this period.

In the various documents and presentation (based on information from the Moroccan authorities) provided to the European Parliament, the Commission has reported its understanding of the existence of about 500 hectares, of which around 350 hectares are already exploited, compared to the 588 hectares reported by the Western Sahara Resource Watch. The latest figure reported by the Morocco Ministry of Agriculture is 520 hectares ([2]).

The relationship between the European Union and Morocco is based on mutual trust. In the past we have had no reasons to question the information given to us regarding the agricultural land in Western Sahara.

Given the limited divergence of the data provided by the authorities and NGOs on this issue, an internal inquiry is not deemed necessary. But we will take the issue up with the Moroccan authorities to check that the information we have is both accurate and up to date.

([1]) http://www.wsrw.org/files/dated/2012-02-13/conflict_tomatoes_14.02.2012.pdf
([2]) http://www.ada.gov.ma/Plans_agricoles/plan_agricole_region_oued_eddahab_lagouira/Diagnostic_agriculture.php.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002452/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Legislative proposal to establish the European Year of Citizens (2013)

Could the Commission provide an analysis of the last 'European' year's added value, and advise me as to what was the actual budget spent compared to that which was predicted?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission is currently carrying out an assessment of the implementation, results and impact of the European Year for Volunteering 2011. On the basis of this evaluation, the Commission will prepare and submit, by 31 December 2012, a report to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

The first results show, for instance, that the European Year has been important in creating political momentum and in putting volunteering issues at the top of the policy agenda. The European Year resulted in the adoption of important policy documents: the Commission communication on 'EU policies and volunteering: Recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activities in the EU' ([1]); the Council conclusions on 'The role of voluntary activities in social policy' ([2]) and on 'The role of voluntary activities in sport in promoting active citizenship' ([3]); the EYV Alliance's Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe ([4]); and the National Coordination Bodies' Warsaw Declaration for Sustainability of Action on Voluntary Activities and Active Citizenship ([5]).

A total budget of EUR 11 million was foreseen for the EYV 2011. Various bodies were awarded grants through this budget, namely, the EYV Alliance, the National Coordination Bodies and the grassroots flagship projects. Since many of these projects are still running, the final amount of the budget actually spent cannot yet be known.

([1]) COM(2011) 568 of 20 September 2011, available at http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/reding/pdf/news/20110920_en.pdf
([2]) http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/124863.pdf
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/126411.pdf
([4]) http://www.eyv2011.eu/images/stories/pdf/EYV2011Alliance_PAVE.pdf
([5]) http://europa.eu/volunteering/sites/default/files/eyv2011follow-up_01122011_final.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002453/12
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: EMFF: Innovation, research and development funding

On Wednesday, 7 December 2011, the Commission published a proposal for a new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (COM(2011) 0804).

The Commission states that new finances will be made available for innovation in technology and research and development with a view to introducing better fishing mechanisms and techniques.

What measures do the Commission intend to take in order to ensure that this funding will directly benefit fishermen in the short, medium and long term?

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

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) proposal foresees a range of measures particularly oriented at stimulating innovation and development with a view of introducing better fishing mechanisms and techniques. These measures are directed to fishermen and aim to contribute to the long-term sustainability of fish stocks and viability of the fishing sector.

For the short term, the Commission proposes that the EMFF would finance investment on board aimed at limiting the impact on the environment or introducing more selective gears.

For the medium to long term, the EMFF would finance innovative activities in the form of promoting new ideas or activities, as well as new ways of doing business. The proposal also foresees investments in eco-innovation, including actions designed to reduce the impact of fishing activities on the environment, increase the selectivity of fishing and generate less discards in line with the key objectives of the common fisheries policy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002454/12
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Data collection regarding fish stocks — Member States

The Commission acknowledges (Answer to Written Question E-009875/2011) that there have been failures in data collection for fish stocks due to 'gaps in data collection by Member States'.

Can the Commission detail the existing obligations for data collection regarding fisheries stocks and the extent to which there have been failures?

Are these 'gaps in data protection' identified equally across all fisheries in the European Union or can the Commission identify which fisheries perform better than others?

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

The Data Collection Framework ([1]) specifies which fisheries data must be collected by Member States. The list of exact biological variables to be collected, which vary by species/region, can be found in Commission Decision 2010/93/EU[1]. Every year, Commission services assess the fulfilment by Member States of their tasks under National Programmes for data collection. This is done on the basis of Member States' Annual Reports as well as feedback received from data end-users such as ICES. Regarding implementation of the 2009 National Programmes, failures to transmit some data to end-users were identified for all 22 coastal Member States but for the majority of them these failures could be clarified through bilateral exchanges. For Bulgaria, Slovenia and Spain, however, these failures were substantial and reductions to Union funding for data collection in these Member States were applied. For implementation of the 2010 National Programmes, the analysis is still ongoing.

The Commission evaluates fulfilment of data collection and transmission requirements by Member State rather than by fisheries. It is therefore not straightforward to determine which fisheries perform better than others in terms strictly of data collection and transmission. The Commission's overview of TACS and Quotas for 2012 ([2]) provides an indication of where the stock status is unclear for the main benthic and pelagic EU stocks. However, this is not due exclusively to lack of data collection or transmission but can also be the result of lack of appropriate scientific models.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) 199/2008 of 25 February 2008 concerning the establishment of a Community framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the common fisheries policy, OJ L 60, 5.3.2008, p. 1.
Commission Regulation (EC) No 665/2008 of 14 July 2008 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008 concerning the establishment of a Community framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the common fisheries policy, OJ L 186, 15.7.2008, p. 3-5.
Commission decision of 18 December 2009 adopting a multiannual Community programme for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector for the period 2011-2013.OJ L 60, 5.3.2008, p. 1-12.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/publications/poster_tac2012_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002459/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(2 maart 2012)

Betreft: Kredietwebsites voor consumenten

Ferratum is een bedrijf dat actief is in 18 Europese landen en dat zich toespitst op het verstrekken van zogenaamde „minikredieten". Burgers kunnen op korte termijn kleine bedragen lenen bij het bedrijf, gaande van EUR 50 tot EUR 500. De drempel om een lening aan te vragen is erg laag; zo kan het zelfs via internet of SMS. Voor de leningen worden geen interesten aangerekend, maar torenhoge „behandelingskosten". Zo kost het 10 euro om een bedrag van 50 euro te lenen voor 15 dagen en 49,99 euro voor een bedrag van 200 euro voor 30 dagen. Er bestaan bezorgdheden dat het bedrijf op deze manier de wetgeving tracht te omzeilen.

Op 10 januari 2012 maakte de Europese Commissie de resultaten bekend van een onderzoek naar kredietwebsites voor consumenten, uitgevoerd in september 2011. In dit onderzoek werden onregelmatigheden vastgesteld bij meer dan 70 procent van de onderzochte websites. In België zouden 89 van de 93 gecheckte websites verder onderzocht worden.

Werd ook de website van Ferratum onderzocht in het kader van dit onderzoek en wat waren de resultaten daarvan?

Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie deze minikredieten?

Welke maatregelen overweegt de Commissie met betrekking tot dergelijke websites?

Antwoord van de heer Dalli namens de Commissie
(26 april 2012)

Het onderzoek of de „sweep" waar de geachte afgevaardigde naar verwijst, is verricht door de nationale autoriteiten in het kader van het netwerk voor samenwerking met betrekking tot consumentenbescherming (Consumer Protection Cooperation Network) ([1]) en werd gecoördineerd door de Commissie.

De deelnemende autoriteiten hebben meer dan 500 websites gecontroleerd die consumentenkredieten aanbieden, met name wat betreft de naleving van de informatievoorschriften van de Richtlijn inzake kredietovereenkomsten voor consumenten ([2]). Het onderzoek was vooral gericht op de meest gebruikelijke typen consumentenkrediet die onder de Richtlijn vallen, zoals kredietkaartkredieten of persoonlijke leningen, maar had geen betrekking op (zeer) kleine kredieten (minder dan 200 EUR).

De nationale autoriteiten nemen momenteel contact op met de betreffende financiële instellingen en/of kredietbemiddelaars om ervoor te zorgen dat geconstateerde onregelmatigheden op websites gecorrigeerd worden. De Commissie zal uiterlijk begin 2013 verslag uitbrengen over deze handhavingsfase.

Of de namen van ondernemingen bekend kunnen worden gemaakt, hangt af van de nationale wettelijke regelingen. De namen zijn bekend bij de nationale autoriteiten en de Commissie nodigt de geachte afgevaardigde uit om de handhavingsautoriteiten van de betreffende landen te raadplegen voor verdere informatie. Een lijst is online beschikbaar ([3]).

Hoewel kredieten van minder dan 200 EUR in principe buiten de werkingssfeer van Richtlijn 2008/48/EG vallen, kunnen lidstaten ervoor kiezen de voorschriften van de richtlijn ook op dergelijke kleine leningen toe te passen.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 2006/2004 betreffende samenwerking met betrekking tot consumentenbescherming, PB L 364 van 9.12.2004, blz. 1.
([2]) Richtlijn 2008/48/EG, PB L 133 van 22.5.2008, blz. 66.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/sweep/consumer_credits/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002459/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Credit websites for consumers

Ferratum is a company that is active in 18 European countries and specialises in providing so-called 'microloans'. Citizens can arrange short-term loans for small amounts, ranging from EUR 50 to EUR 500, provided by the company. The barriers to applying for loans are very low; they can even be arranged over the Internet or by SMS. No interest is charged for the loans, just sky-high 'handling charges'. For example, it costs EUR 10 to borrow EUR 50 for 15 days and EUR 49.99 to borrow EUR 200 for 30 days. There are concerns that in this way, the company is trying to circumvent legislation.

On 10 January 2012, the European Commission announced the results of a September 2011 investigation into credit websites for consumers. The investigation identified irregularities in the case of more than 70 % of the investigated websites. In Belgium, 89 of the 93 websites checked were to be investigated further.

Was Ferratum's website also included in this investigation, and what were the results?

What view does the Commission take of these microloans?

What measures is the Commission considering in relation to such websites?

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

The investigation or 'sweep' to which the Honourable Member refers was carried out by the national authorities in framework of the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network ([1]) and was coordinated by the Commission.

Participating authorities checked over 500 websites offering credit to consumers, notably for compliance with the information requirements established by the directive on credit agreements for consumers ([2]). The sweep focused on the most common types of consumer credits falling under the remit of the directive, such as credit card credits or personal loans, but did not cover credits of very low value (below EUR 200).

National authorities are now contacting the financial institutions and/or credit intermediaries concerned to ensure that the websites where an irregularity was detected are amended as appropriate. The Commission will report on the final outcome of this enforcement phase at the beginning of 2013, at the latest.

National legal rules determine whether company names may be disclosed. The names are known to the national authorities and the Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult the enforcement authorities of the countries concerned for further information. A list is accessible online ([3]).

Although credits below EUR 200 are in principle excluded from the scope of Directive 2008/48/EC, Member States may choose to extend its application to such low value loans.

([1]) Regulation on consumer protection cooperation, OJ L 364, 9.12.2004.
([2]) Directive 2008/48/EC, OJ L 133, 22.5.2008.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/sweep/consumer_credits/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002460/12
aan de Raad
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(2 maart 2012)

Betreft: Oost-Europeanen steeds vaker crimineel

In Nederland neemt het aandeel Polen, Bulgaren, Roemenen en andere Midden- en Oost-Europeanen toe dat zich op het criminele pad begeeft. Daarnaast neemt het totale aantal inbraken en pogingen daartoe in Nederland toe met 4 % en bedraagt nu 7 300. Het blijkt dat Midden- en Oost-Europese criminelen soms in zogenaamde vliegende brigades opereren waarbij zij in korte tijd een reeks inbraken plegen en vervolgens het land verlaten voordat de politie patronen in hun gedrag kan ontdekken. Criminele Bulgaren houden zich daarnaast veelal bezig met skimmen.

De Raad voor korpschefs start een onderzoek naar de criminaliteit onder Oost-Europeanen in Nederland.

1. Is de Raad bekend met de berichten „Werkloze Oost-Europeanen steeds vaker op het criminele pad" ([1]) en „Onderzoek naar criminaliteit Oost-Europeanen" ([2])?

2. Wat vindt de Raad van de toename van het aantal criminelen uit Midden- en Oost-Europa in Nederland?

3. In haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-012317/2011 stelt de Commissie dat besluiten m.b.t. (binnen)grenzen en grenscontroles aan de Raad zijn voorbehouden. Is de Raad met de PVV van mening dat Nederland zijn grenzen moeten kunnen sluiten om criminelen buiten de deur te houden? Zo neen, welke maatregelen vindt de Raad dat Nederland dan wel kan nemen?

Antwoord
(30 april 2012)

Het is niet aan de Raad commentaar te geven op artikelen in de pers.

De Raad heeft niet gesproken over het in de tweede vraag van het geachte Parlementslid genoemde punt en herinnert eraan dat, zoals in artikel 72 VWEU is bepaald, de bevoegdheid voor de handhaving van de openbare orde en de bescherming van de binnenlandse veiligheid bij de lidstaten berust.

Wat de derde vraag betreft, memoreert de Raad dat volgens de artikelen 23 t/m 26 van de Schengengrenscode ([3]), alleen de lidstaten, en niet de Raad, onder bepaalde strikte voorwaarden kunnen besluiten tot de herinvoering van grenscontroles aan de binnengrenzen wanneer er sprake is van een ernstige bedreiging van de openbare orde of de binnenlandse veiligheid.

([1]) http://www.ad.nl/ad/nl/1040/Den-Haag/article/detail/3103241/2012/01/03/Werkloze-Oost-Europeaan-steeds-vaker-op-het-criminele-pad.dhtml.
([2]) http://www.elsevier.nl/web/Artikel/326815/Onderzoek-naar-criminaliteit-OostEuropeanen.htm
([3]) PB L 105 van 13.4.2006, blz. 1-32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002460/12
to the Council
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Eastern Europeans increasingly turn to crime

The Netherlands is seeing an increase in the number of Poles, Bulgarians, Romanians and other Central and Eastern Europeans who have turned to crime. The total number of burglaries and attempted burglaries in the Netherlands has also gone up by 4 % and now stands at 7 300. It has emerged that Central and Eastern European criminals sometimes operate in so-called flying squads, where they commit a series of burglaries in a short period of time and then leave the country before the police can detect patterns in their behaviour. Bulgarian criminals are also often involved in skimming.

The Council of Police Force Commanders has launched an investigation into the criminal activities among Eastern Europeans in the Netherlands.

1. Is the Council familiar with the articles 'Jobless Eastern Europeans increasingly turn to crime' ([1]) and 'An investigation into criminal activities among Eastern Europeans' ([2])?

2. What is the Council's view of the increase in the number of criminals from Central and Eastern Europe in the Netherlands?

3. In its answer to Written Question E-012317/2011, the Commission states that decisions regarding (internal) borders and border control are made by the Council. Does the Council agree with the PVV that the Netherlands should be able to close its borders in order to keep criminals out? If not, which measures does the Council think that the Netherlands can take?

Reply
(30 April 2012)

It is not for the Council to comment on articles appearing in the press.

The Council has not discussed the issue raised in the Honourable Member's second question and recalls that, as provided for in Article 72 TFEU, the competence to maintain law and order and to safeguard internal security belongs to Member States.

As regards the third question, the Council recalls that according to Articles 23 to 26 of the Schengen Borders Code ([3]), only Member States, and not the Council, can decide, under certain strict conditions, on the reintroduction of border controls at internal borders when there is a serious threat to public policy or internal security.

([1]) http://www.ad.nl/ad/nl/1040/Den-Haag/article/detail/3103241/2012/01/03/Werkloze-Oost-Europeaan-steeds-vaker-op-het-criminele-pad.dhtml.
([2]) http://www.elsevier.nl/web/Artikel/326815/Onderzoek-naar-criminaliteit-OostEuropeanen.htm
([3]) OJ L 105, 13.4.2006, pp. 1-32.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-002461/12
à Comissão
José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)
(2 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Seca em território português

Segundo notícias veiculadas pela imprensa portuguesa e informações avançadas pelo Instituto da Meteorologia, 70 por cento do território português está em seca severa e cinco por cento em seca extrema. Acresce que, e segundo a Autoridade Nacional de Proteção Civil, no passado dia 28 de fevereiro, registou-se a existência de 235 incêndios em território português, 147 dos quais ocorreram durante o período noturno.

Ora, para além dos prejuízos patrimoniais decorrentes dos incêndios, a falta de chuva está a colocar os agricultores portugueses numa situação precária, nomeadamente pela falta de pastagens para alimentar o gado, com risco de perdas totais de plantações de cereais e, ainda, com a necessidade de despesas extras para regar culturas de regadio.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais os mecanismos e fundos europeus que a UE pode disponibilizar para compensar os prejuízos resultantes desta seca extrema?

2. Quais os mecanismos e fundos que a UE e os Estados-Membros podem disponibilizar para ajudar os agricultores afetados?

3. Quais os mecanismos existentes que estão ao alcance dos Estados-Membros para compensação dos danos resultantes dos fogos?

4. Quais as medidas de caráter preventivo, e respetivo apoio, defendidas pela Comissão Europeia, para minimizarem os prejuízos resultantes da seca, com efeitos visíveis nos setores da agricultura e pecuária?

5. Quais as medidas de caráter preventivo, e respetivo apoio, defendidas pela Comissão Europeia, para evitarem os incêndios?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-002462/12
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(2 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Seca em território português

Segundo notícias veiculadas pela imprensa portuguesa e informações avançadas pelo Instituto da Meteorologia, 70 por cento do território português está em seca severa e cinco por cento em seca extrema. Acresce que, e segundo a Autoridade Nacional de Proteção Civil, no passado dia 28 de fevereiro, registou-se a existência de 235 incêndios em território português, 147 dos quais ocorreram durante o período noturno.

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Resposta conjunta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(13 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos problemas relativos à seca grave com que Portugal se confronta atualmente, cuja evolução segue atentamente.

No que diz respeito à compensação por perdas causadas pela seca ou prejuízos florestais, os Estados-Membros podem conceder auxílios *de minimis* até 7 500 euros por beneficiário durante três exercícios. Não é necessário cumprir qualquer formalidade especial, além do registo *de minimis*. Se a perda atingir 30 % da produção, pode ser concedido um auxílio correspondente a 80 % dos danos, ao abrigo das regras em vigor em matéria de auxílios estatais, por meio de um pedido de isenção ou de uma notificação.

Se os danos afetarem o setor das frutas e produtos hortícolas, os membros de organizações de produtores podem beneficiar de seguros de colheita para proteger os seus rendimentos e cobrir as perdas causadas, desde que esta medida de crise esteja incluída na estratégia nacional e nos programas operacionais (PO) das organizações de produtores.

No que se refere a medidas preventivas e de apoio previstas no Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural do Continente, a Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta escrita E-001260/2011.

Quanto às ajudas diretas, sob reserva da situação orçamental, a Comissão pode autorizar Portugal a pagar adiantamentos antes de 1 de dezembro de 2012 (mas não antes de 16 de outubro, e apenas quando sejam efetuados os controlos de elegibilidade) nas regiões em que os agricultores, devido a condições excecionais, enfrentem graves dificuldades financeiras. A Comissão está a apreciar o pedido apresentado por Portugal com base nas circunstâncias excecionais e nas dificuldades financeiras com que se confrontam os agricultores.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002461/12
to the Commission
José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Drought in Portugal

According to Portuguese press reports and information from the Meteorology Institute, severe drought is affecting 70 % of Portugal and 5 % of the country is affected by extreme drought. In addition, the National Civil Defence Authority states that 235 fires were recorded in Portugal on 28 February 2012, of which 147 took place at night.

Aside from the property damage caused by the fires, the lack of rain is putting Portuguese farmers in a precarious position, particularly because of the shortage of pasture for feeding cattle, the risk that cereal crops will be completely lost and the extra costs of providing water for irrigation systems.

1. What European mechanisms and funds can the EU make available to provide compensation for the losses caused by this extreme drought?

2. What mechanisms and funds can the EU and Member States make available to assist the affected farmers?

3. What existing mechanisms can Member States access for compensation for fire damage?

4. What prevention and support measures does the European Commission recommend for reducing the losses caused by the drought, which is having a noticeable impact on the agriculture and livestock sectors?

5. What prevention and support measures does the European Commission recommend for fire prevention?

Question for written answer P-002462/12
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Drought in Portugal

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4. What prevention and support measures does the European Commission recommend for reducing the losses caused by the drought, which is having a noticeable impact on the agriculture and livestock sectors?

5. What prevention and support measures does the European Commission recommend for fire prevention?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of and follows with attention the problems related to a severe drought that Portugal is currently facing.

With regard to the questions relating to compensation for losses caused by drought or forest damages: the Member State may grant *de minimis* aid up to EUR 7 500 per beneficiary over a period of three fiscal years. It requires no particular formality, outside the *de minimis* registration. Or, if the loss reaches 30 % of production, an aid of 80 % of the damage may be granted under the existing rules regarding state aid, by way of an application for exemption or a notification.

If the damage concerns the fruit and vegetables sector, members of producer organisations might benefit from harvest insurances to protect their income and to cover market losses caused, provided that this crisis measure is included in the national strategy and in the producer organisations' operational programmes (OP).

With regard to preventive and support measures foreseen in the Rural Development Programme of Mainland, the Commission would refer to its answer to Written Question E-001260/2011.

In relation to direct aids, the Commission may authorise, subject to the budgetary situation, Portugal to pay advances prior to 1 December 2012 (but not before 16 October and only when the eligibility controls are carried out) in regions where due to exceptional conditions, farmers face severe financial difficulties. The Commission is analysing the request submitted by Portugal, on the basis of the exceptional conditions and financial difficulties faced by farmers.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002463/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Βίαιη καταστολή των διαδηλώσεων στη Χεβρόνα

Οι ισραηλινές στρατιωτικές δυνάμεις κατοχής επιτέθηκαν βίαια στους χιλιάδες Παλαιστίνιους και αγωνιστές για την ειρήνη από άλλες χώρες, που συμμετείχαν σε διαδήλωση στη Χεβρόνα, στη Δυτική Όχθη, τιμώντας τη μνήμη των 29 Παλαιστινίων που δολοφονήθηκαν στο τζαμί της πόλης στις 25.2.1994.

Σύμφωνα με τεκμηριωμένα στοιχεία, το μέλος του ΚΝΕΣΕΤ, Mohammed Barakeh, ηγετικό στέλεχος και πρόεδρος του κόμματος Hadash, κομμουνιστής αγωνιστής, μαζί με πάνω από 70 διαδηλωτές, μεταφέρθηκε στο νοσοκομείο.

Με καθημερινές επιθέσεις του ισραηλινού στρατού κατοχής, δολοφονούνται Παλαιστίνιοι στη Δυτική Όχθη και στα άλλα κατεχόμενα παλαιστινιακά εδάφη. Οι δολοφονικές επιθέσεις του ισραηλινού στρατού κατοχής δεν πρόκειται να ανακόψουν την πάλη του παλαιστινιακού λαού και την έκφραση αλληλεγγύης από τους λαούς της Ευρώπης και σε διεθνή κλίμακα για τη δημιουργία ανεξάρτητου, ενιαίου παλαιστινιακού κράτους στα εδάφη του 1967 με πρωτεύουσα την Ανατολική Ιερουσαλήμ.

Καταγγέλλει η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος τη βάρβαρη επίθεση των ισραηλινών δυνάμεων ασφαλείας ενάντια στους ειρηνικούς διαδηλωτές;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2012)

Το γραφείο της ΕΕ στην Ιερουσαλήμ έχει λάβει γνώση αυτού του περιστατικού.

Η ΕΕ στηρίζει σταθερά το δικαίωμα συμμετοχής σε μη βίαιη διαμαρτυρία και υπενθυμίζει το νόμιμο δικαίωμα των Παλαιστινίων να συμμετέχουν σε ειρηνικές διαδηλώσεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002463/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Violent suppression of protests in Hebron

The occupying Israeli military forces have violently attacked thousands of Palestinians and peace protestors from other countries who were taking part in a protest in Hebron, in the West Bank, to honour the memory of the 29 Palestinians murdered in the town mosque on 25 February 1994.

According to substantiated information, Mohammed Barakeh, a prominent member of the Knesset and Chair of the Hadash party as well as a Communist activist, was taken to hospital, along with over 70 protestors.

In daily attacks by the Israeli occupying military, Palestinians in the West Bank and other occupied Palestinian areas are being murdered. The murderous attacks by the Israeli occupying army will not end the fight by the Palestinian people and expressions of solidarity by the people of Europe and the rest of the world for the creation of an independent, united Palestinian state on 1967 territories, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Does the High Representative condemn the barbaric attack by the Israeli security forces on peaceful protestors?

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

The EU office in Jerusalem is aware of this incident.

The EU consistently defends the right to non-violent protest and recalls the legitimate right of the Palestinians to engage in peaceful demonstrations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002465/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activities in the EU

Almost one in five Member States does not have a clear legal framework and clear rules for volunteers and volunteering.

Could the Commission provide clear data of its analysis on the voluntary sector in UK, both in terms of legislation and cost?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

There is a lack of internationally comparable data on volunteering in the European Union. That said, the Honourable Member can find detailed information about the voluntary sector in all Member States in a study commissioned by the Commission and published in 2010 in order to inform and prepare for the European Year of Volunteering 2011. The analysis of the situation in the United Kingdom, as of 2010, can be found online ([1]).

The National Coordination Body for the United Kingdom, which received a grant from the budget of the European Year to implement activities for the Year at national level, is due to issue a report of its work during the European Year. This report is expected to provide a more up-to-date picture of the current situation in the United Kingdom. Further information about the situation in the United Kingdom is also available from the UK national website for the European Year of Volunteering ([2]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/volunteering/fr/node/1224.
([2]) http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/big-society.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002466/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Julie Girling (ECR)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Hunger strike by Khader Adnan

Khader Adnan, a Palestinian prisoner, is being held without charge by the Israeli authorities under a four-month term of 'administrative detention'. Mr Adnan was on a hunger strike which lasted 66 days and ended in a deal that will see him released in two months. The Israeli Justice Ministry announced that he would remain in custody until 17 April 2012, when his 'administrative detention' would end.

Is the High Representative aware of this situation, and what action will be taken to ensure that any similar cases in the future will be resolved more efficiently?

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

The EU has followed with great concern reports about the deteriorating health condition of Mr Kahder Adnan, a Palestinian currently held under administrative detention by the Israeli authorities without formal charge.

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton (HR/VP) issued a statement on 17 February 2012 requesting the government of Israel to do to everything in its power to preserve the health of Mr Adnan in its handling of this case. HR/VP reiterated the EU's long standing concern about the extensive use by Israel of administrative detention without formal charge. All detainees have the right to be informed about charges underlying any detention and the right to a fair trial.

Mr Adnan ended his hunger strike on 21 February 2012 after an agreement was reached with the Israeli Ministry of Justice on a date for his release. He has since then been released on 17 April 2012.

The EU systematically raises its concern over the widespread use by Israel of administrative detention in the framework of its bilateral meetings.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002467/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Violazione dei diritti umani in Russia

La Falun Dafa (nota anche come Falun Gong) è una disciplina di origine asiatica e di derivazione buddista fondata da Li Hongzhi. Diffusa in tutto il mondo e insegnata in maniera volontaria da molti sostenitori, la Falun Dafa è composta da una serie di testi che sono stati tradotti in trentotto lingue e sono pubblicati e distribuiti in tutto il mondo.

L'attivista russo Sergei Kovalev, vincitore del Premio Sakharov 2009, ha recentemente denunciato la violazione della libertà di espressione e di religione da parte delle autorità russe.

Il 22 dicembre 2011, secondo quanto ha dichiarato Kovalev, la Corte regionale di Krasnodar ha bandito i testi Falun Gong perché ritenuti estremisti. L'attivista russo ritiene che la decisione sia stata presa a seguito di pressioni esercitate sul governo russo dalle autorità cinesi, le quali hanno inserito la Falun Gong nella lista nera perché considerata attività estremista.

Visto che il premio Sakharov 2009 ha comunicato ai membri del Parlamento europeo la sua preoccupazione per le continue violazioni dei diritti umani in Russia, in particolare nei confronti dei seguaci della Falun Dafa, e che la libertà di espressione e di religione è sancita dalla Dichiarazione universale dei diritti umani dell'ONU e dalla Convenzione europea per la salvaguardia dei diritti dell'uomo e delle libertà fondamentali, può dire la Commissione qual è il suo punto di vista sull'argomento e se intende adottare particolari misure per la protezione dei praticanti della Falun Dafa in Russia e in Cina?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue attentamente il caso della Falung Gong in Russia. Alcuni funzionari del Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE) hanno incontrato in numerose occasioni rappresentanti della Falun Gong provenienti dalla Russia per ottenere informazioni di prima mano sulla questione e sono quindi a conoscenza dei provvedimenti restrittivi adottati nei loro confronti, ivi compresi la messa al bando di testi, procedimenti giudiziari, perquisizioni, ammende e confische. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente nutre viva preoccupazione per tale problema e per le sue più ampie implicazioni.

Questioni relative alla libertà di espressione, all'applicazione della legge contro l'estremismo e al rispetto delle procedure giudiziarie nei tribunali russi vengono regolarmente sollevate presso le autorità russe: di esse si è discusso, ad esempio, nel corso delle ultime tre consultazioni consecutive con la Russia in materia di diritti umani. Anche la questione dell'elenco delle pubblicazioni estremiste stilato dal ministero della Giustizia è stata oggetto di tali discussioni. Il SEAE ha sollevato il caso dei testi banditi della Falung Gong alla riunione del 29 novembre. La delegazione dell'UE a Mosca sorveglierà il procedimento giudiziario riguardante i testi banditi, una questione per la quale la Falun Gong ha adito la Corte suprema della Federazione russa.

Oltre a discutere di tali questioni in diversi ambiti, l'UE si avvale di numerosi altri strumenti per promuovere cambiamenti positivi nelle strutture istituzionali della Russia e nella società in generale. Tra questi figura il partenariato per la modernizzazione con la Russia, che è incentrato sullo Stato di diritto; l'Unione europea esorta tra l'altro il paese a perseguire le riforme del sistema giudiziario anche in tale contesto.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente continuerà a seguire da vicino gli sviluppi della questione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002467/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Human rights violation in Russia

Falun Dafa (also known as Falun Gong) is an Asian discipline of the Buddhist school founded by Li Hongzhi. Now extensively seen worldwide and taught by a great many volunteer followers, Falun Dafa consists of a series of texts that have been translated into 38 different languages and are published and distributed worldwide.

The Russian activist Sergei Kovalev, winner of the 2009 Sakharov prize, has recently reported the violation of the freedom of expression and religion by the Russian authorities.

On 22 December 2011, according to Kovalev, the Regional Court of Krasnodar banned the Falun Gong texts on the grounds that they were extremist. The Russian activist believes that the decision was made following pressure exerted on the Russian Government by the Chinese authorities, which have blacklisted Falun Gong because it is regarded as an extremist activity.

Given that the winner of the 2009 Sakharov prize has alerted members of the European Parliament to his concern over the continued human rights violations in Russia, in particular with regard to followers of Falun Dafa, and that freedom of expression and religion is enshrined in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, can the Commission say what its opinion is on the matter at hand and whether it intends to take any specific steps to protect followers of Falun Dafa in Russia and China?

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

The HR/VP is following the case of Falun Gong in Russia very closely. EEAS officials have met with the Falun Gong representatives from Russia on numerous occasions to obtain firsthand information on this case and thus are aware of the restrictive actions taken against them, including banned texts, prosecutions, searches, fines and confiscations. The HR/VP is very concerned about this case and about its broader implications.

Issues relating to the freedom of expression, the application of the anti-extremist law, and the due process of law in the Russian courts are all being raised with the Russian authorities. These have been raised during the last three consecutive human rights consultations with Russia. The issue of the Ministry of Justice's list of extremist publications has been part of those discussions. The EEAS raised the case of the banned Falun Gong materials at the November 29 meeting of the consultations. The EU Delegation in Moscow will be monitoring the judicial proceedings on the banned material, which Falun Gong has now brought to the level of the Supreme Court of the RF.

In addition to discussions of these questions in different fora, the EU uses a number of other instruments to encourage positive change in Russia's institutional structures and the society at large. One of such is our Partnership for Modernisation with Russia. Rule of law is at the core of this Partnership; the EU encourages Russia to *inter alia* pursue reforms of the judiciary system also in this context.

The HR/VP will continue to follow the developments in this case closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002468/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Gli orsi da bile

In Oriente il succo secreto dalla cistifellea degli orsi è tra le materie prime della medicina tradizionale. Da secoli esso è considerato un ricostituente ed è regolarmente impiegato come farmaco.

Purtroppo, per estrarre il liquido prodigioso si sottopongono migliaia di orsi a incredibili torture.

I cinesi sono sempre stati poco sensibili alla questione della protezione degli animali. Tuttavia, negli ultimi anni l'opinione pubblica sta cambiando punto di vista e stanno nascendo molti comitati che si oppongono al maltrattamento degli animali.

Recentemente ha fatto scalpore il caso di una nota casa farmaceutica cinese che seviziava e maltrattava quotidianamente gli orsi per ricavare la bile. Alcuni video girati di nascosto nella struttura testimoniano le sevizie e le pessime condizioni in cui vivono i cosiddetti «orsi da bile».

Gli animalisti cinesi chiedono che il governo di Pechino ponga fine a queste torture e citano il buon esempio di una nota catena di hotel che ha iniziato una campagna a difesa degli squali, eliminando dal menu le pietanze a base di pinna di squalo. Numerosi ristoranti cinesi hanno accettato la sfida e seguito il suo esempio. Si tratta di un primo, piccolo passo per bloccare il triste fenomeno che provoca la morte di migliaia di squali.

Considerato che in Asia la protezione degli animali non è considerata prioritaria e che i cittadini non sono consapevoli dei maltrattamenti a cui sono spesso sottoposti gli animali per scopi differenti da quelli medici, intende la Commissione sostenere azioni di sensibilizzazione delle persone nei confronti degli animali attraverso campagne mediatiche specifiche in quelle aree?

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

Sebbene il benessere degli animali non sia menzionato esplicitamente nell'accordo generale sulle tariffe doganali e sul commercio (GATT) 1994 né in altri accordi dell'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio, la Commissione coglie tutte le opportunità per migliorare e promuovere gli standard in tema di benessere degli animali a livello europeo e internazionale.

La Commissione si sta in effetti adoperando con i suoi partner commerciali per far opera di sensibilizzazione sulle questioni legate al benessere degli animali e definire una concezione comune di standard internazionalmente riconosciuti in tema di benessere degli animali. In particolare, si discute dell'inclusione del benessere degli animali nell'ambito dei negoziati in corso per la bilaterale con i paesi dell'ASEAN e nell'ambito dei negoziati in corso per un accordo di partenariato e cooperazione (APC) con la Cina.

La legislazione europea non si applica ai paesi terzi poiché l'Unione non ha competenza giuridica in relazione al benessere degli animali detenuti in paesi terzi quali la Cina. Di conseguenza la Commissione non è in condizione di adottare interventi specifici in merito all'allevamento degli orsi in Cina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002468/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Bile bears

In the Far East, the fluid secreted by the gall bladder of bears is one of the raw materials of traditional medicine. For centuries, it has been considered a tonic and is regularly used as a drug.

Unfortunately, to extract this prodigious liquid, thousands of bears are subjected to incredible torture.

The Chinese have always shown little in the way of sensitivity to matters of animal protection. However, in recent years, public opinion is changing and a great many committees are being established opposing the mistreatment of animals.

Recently, there was uproar concerning the case of a famous Chinese pharmaceutical company that tortured and mistreated the bears on a daily basis to collect their bile. Videos filmed secretly in the facility show the torture and poor conditions in which the so-called 'bile bears' live.

Chinese animal rights activists are asking for the Beijing Government to put an end to this torture, mentioning the good example set by a famous hotel chain that has begun a campaign in defence of sharks by eliminating shark fin-based dishes from their menus. Numerous Chinese restaurants have taken up the challenge and followed its example. It is a first, small step to put an end to the sad phenomenon that causes the death of thousands of sharks.

Considering that in Asia, animal protection is not considered a priority and citizens are not aware of the mistreatment often suffered by animals for non-medical purposes, does the Commission intend to support activities aimed at raising awareness with regard to animals through specific media campaigns in that part of the world?

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

Although animal welfare is not explicitly mentioned in the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) 1994 or in other World Trade Organisation agreements, the Commission takes every opportunity to raise and to promote improved animal welfare standards at European and at international level.

The Commission is indeed working with its trading partners to raise awareness on animal welfare issues and build a common understanding on internationally recognised animal welfare standards. In particular, the inclusion of animal welfare is being discussed in the ongoing negotiations for the bilateral with ASEAN countries and in particular in the ongoing negotiations for a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with China.

European legislation does not apply to third countries as the Union has no legal competence in relation to the welfare of animals kept in third countries such as China. As a consequence, the Commission is not in a position to take specific actions regarding bear farming in China.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002469/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Importazioni insostenibili

Uno studio realizzato dal *WWF* e dal *Sustainable Europe Research Institute*, in vista del vertice di Rio+20, rivela il peso in termini ambientali che hanno le importazioni. Con riferimento particolare all'Italia, i dati indicano che per importare caffè, carta e pasta di carta, cotone e olio di palma si utilizzano circa 8 miliardi di metri cubi di acqua, si emettono più di 34 milioni di tonnellate di CO_2, sono sottratti all'agricoltura e alla biodiversità circa 85 mila chilometri quadrati di terreno ecc. In totale, si calcola che circa mezza tonnellata di risorse all'anno vengono prelevate in natura per ogni cittadino italiano.

La sostenibilità delle importazioni europee non è certo più lodevole di quella italiana. Il rapporto ultimato dal *Sustainable Europe Research Institute* e dal *WWF* rivolge un appello alle imprese importatrici affinché si responsabilizzino per ridurre il proprio impatto ambientale.

Si propone alle aziende di individuare soluzioni che vanno dall'adesione a standard di sostenibilità a livello di approvvigionamento, uso delle risorse naturali più responsabile e importazioni più sostenibili.

Considerato che le importazioni europee hanno un impatto significativo sull'ambiente naturale, può la Commissione comunicare quali misure sono previste dall'Unione europea per favorire la sostenibilità e rendere più verdi le importazioni?

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

La Commissione sostiene gli sforzi profusi a livello mondiale per rendere i modelli di consumo e di produzione ([1]) più sostenibili, anche nell'ambito del cosiddetto processo di Marrakech ([2]). Nel mese di settembre 2011, la Commissione ha adottato una tabella di marcia per un'Europa efficiente sotto il profilo delle risorse ([3]), che definisce un quadro coerente di politiche e azioni, necessario per l'evoluzione verso un'economia a basse emissioni di carbonio e efficiente in termini di risorse.

Attraverso la politica commerciale dell'UE, la Commissione sostiene e promuove la crescita «verde» in tutto il mondo anche in settori quali l'energia, l'efficienza delle risorse e la protezione della biodiversità. Integrare negli accordi commerciali bilaterali dell'UE le tematiche del commercio e dello sviluppo sostenibile, nonché meccanismi di controllo che coinvolgano tanto le autorità pubbliche quanto la società civile, può contribuire a raggiungere tale obiettivo. Una volta approvate dai partner negoziali dell'UE, le nuove tematiche costituiranno una base per discutere e, se necessario, affrontare l'impatto del commercio di merci sensibili sotto il profilo ambientale.

([1]) COM(2008)397 definitivo, comunicazione della Commissione sul piano d'azione «Produzione e consumo sostenibili».
([2]) Si veda: http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/.
([3]) COM(2011)571 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002469/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Unsustainable imports

A study carried out by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Sustainable Europe Research Institute in view of the Rio+20 Summit has revealed the environmental burden of imports. With specific reference to Italy, the data shows that to import coffee, paper and paper pulp, cotton and palm oil, approximately 8 billion cubic metres of water are used, over 34 million tonnes of CO_2 are emitted and approximately 85 000 square kilometres of land are taken from agriculture and biodiversity. In total, it is calculated that approximately half a tonne of resources per year are taken from nature for each Italian citizen.

Europe fares no better than Italy as regards the sustainability of its imports. The report produced by the Sustainable Europe Research Institute and the WWF appeals to importers to take responsibility for reducing their environmental impact.

Businesses are recommended to find solutions that range from adhering to sustainability standards for their supplies, to more responsible use of natural resources and more sustainable imports.

As EU imports have a significant impact on the natural environment, can the Commission say what steps the European Union intends to take to encourage sustainability and make imports greener?

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

The Commission is supporting global efforts to put consumption and production ([1]) patterns on a more sustainable footing including through the so-called Marrakech Process ([2]). In September 2011, the Commission adopted a Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe ([3]) setting out a coherent framework of policies and actions, which is required for the shift towards a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy.

Through EU trade policy the Commission supports and promotes green growth around the globe, including in areas such as energy, resource efficiency and biodiversity protection. One way to help achieve this objective is through the inclusion in the EU's bilateral trade agreements of trade and sustainable development chapters, including monitoring mechanisms involving both public authorities and civil society. Once agreed with EU negotiating partners, such chapters provide a basis to discuss and, where needed, address the impacts of trade in environmentally sensitive goods.

([1]) COM(2008) 397 final, Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production.
([2]) See: http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/.
([3]) COM(2011) 571 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002470/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Le donne sono più attente alla sostenibilità ambientale

Una ricerca condotta in Italia e presentata lo scorso mese di febbraio rivela dati molto interessanti sulla consapevolezza e la sensibilità dei cittadini in tema di sostenibilità ambientale.

Lo studio è stato condotto fra il 2010 e il 2011 su aziende e università e ha coinvolto mille persone dai 18 ai 65 anni e mille giovani dai 18 ai 28 anni. L'obiettivo era quello di indagare le abitudini degli italiani e i consumi alimentari: i risultati della ricerca indicano che il 50 % della popolazione ha comportamenti mediamente sostenibili mentre il 37 % è del tutto o molto disattento all'ambiente nelle scelte quotidiane.

La raccolta differenziata si situa al primo posto delle azioni che gli italiani svolgono a tutela dell'ambiente. Essa, infatti, è svolta nel 68 % dei casi, mentre nel 45 % dei casi si consumano prodotti di stagione e, nel 37 %, si pone maggiore attenzione al risparmio energetico.

Ciò che risalta dallo studio, è che le donne tra i 30 e i 35 anni di reddito e cultura medio-alti sono le più attente all'ambiente. Al contrario, gli atteggiamenti peggiori sono registrati negli uomini tra i 18 e i 24 anni.

I ricercatori hanno creato un neologismo, «SostenAbile», per indicare uno sviluppo che soddisfa i bisogni del presente senza però compromettere quelli futuri.

Ci sono buone speranze per migliorare i comportamenti dei consumatori a difesa dell'ambiente. I giovani, infatti, sono sempre più attenti alle loro scelte. Oltre al prezzo, si fa maggiore attenzione alla qualità del prodotto e ai suoi processi di produzione.

Considerato che lo studio italiano potrebbe rispecchiare l'andamento delle abitudini dei consumatori degli altri paesi europei, può la Commissione precisare se ha a disposizione dati simili a livello europeo e se intende promuovere campagne di «consumo responsabile» per sensibilizzare gli europei al tema dell'ambiente?

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

La direzione generale dell'Ambiente della Commissione europea organizza regolarmente dei sondaggi paneuropei sull'approccio dei cittadini dell'UE verso l'ambiente. I più recenti sono:

— indagine Flash Eurobarometro sull'approccio degli europei verso tematiche legate all'acqua (marzo 2012): http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_344_sum_en.pdf,

— indagine Eurobarometro speciale sull'approccio degli europei verso tematiche ambientali (giugno 2011): http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/ebs_365_en.pdf,

— indagine Flash Eurobarometro sull'approccio degli europei verso l'efficienza delle risorse (marzo 2011): http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_316_en.pdf.

A livello di UE non emergono variazioni degne di nota tra uomini e donne. Ad esempio, dall'ultima indagine Eurobarometro, cui hanno partecipato oltre 26 000 europei, è emerso che la protezione dell'ambiente è ritenuta molto importante dal 58 % dei cittadini dell'UE (per il 56 % degli uomini e per il 59 % delle donne). L'83 % dei cittadini (nessuna differenza significativa in base al sesso dei partecipanti) considera invece che un uso efficiente delle risorse naturali possa stimolare la crescita economica dell'Unione europea, mentre il 60 % dei partecipanti si ritiene ben informato in materia di ambiente (il 62 % degli uomini e il 57 % delle donne).

Nel 2011 la direzione generale dell'ambiente ha lanciato «Generation Awake» ([1]), una campagna di sensibilizzazione paneuropea sull'efficienza delle risorse rivolta ai consumatori europei e in particolare a ragazze e ragazzi che vivono nei centri urbani e a famiglie con bambini. La campagna mira a una maggiore sensibilizzazione sulla crescente scarsità delle risorse naturali e sulla necessità di un consumo responsabile.

([1]) http://www.generationawake.eu/it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002470/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Women are more mindful of environmental sustainability

Research carried out in Italy and presented in February has revealed interesting information on the awareness and sensitivity of citizens in terms of environmental sustainability.

The study was carried out between 2010 and 2011 on businesses and universities, involving 1 000 people aged between 18 and 65 years, and 1 000 young adults aged between 18 and 28 years. The aim was to investigate the habits of Italians and their food consumption. The research results show that 50 % of the population behaves in an averagely sustainable manner, whilst 37 % is entirely or highly unaware of the environment in their day-to-day choices.

Separate waste collection is the first thing Italians do to protect the environment. In fact, this applies in 68 % of cases, while in 45 % of cases they eat seasonal produce and 37 % pay more attention to energy saving.

The study has revealed that women aged between 30 and 35 years with medium-high income and socioeconomic standing are the most environmentally aware. By contrast, the worst behaviour is seen in men aged 18 to 24 years.

Researchers have coined the new phrase 'SustainAble' to indicate a level of development that meets the needs of the present, without, however, compromising those of the future.

There is hope for improving the behaviour of consumers in terms of protecting the environment. The young, in fact, are increasingly mindful of the choices they make. In addition to price, more attention is paid to product quality and its production processes.

Considering that the Italian study could reflect the trend in consumer habits in other EU Member States, can the Commission specify if it has any similar European-level data available and if it intends to promote 'responsible consumption' campaigns to raise the awareness of Europeans on the issue of the environment?

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

The Directorate-General for the Environment regularly carries out pan-European surveys on attitudes of EU citizens towards the environment; the most recent surveys carried out are:

— Flash Eurobarometer survey on attitudes of Europeans towards water-related issues (March 2012): http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_344_sum_en.pdf

— Special Eurobarometer survey on attitudes of European citizens towards environment (June 2011): http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/ebs_365_en.pdf

— Flash Eurobarometer survey on attitudes of Europeans towards resource efficiency (March 2011): http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_316_en.pdf

At European level, there does not appear to be any major variation between genders. For example, in the last Eurobarometer, among over 26 000 respondents, protection of the environment is personally very important to 58 % of EU citizens (56 % for male and 59 % for female citizens); 83 % of citizens (no significant variation between men and women) consider that the efficient use of natural resources can boost economic growth in the European Union, while 60 % of citizens consider themselves well informed on environmental issues (62 % for male and 57 % for female citizens).

Last year the Directorate-General for the Environment of the European Commission launched a pan-European awareness-raising campaign on resource efficiency called Generation Awake ([1]), targeting EU consumers, in particular young urbanites (both genders) and families with children. The campaign aims at raising awareness on the increasing scarcity of natural resources and the need to use them wisely while making consumption choices.

([1]) http://www.generationawake.eu.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002471/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: L'olio lubrificante riciclato è una risorsa importante

L'olio lubrificante è un agente inquinante molto pericoloso: una sola goccia dispersa in acqua può creare una patina isolante che non permette l'ossigenazione. Quattro chili di olio lubrificante versati in acqua potrebbero inquinare una superficie grande come un campo di calcio. Quando invece viene raccolto, l'88 % di esso è destinato alla rigenerazione.

Dopo il processo di rigenerazione, l'olio torna ad avere le stesse qualità del lubrificante da cui deriva. Solo una piccola parte viene distrutta termicamente in quanto non può essere rigenerata, ma rappresenta il 4 per mille.

In Italia, grazie all'operato del Consorzio obbligatorio degli oli usati (COOU), l'inquinamento ambientale causato da olio lubrificante è stato ridotto notevolmente e, inoltre, tramite la rigenerazione dell'olio usato, il COOU, dal 1984 ad oggi, ha risparmiato l'equivalente di 2,9 miliardi di euro sulle importazioni di petrolio.

In Italia vi sono state diverse campagne per sensibilizzare i cittadini a non disperdere olio lubrificante nell'ambiente. Inoltre, l'olio riciclato costituisce una risorsa importante. Oltre ad essere rigenerato e, quindi, riutilizzato, una parte di esso è impiegato per la realizzazione del bitume.

Considerato il potenziale inquinante dell'olio lubrificante e le sue potenzialità se riciclato, può la Commissione comunicare se a livello europeo esistono strumenti e/o misure indirizzati alla raccolta e alla rigenerazione dell'olio, che in tal modo non va disperso nell'ambiente?

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

Gli oli usati sono disciplinati dalla direttiva 2008/98/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 19 novembre 2008, relativa ai rifiuti ([1]), in particolare dalle disposizioni inerenti alla gestione dei rifiuti pericolosi in essi contenuti.

Data la loro pericolosità caratteristica, il legislatore europeo ha inserito un articolo specifico sugli oli usati (articolo 21), a norma del quale «gli Stati membri adottano le misure necessarie per garantire che:

a) gli oli usati siano raccolti separatamente, laddove ciò sia tecnicamente fattibile;

b) gli oli usati siano trattati in conformità degli articoli 4 e 13;

c) laddove ciò sia tecnicamente fattibile ed economicamente praticabile, gli oli usati con caratteristiche differenti non siano miscelati e gli oli usati non siano miscelati con altri tipi di rifiuti o di sostanze, se tale miscelazione ne impedisce il trattamento.».

L'articolo 21 rimanda al principio della gerarchia dei rifiuti (articolo 4) che gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad applicare. In base a tale principio, la precedenza è attribuita al riciclaggio (ossia, nel caso in questione, alla rigenerazione degli oli usati) rispetto al recupero di altro tipo e allo smaltimento.

([1]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002471/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Recycled lubricating oil is an important resource

Lubricating oil is a very dangerous pollutant: a single drop spilt in water can create an insulating film that prevents oxygenation. Four kilograms of lubricant oil added to water is enough to pollute an area the size of a football pitch. When it is collected, however, 88 % of it can be recycled.

After being regenerated, the oil regains its original lubricating properties. Only a small portion is destroyed by the heat, and therefore cannot be regenerated, but this accounts for just four parts per thousand.

In Italy, the work of the waste oil consortium (COOU) has enabled environmental pollution caused by lubricating oil to be reduced significantly, and, by regenerating waste oil, the COOU has since 1984 saved the equivalent of EUR 2.9 billion on oil imports.

Several awareness campaigns have been run in Italy to discourage citizens from releasing lubricating oil into the environment. Recycled oil is also an important resource. In addition to being regenerated, and therefore reused, some of it is used to make bitumen.

Given the polluting potential of lubricating oil and its potential if recycled, are there any European instruments and/or measures providing for the collection and regeneration of oil, thus preventing its release into the environment?

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

Waste oils are governed by the provisions of Directive 2008/98/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste ([1]) and in particular by the provisions regarding the management of hazardous waste contained therein.

Given the specific hazards of waste oils, the European legislator introduced a specific Article (Article 21) on waste oils, which provides that 'Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that:

(a) waste oils are collected separately, where this is technically feasible;

(b) waste oils are treated in accordance with Articles 4 and 13;

(c) where this is technically feasible and economically viable, waste oils of different characteristics are not mixed and waste oils are not mixed with other kinds of waste or substances, if such mixing impedes their treatment'.

Article 21 refers to the principle of waste hierarchy (Article 4), to be applied by Member States. According to this principle, priority shall be given to recycling (in this case, waste oil regeneration) over other recovery options and disposal.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002472/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: L'Unicef a difesa dei bambini che vivono negli slums

Il rapporto dell'Unicef intitolato «La condizione dell'infanzia nel mondo 2012: figli delle città» lancia l'allarme: entro il 2020 quasi 1,4 miliardi di persone vivranno in insediamenti urbani non ufficiali e negli slums.

I disagi creati dalla vita nelle baracche colpiscono soprattutto i più piccoli. Oltre un miliardo di bambini e ragazzi vivono in ambienti urbani. I bambini delle baraccopoli sono privati della maggior parte dei servizi di base e non hanno un'infanzia semplice. Molto spesso gli slums non hanno acqua corrente e fognature, non vi sono scuole, parchi giochi, infrastrutture o servizi ai quali invece sono abituati i bambini ricchi.

Cattive condizioni di vita frenano lo sviluppo delle potenzialità di ogni singolo bambino. Si pensi che ogni giorno nel mondo muoiono circa 22mila bambini per cause che si possono facilmente prevenire.

Uno dei motivi principali che frenano la riqualificazione delle baraccopoli è costituito da un'errata distribuzione delle risorse economiche. Dati statistici erronei contribuiscono alla cattiva allocazione. Non è semplice riuscire a raccogliere dati esatti sugli slums e sui suoi abitanti. Oltre un terzo delle nascite non viene registrato, quindi esistono molti «bambini invisibili» completamente esclusi dal riconoscimento dei loro diritti e dalla protezione sociale. Pertanto, previsioni errate o medie statistiche che raggruppano varie realtà senza distinzioni provocano un'inefficace distribuzione delle risorse locali.

Per tale ragione, l'Unicef chiede ai governi di mettere i bambini al centro dei loro piani urbanistici e di considerare prioritarie le esigenze dei più piccoli. Una raccolta e un'analisi dei dati più accurate potrebbero essere un primo passo verso la realizzazione di interventi volti a colmare le disparità tra bambini ricchi e bambini poveri.

Considerato che la povertà e le cattive condizioni sanitarie in cui vivono milioni di bambini aumentano il loro rischio di morire o di avere seri problemi sul piano della crescita e dello sviluppo personale, può la Commissione indicare se intende intraprendere iniziative come ad esempio quella promossa da Unicef e da Un-Habitat, intitolata «Città amiche dei bambini», per impegnarsi a costruire città più sostenibili e sensibili ai bisogni dell'infanzia?

Risposta data da Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(23 aprile 2012)

La tutela e la promozione dei diritti dei minori sono integrate nella cooperazione allo sviluppo e nei programmi di sviluppo urbano dell'UE.

Il «Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme», con una copertura di 5 milioni di EUR dal 9° Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES), è stato lanciato nel febbraio 2008 ed è stato portato a termine il 31 dicembre 2011.

Il programma è stato gestito dall'agenzia ONU Habitat in 30 paesi dell'Africa, dei Caraibi e del Pacifico (Stati ACP).

L'iniziativa era volta a migliorare le condizioni di vita delle fasce povere urbane (compresi i minori) e a contribuire alla realizzazione dell'obiettivo di sviluppo del millennio numero 7 (assicurare la sostenibilità ambientale), in particolare il traguardo 10 (dimezzare entro il 2015 la percentuale di persone che non hanno accesso all'acqua potabile e a condizioni igieniche di base) e il traguardo 11 (migliorare sensibilmente, entro il 2020, le condizioni di vita di almeno 100 milioni di persone che vivono nelle baraccopoli).

Il progetto era mirato a sostenere i decisori locali, regionali e nazionali e i principali soggetti impegnati a livello istituzionale e urbano a migliorare le baraccopoli e a prevenirne la nascita, mettendoli in condizione di individuare le misure appropriate per far fronte alla crescente urbanizzazione della povertà e di attuare con efficacia politiche cittadine a favore dei disagiati, strategie per la riqualifica delle baraccopoli e progetti dimostrativi estesi all'intera città.

Un programma di consolidamento (Participatory Slum Upgrading Program 2) con una copertura di 12 milioni di EUR è già stato approvato e sarà lanciato nel corso del primo semestre del 2012. Il contributo dell'UE, nell'ambito del 10° FES, ammonta a 10 milioni di EUR.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002472/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Unicef: protecting children living in slums

A Unicef report entitled 'The State of the World's Children 2012: Children in an Urban World' sets alarm bells ringing: by 2020 roughly 1.4 billion people will be living in informal urban settlements and slums.

The poverty linked to life in the slums impacts most on the youngest inhabitants. More than a billion infants and children live in urban areas; children from shantytowns are deprived of most basic services and do not lead a simple childhood. Often the slums do not have running water and sewage systems, and there are no schools, playgrounds, infrastructure or services to which more privileged children have access.

Poor living conditions curb the development potential of every single child and, every day, some 22 000 children die worldwide from causes that are easily preventable.

One of the main obstacles standing in the way of redevelopment in the slums is the disparity in the distribution of economic resources. Incorrect statistical data contributes to this misallocation. It is not easy to successfully gather precise data on the slums and on their inhabitants: over a third of births are not registered, thus there are numerous 'invisible children' who are completely devoid of rights and who have no social protection. Therefore, incorrect estimates or statistical averages that group various situations together without distinction lead to an ineffective distribution of local resources.

For this reason, Unicef calls on governments to put children at the heart of their town planning and to consider the needs of the youngest as a priority. Gathering and analysing more accurate data could be a first step towards taking measures to overcome the disparities between rich and poor children.

In light of the poverty and poor health conditions in which millions of children live, increasing their risk of death or of having serious growth and personal development problems, could the Commission state whether it intends to undertake initiatives, such as the one promoted by Unicef and UN-Habitat, entitled 'Child Friendly Cities', in order to build cities that are more sustainable and receptive to the needs of childhood.

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

The Commission has integrated the protection and promotion of the right of the child into EU development cooperation, including in urban development programmes.

The 'Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme' for EUR 5 million, under the 9th EDF was launched in February 2008 and was completed on 31 December 2011.

The programme has been implemented by Habitat (UN) in 30 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

Its overall goal was to improve the living conditions of urban poor (including children) and to contribute to MDG 7 (ensure environmental sustainability), target 10 (halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation) and target 11 (have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement on the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers).

The purpose was to strengthen local, national and regional decision-makers, institutional and key urban stakeholders' capacities in slum improvement and prevention by enabling them to identify appropriate responses to increased urbanisation of poverty and to efficiently implement pro-poor urban policies, city-wide slum upgrading strategies and slum upgrading demonstration projects.

A EUR 12 million Consolidation of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (Participatory Slum Upgrading Program 2) has been approved and will be launched in the first semester of 2012. The EU contribution is for EUR 10 million under the 10th EDF.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002474/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Supersoftware in grado di simulare il sangue

Grazie all'utilizzo di un supersoftware, è possibile oggi ricostruire nei minimi dettagli la circolazione sanguigna e darne una rappresentazione multiscala, completa e in 4 dimensioni (tre nello spazio più il tempo).

Per realizzare questa impresa fino a poco fa considerata impossibile, sono stati utilizzati metodi computazionali molto avanzati, ad esempio, per simulare un battito cardiaco ci sono volute oltre 600 mila miliardi di operazioni aritmetiche al secondo.

Per ottenere una rappresentazione completa e reale del sangue sono state impiegate ben 4 mila schede Gpu molto potenti, in grado di comunicare tra loro alla velocità di centinaia di megabyte al secondo.

Le potenzialità di questa applicazione sono enormi. Se impiegata a livello clinico, la simulazione del sangue potrebbe essere in grado di prevenire i disturbi cardiovascolari. Infatti, sarà possibile circoscrivere le zone delle coronarie dove si accumulano i grassi e, pertanto, stimare le probabilità di avere un infarto.

La fase successiva è ora quella di introdurre il sistema di simulazione del sangue nei laboratori per scopi clinici. In verità, già è iniziata una sperimentazione presso un ospedale toscano, ma resta da vedere se e come diffondere la tecnica in altre strutture ospedaliere.

Considerato che il supersoftware potrebbe esaminare le coronarie, le carotidi, il flusso sanguigno e prevenire disturbi cardiovascolari nei pazienti, può la Commissione comunicare se intende approfondire le funzionalità del sistema e diffonderlo in altri paesi dell'Unione europea?

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

Il software 4D simulator della circolazione del sangue è testato attualmente in un ospedale toscano. Per quanto concerne la convalida clinica, la Commissione ritiene che l'acquisizione di prove cliniche dei vantaggi derivanti dall'uso di modelli computerizzati sia un passo indispensabile nello sviluppo dei modelli VPH (virtual physiological human) nella prassi medica. Per tale motivo la Commissione sosterrà, nell'ambito del programma di ricerca FP7, il consolidamento della ricerca sulla modellizzazione computerizzata della fisiologia umana e solleciterà convalide/prove cliniche di entità contenuta sui modelli VPH e sui simulatori atte a coadiuvare il processo decisionale e la pianificazione delle cure.

I programmi di lavoro in tema di deployment, vale a dire il programma di sostegno alla politica TIC nell'ambito della PIC non ha per obiettivo l'ambito specifico della modellizzazione in-silico del corpo umano.

Sulla base delle informazioni fornite, il prodotto finale cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato potrebbe rientrare nel campo di applicazione della legislazione sui dispositivi medici. Ciò può essere però stabilito soltanto se di dispone di una conoscenza completa delle caratteristiche del prodotto.

Se il prodotto è un dispositivo medico, il fabbricante deve dimostrare che esso è conforme alle disposizioni pertinenti della direttiva 93/42/CEE ([1]), comprese quelle relative agli aspetti clinici, e seguire la prevista procedura di valutazione di conformità prima di poter affiggere la marcatura CE sul prodotto. Una volta contrassegnato con la marcatura CE il prodotto può circolare liberamente nell'Unione europea.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1993L0042:20071011:it:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002474/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(2 March 2012)

Subject: Supersoftware able to simulate blood

Using 'supersoftware' it is now possible to reconstruct blood circulation down to the minutest detail and provide a complete multi-scale representation in four dimensions (three spatial dimensions, plus time).

What was until recently considered an impossible task has been accomplished by means of highly advanced calculation methods; for example, it takes more than 6 trillion calculations per second to simulate a heartbeat.

To obtain a complete and accurate representation of blood, it has taken a total of 4 000 very powerful GPU cards, able to communicate at a speed of hundreds of megabytes per second.

The potential of this application is enormous. If used in clinical practice, blood simulation could help to prevent cardiovascular problems. It will be possible to delineate the coronary regions where fat has accumulated and therefore estimate the probability of a heart attack.

The next stage is to introduce the blood simulation system in clinical laboratories. A trial has already begun in a Tuscany hospital, but it remains to be seen whether and how the technique can be deployed in other hospitals.

Given that the supersoftware could be used to examine the coronary and carotid arteries and blood flow, and might prevent cardiovascular problems in patients, will the Commission further investigate the functionalities of the system and publicise it in other European Union Member States?

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

The software 4D simulator of the blood circulation is currently tested in a hospital in Tuscany. Related to the clinical validation, the Commission considers that providing clinical evidence of the benefits of the use of computer based models is a necessary step in the deployment of the VPH (virtual physiological human) models into the medical practice. Therefore the Commission will support under the FP7 research programme the consolidation of research in the computational modelling of human physiology and call for small clinical validation/trials of the VPH models and simulators that help decision and treatment planning.

The Commission work programmes for deployment, i.e. the CIP ICT-Policy Support Programme, do not target the specific domain of the in-silico modellisation of the human body.

On the basis of the information provided, the final product referred to might fall under the medical device legislation. However, this assessment can only be made with a complete understanding of the product's characteristics.

If the product is a medical device, the manufacturer must demonstrate that it complies with the applicable requirements of Directive 93/42/EEC ([1]), including those on clinical aspects, and follow the appropriate conformity assessment procedure before being allowed to affix the CE marking on the product. Once CE marked, the product can freely circulate in the European Union.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1993L0042:20071011:en:PDF.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002476/12
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(5 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Retiradas de frutas

Actualmente, las medidas de gestión del mercado que pueden ser financiadas a través de las organizaciones de productores de frutas y hortalizas no contemplan ninguna línea para financiar la transformación en zumos de las frutas retiradas de la producción para su distribución gratuita a los pobres. Esa iniciativa permitiría una mejor conservación y almacenamiento de los productos y un mayor aprovechamiento de las retiradas. La próxima reforma de la PAC es una buena oportunidad para introducir esa nueva línea dentro de la organización común de mercados de productos agrícolas.

¿Qué opina la Comisión al respecto? ¿Cómo piensa que podría mejorarse el instrumento de las retiradas en el sector hortofrutícola?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de marzo de 2012)

El artículo 80, apartado 2, del Reglamento de Ejecución (UE) n° 543/2011 de la Comisión, de 7 de junio de 2011, por el que se establecen disposiciones de aplicación del Reglamento (CE) n° 1234/2007 del Consejo en los sectores de las frutas y hortalizas y de las frutas y hortalizas transformadas ([1]), contempla la posibilidad de que los Estados miembros autoricen el pago en especie por los beneficiarios de la distribución gratuita a los transformadores de frutas y hortalizas cuando dicho pago únicamente compense los costes de transformación y cuando el Estado miembro donde se efectúa el pago haya establecido normas que garanticen que los productos transformados se destinan realmente al consumo por los beneficiarios finales de las instituciones caritativas.

Por lo tanto, aprovechar las frutas y hortalizas retiradas mediante su transformación para facilitar su distribución a las personas más necesitadas, como desea Su Señoría, ya resulta posible con arreglo al Derecho vigente.

([1]) DO L 157 de 15.6.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002476/12
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Withdrawals of fruit

Currently, the market management measures that can be financed through fruit and vegetable producer organisations do not include any lines for financing the transformation of fruit withdrawn from production into juices for free distribution to the poor. This initiative would permit better conservation and storage of the products and a greater use of the withdrawn fruit. The forthcoming CAP reform is a good opportunity to introduce this new line into the common organisation of the market in agricultural products.

What is the Commission's opinion on this issue? How does it think the withdrawal instrument in the fruit and vegetable sector could be improved?

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

Article 80(2) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 543/2011 of 7 June 2011 ([1]) laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 in respect of the fruit and vegetables and processed fruit and vegetables sectors gives Member States the possibility to allow payment in kind by the beneficiaries of free distribution to processors of fruit and vegetables where such payment only compensates for processing costs and where the Member State in which the payment takes place has provided for rules ensuring that processed products are indeed destined for consumption by the final recipients of the charitable institutions.

Therefore, making better use of withdrawn fruit and vegetables by processing them to facilitate their distribution to the most deprived, as desired by the Honourable Member is already possible under the current legislation.

([1]) OJ L 157, 15.6.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002477/12
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Schmallenberg virus

The Schmallenberg virus is spreading throughout the EU and the UK and has now been discovered in south-west England, the area which I represent.

Can the Commission confirm what action it is taking regarding issuing guidelines to farmers to help them combat this virus, and how it is linking with veterinary agencies to ensure that appropriate action is taken to reduce its spread?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-000544/2012 and E-001855/2012 ([1]).

The Commission has prepared a website where EU-relevant documents are made available ([2]), in particular a Guidance document on the priority actions to be undertaken in the EU in the coming months, which was endorsed by Member States' veterinary authorities. This website also contains links to the relevant websites of the affected Member States, notably to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) ([3]) of the United Kingdom, that provides guidance documents addressed to farmers.

While the Commission is working in full transparency, it considers that providing direct advice to farmers is a responsibility of the Member States.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/schmallenberg_virus/index_en.htm
([3]) http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/a-z/schmallenberg-virus/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-002478/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Apoio aos agricultores afetados pela seca prolongada

A seca prolongada, que se tem registado em algumas regiões de Portugal, tem vindo a afetar as culturas de outono/inverno — os cereais —, os pastos naturais, os pomares e olivais. É grande a carência de água e as previsões meteorológicas não são favoráveis. Em face desta situação, os agricultores sofrem prejuízos acrescidos que se somam às crónicas dificuldades de escoamento dos seus produtos, aos persistentes baixos preços à produção e à crise de rendimentos que enfrentam. Neste contexto, diversas associações de agricultores têm vindo a reclamar apoios excecionais para enfrentar a seca e os seus efeitos.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que apoios comunitários poderão ser mobilizados para compensar estes agricultores, em especial os pequenos e médios agricultores, pela perda de culturas ou animais e apoiá-los na compra de palhas e silagens?

2. Já recebeu algum pedido do Governo português nesse sentido?

3. Que seguimento deu a Comissão às recomendações da resolução aprovada pelo Parlamento Europeu, em setembro de 2010, relativamente à prevenção de catástrofes naturais, designadamente as relativas à criação de um seguro público agrícola, financiado com fundos comunitários, que apoie os agricultores em caso de catástrofes, e à criação do Observatório Europeu da Seca e da Desertificação?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2012)

1. A Comissão remete para a sua resposta às perguntas escritas E-001260/2011 e E-002461/2012 ([1]) sobre o mesmo assunto.

2. A Comissão recebeu um pedido das autoridades portuguesas no sentido de analisar a eventual aplicação de algumas medidas excecionais que ajudem os agricultores a fazer face aos custos adicionais resultantes da seca. Na sessão do Conselho «Agricultura e Pescas» de 20 de março de 2012, a Ministra da Agricultura portuguesa incluiu também, na rubrica «Diversos», um ponto relativo à grave seca que afeta Portugal.

3. A atual PAC dispõe já de diversos instrumentos que poderão intervir na gestão dos riscos, incluindo medidas de apoio ao mercado e pagamentos diretos, assim como algumas medidas de desenvolvimento rural. A Comissão propôs que a PAC reformada contenha um novo dispositivo para a gestão dos riscos no âmbito do segundo pilar, com base nos instrumentos atualmente disponíveis para subsidiar seguros ou fundos mútuos e acrescentando um instrumento de estabilização do rendimento, administrado por meio de fundos mútuos.

Com o novo quadro da União Europeia, espera-se que a utilização dos fundos se intensifique, porquanto, até à data, apenas quatro Estados-Membros aproveitaram as opções de subsídio dos seguros e fundos mútuos. A oferta através do segundo pilar dá flexibilidade aos Estados-Membros em termos de afetação orçamental, seleção de objetivos e escolha dos instrumentos adequados para a gestão dos riscos.

Os Estados-Membros podem combinar o dispositivo de gestão do risco com outras medidas de desenvolvimento rural destinadas a reduzir os riscos, como as ajudas à reconstituição do potencial de produção afetado por catástrofes naturais e medidas preventivas na agricultura e na silvicultura, no contexto de uma abordagem estratégica mais ampla do desenvolvimento rural.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002478/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Support for farmers affected by the prolonged drought

The prolonged drought recorded in some regions of Portugal has affected autumn/winter cereal crops, natural pastures, orchards and olive groves. The shortage of water is severe and the weather forecasts are not promising. Farmers are suffering increasing losses due to this situation, on top of the chronic problems they have selling their products, persistently low basic prices and the income crisis they are facing. In this context, various farmers associations have been calling for special support to cope with the drought and its impact.

1. What Community support can be mobilised to compensate these farmers, particularly small and medium-sized farmers, for the loss of crops or animals, and assist them in purchasing fodder and silage?

2. Has the Commission already received a request from the Portuguese Government in this regard?

3. What action has the Commission taken following the recommendations contained in the European Parliament resolution of September 2010 on preventing natural disasters, particularly with regard to the creation of an EU-funded agricultural public insurance scheme to support farmers in case of disasters, and the creation of the European Drought and Desertification Observatory?

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

1. The Commission would refer to its answer to Written Questions E-001260/2011 and E-002461/2012 ([1]) on the same subject.

2. The Commission received a request from the Portuguese authorities to analyse the possibility to implement some exceptional measures to help the farmers to face additional costs due to drought. The Portuguese Minister of Agriculture included also an AOB point concerning the severe drought in Portugal in the meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of 20 March 2012.

3. The current CAP already has several instruments which could play a role in risk management, including market support measures and direct payments, as well as a number of rural development measures. 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 or mutual funds and adding an income stabilisation tool, administered through mutual funds.

With the new EU framework it is hoped that the uptake will increase, as so far only four Member States have availed themselves of the options to subsidise insurance and mutual funds. Delivery through the second pillar gives flexibility to Member States in terms of budget allocation, targeting and choice of appropriate risk management instruments.

They may combine the Risk Management toolkit with other rural development measures aimed at risk reduction such as aids for restoration of production potential damaged by natural disasters and for preventive measures in agriculture and forestry, in the context of a wider strategic approach to rural development.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002479/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διακύμανση ποσοστών απορροφητικότητας στο ΕΣΠΑ τη διετία 2010-2011

Αναντίρρητα το ΕΣΠΑ αποτελεί ένα από τα βασικότερα αναπτυξιακά εργαλεία. Ο ρόλος του είτε στην ανάσχεση της ύφεσης είτε στη μεγέθυνση της παραγωγικής δραστηριότητας γίνεται ακόμη πιο κομβικός στις χώρες που εφαρμόζουν προγράμματα δημοσιονομικής σταθερότητας, καθώς συνδέεται άμεσα με την τόνωση της ρευστότητας και κατ' επέκταση τη στήριξη της πραγματικής οικονομίας και της απασχόλησης. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, και με δεδομένη τη συρρίκνωση του ΑΕΠ ή τη στασιμότητα που καταγράφεται σε αρκετά κράτη μέλη, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη μεταβολή του ποσοστού απορροφητικότητας στο ΕΣΠΑ στα κράτη μέλη την τελευταία διετία και κυρίως στις χώρες που βρίσκονται σε ύφεση ή εμφανίζουν σημαντικά δημοσιονομικά προβλήματα;

2. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα στοιχεία για το ύψος των λεγόμενων «νεκρών εντάξεων», δηλαδή έργων που ενώ παραμένουν ενταγμένα στο ΕΣΠΑ για χρονικό διάστημα μεγαλύτερο των 6 μηνών δεν έχει ξεκινήσει η διαδικασία δημοπράτησής τους;

3. Επεξεργάζεται ή σκοπεύει να διενεργήσει σε συνεργασία με Πανεπιστημιακά Ιδρύματα και επιστημονικούς φορείς των κοινωνικών εταίρων εξειδικευμένες μελέτες σχετικά με τις βασικότερες αιτίες τόσο της χαμηλής απορροφητικότητας και των σημαντικών καθυστερήσεων όσο και της περιορισμένης συμμετοχής στα υπό διενέργεια Προγράμματα;

4. Προτίθεται να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών προκειμένου να αναδειχθούν οι πλέον αποτελεσματικές μέθοδοι και τα ενδεδειγμένα σχέδια δράσης για την ενίσχυση της απορροφητικότητας;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Τα κράτη μέλη αποστέλλουν στην Επιτροπή ετήσια στοιχεία σχετικά με την επιλογή δραστηριοτήτων στο πλαίσιο κάθε προγράμματος και τακτικές δηλώσεις πληρωμής οι οποίες περιλαμβάνουν στοιχεία ανά κατηγορία δαπάνης. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να συναθροίσει αυτά τα στοιχεία σε εθνικό επίπεδο (ΕΣΠΑ). Τα πιο πρόσφατα στοιχεία σχετικά με τα ποσοστά επιλογής σχεδίων παρουσιάζονται στον πίνακα 1· ο πίνακας 2 παρουσιάζει τις πληρωμές στο τέλος του 2010 και του 2011 με μια συνολική αύξηση κατά 50 %.

2. Η διαχείριση των συγχρηματοδοτούμενων σχεδίων ανήκει στην αρμοδιότητα των αρχών διαχείρισης. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει συστηματικά πρόσβαση σε στοιχεία αυτού του είδους. Ωστόσο, οι ελληνικές αρχές ενημερώνουν τακτικά την Επιτροπή σχετικά με την πρόοδο των σχεδίων που δεν αποτελούν αντικείμενο σύμβασης. Σύμφωνα με τα πιο πρόσφατα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία, μειώθηκε κατά 64 % ο αριθμός των σχεδίων που δεν αποτελούν αντικείμενο σύμβασης σε σύγκριση με το 2011. Επιπλέον, καταβλήθηκαν προσπάθειες να αποσυρθούν τα σχέδια χωρίς σύμβαση ή τα σχέδια για τα οποία δεν έχει εγκριθεί η υποβληθείσα προσφορά.

3. Η Επιτροπή θα δημοσιεύσει σύντομα συγκεφαλαιωτική έκθεση πραγματογνωμοσύνης σχετικά με την υλοποίηση των υφισταμένων προγραμμάτων η οποία θα εξετάσει το θέμα των καθυστερήσεων, μεταξύ άλλων σημείων.

4. Η υλοποίηση επηρεάζεται από πολλαπλούς παράγοντες που διαφέρουν από το ένα κράτος μέλος στο άλλο. Η Επιτροπή εργάζεται στενά με τα κράτη μέλη για να διευκολύνει την ομαλή υλοποίηση της πολιτικής συνοχής. Όταν τα ποσοστά απορρόφησης είναι χαμηλά, η Επιτροπή προσφέρει συμβουλές και καθοδήγηση με στόχο την αποφυγή των σημείων συμφόρησης και την επιτάχυνση της υλοποίησης και της απορρόφησης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002479/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Fluctuation in NSRF take-up rates in 2010-2011

It is undeniable that the NSRF is one of the most fundamental development tools available. Its role, both in halting the recession and in increasing output, is even more crucial in countries where financial stability programmes are being applied; it is also directly connected with stimulating liquidity and, by extension, supporting the real economy and employment. In this context, and given the fall in GDP or stagnation being recorded by many Member States:

1. Does the Commission have data on the changes in the NSRF take-up rates in Member States over the last two years, particularly in the countries in recession, and where significant financial problems are arising?

2. Is information available regarding the number of 'dead' projects, i.e. projects for which, no invitations to tender have been issued, despite having been included in the NSRF for over six months?

3. Is it or will it be drawing up, in cooperation with university institutions and expert bodies representing the social partners, specialised studies concerning the basic reasons for the low take-up rate, the significant delays and the limited participation in current programmes?

4. Does it intend to continue with the exchange of best practices between Member States to promote the most effective methods and appropriate action plans to improve take-up?

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

1. Member States send the Commission annual data on the selection of operations under each programme and regular payment declarations which include data per category of expenditure. The Commission can aggregate this information to the national level (NSRF). The latest data on project selection rates is presented in Table 1; Table 2 shows payments at the end of 2010 and 2011 with an overall 50 % increase.

2. The management of the projects co-financed is the responsibility of the managing authorities. The Commission does not systematically have access to such data. However, the Greek authorities regularly inform the Commission on progress of uncontracted projects. According to the latest available data, there is a 64 % decrease in the number of uncontracted projects in comparison with 2011. Further efforts are being made to withdraw projects without contracts or tender approval.

3. The Commission will shortly publish a synthesis expert report on the implementation of the current programmes which will deal with the issue of delays, amongst other points.

4. Implementation is influenced by multiple factors which vary by Member State. The Commission is working closely with Member States to facilitate the smooth implementation of cohesion policy. Where absorption rates are low, the Commission offers advice and guidance with a view to removing bottlenecks and speeding up implementation and absorption.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002481/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ποσοστά Μακροχρόνιας Ανεργίας στα Κράτη Μέλη

Χωρίς αμφιβολία η μακροχρόνια ανεργία αποτελεί την πιο επώδυνη εκδοχή της ανεργίας καθώς βρίσκεται σε ευθεία σχέση με φαινόμενα φτώχειας, κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού αλλά και απώλειας επαγγελματικών δεξιοτήτων, που υπονομεύουν ακόμη περισσότερο την πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση. Τα άτομα που είτε δεν μπορούν να εισαχθούν στην αγορά εργασίας είτε παραμένουν έξω από αυτήν για πολύ μεγάλο χρονικό διάστημα, αντιμετωπίζουν σημαντικά ζητήματα σχετικά με την επιβίωσή τους, την ιατροφαρμακευτική τους περίθαλψη και την υγειονομική κάλυψη των προστατευόμενων μελών, ενώ παράλληλα βρίσκονται μακριά από τις επιστημονικές και τεχνολογικές εξελίξεις της ειδικότητάς τους. Η συνεχιζόμενη αύξηση της ανεργίας στην ΕΕ συνδυάζεται τόσο με την άνοδο του ποσοστού των μακροχρόνια ανέργων όσο και με την επιμήκυνση του χρόνου παραμονής στο «εργασιακό περιθώριο».

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει συγκεντρωτικά στοιχεία για το ποσοστό των μακροχρόνια ανέργων στα κράτη μέλη και τους μέσους όρους του χρονικού διαστήματος παραμονής εκτός εθνικής αγοράς εργασίας;

2. Με δεδομένους του διακηρυγμένους στόχους της ΕΕ 2020 για μείωση του ποσοστού της φτώχειας και αύξηση της απασχολησιμότητας, σκοπεύει να αναλάβει συμπληρωματικές δράσεις υπέρ των μακροχρόνια ανέργων; Αν ναι, προς ποιά κατεύθυνση;

3. Στο πλαίσιο του ευρωπαϊκού εξαμήνου με ποιό τρόπο μπορεί να διασφαλιστεί ότι η δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση δεν επιτυγχάνεται σε βάρος της απασχόλησης και ότι προάγεται η ανάπτυξη; Πώς αυτό μπορεί να υλοποιηθεί για κράτη μέλη, όπως η Ελλάδα, όπου δεν δίδονται κατευθύνσεις πέραν αυτές του Μνημονίου;

4. Προτίθεται να δώσει κατευθυντήριες γραμμές στα κράτη μέλη προκειμένου να ενισχυθεί το πλέγμα της υγειονομικής κάλυψης των μακροχρόνια ανέργων και των προστατευόμενων μελών τους;

5. Δεδομένου του κεντρικού ρόλου που διαδραματίζουν τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία αναφορικά με την προαγωγή της απασχόλησης, την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας αλλά και των δεσμεύσεων στο πλαίσιο της στρατηγικής ΕΕ 2020, ποιό είναι το σκεπτικό της πίσω από την επέκταση της μακροοικονομικής αιρεσιμότητας; Μήπως κάτι τέτοιο τελικώς λειτουργήσει σε βάρος των ευάλωτων ευρωπαίων πολιτών (αστέγων, ανέργων κ.λπ.);

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

Πληροφορίες σχετικά με τη μακροχρόνια ανεργία διατίθενται και αναλύονται από την Eurostat, π.χ. στις τριμηνιαίες επισκοπήσεις της ανεργίας και της κοινωνικής κατάστασης στην ΕΕ. Στο σύνολο της ΕΕ, το ποσοστό της μακροχρόνιας ανεργίας το τρίτο τρίμηνο του 2011 ανερχόταν σε 4,1 %, ποσοστό που αντιστοιχούσε στο 43 % των ανέργων. Στην Ελλάδα, η μακροχρόνια ανεργία αυξήθηκε σε 9,1 % του εργατικού δυναμικού και αντιπροσωπεύει σχεδόν το ήμισυ των ανέργων ([1]). Ωστόσο, είναι δύσκολο να εκτιμηθεί η διάρκεια των συμπληρωμένων περιόδων ανεργίας για τους αναζητούντες εργασία. Στην έκθεση για την απασχόληση στην Ευρώπη 2009, έγιναν κάποιοι στατιστικοί υπολογισμοί ([2]).

Στην ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης και την κοινή έκθεση για την απασχόληση για το 2012, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε μια σειρά μέτρων προτεραιότητας για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας και της αύξησης της μακροχρόνιας ανεργίας. Στην ανακοίνωση «Στοχεύοντας σε μια ανάκαμψη με άφθονες θέσεις απασχόλησης», που εκδόθηκε στις 18 Απριλίου 2012, η Επιτροπή παρέχει περαιτέρω οδηγίες για την προώθηση της δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας.

Στο παρόν στάδιο η Επιτροπή δεν συζητά με τα κράτη μέλη την πιθανότητα έκδοσης κατευθυντήριων γραμμών για την υποστήριξη της υγειονομικής φροντίδας των μακροχρόνια ανέργων. Η Επιτροπή κατανοεί, ωστόσο, το κατεπείγον και τις ανάγκες που έχουν ενδεχομένως οι μακροχρόνια άνεργοι όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση σε υγειονομική περίθαλψη καλής ποιότητας.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1255&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&langId=en.

Το σκεπτικό των μακροοικονομικών προϋποθέσεων είναι ότι η επίτευξη των στόχων της πολιτικής συνοχής εξαρτάται από την ορθότητα των δημοσιονομικών και οικονομικών πολιτικών. Η εφαρμογή αυτών των προϋποθέσεων είναι μια σταδιακή διαδικασία, αρχίζοντας με την αναθεώρηση της σύμβασης εταιρικής σχέσης και των επιχειρησιακών προγραμμάτων. Κάθε απόφαση για την αναστολή πληρωμών ή πιστώσεων θα πρέπει να είναι αναλογική και αποτελεσματική, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις οικονομικές και κοινωνικές περιστάσεις στο οικείο κράτος μέλος. Η αναστολή θα πρέπει να αίρεται μόλις το κράτος μέλος προβαίνει στις αναγκαίες ενέργειες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002481/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Long-term unemployment figures in Member States

Long-term unemployment is undoubtedly the most distressing form of unemployment, since it is directly related to poverty, social exclusion and the loss of professional skills that further hamper access to employment. People who either cannot enter the job market or remain outside it for a very long time find it very difficult to survive and obtain medical care and health cover for their dependants; at the same time they are excluded from scientific and technological developments in their specialised fields. In addition to the steady rise in unemployment in the EU, there are a growing number of long-term unemployed and the length of time that unemployed people remain without work is increasing.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have centralised data on the percentage of long-term unemployed people in Member States and the average length of time unemployed people stay outside national job markets?

2. Considering the declared targets of the Europe 2020 strategy to reduce poverty and increase employment, does it intend to take additional action in favour of the long-term unemployed? If so, what kind of measures will these be?

3. In the context of the European Semester, what steps will be taken to ensure that financial reform is not achieved at the expense of employment and that growth is promoted? How can this be done for Member States such as Greece which have no guidelines to follow apart from those in the Memorandum?

4. Does it intend to issue guidelines to Member States in order to support the healthcare system for the long-term unemployed and their dependants?

5. Considering the central role played by the Structural Funds in promoting employment and combating poverty and in view of the commitments under the Europe 2020 strategy, what is its rationale for extending macroeconomic conditionality? Will this ultimately operate at the expense of vulnerable European citizens (the homeless, unemployed, etc.)?

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

Information on long-term unemployment can be obtained from the Eurostat and is analysed e.g. in the Quarterly Reviews of the EU Employment and Social Situation. In the EU as a whole, the long-term unemployment rate stood at 4.1 % in 3Q2011, accounting for 43 % of the unemployed. In Greece, long-term unemployment increased to 9.1 % of the labour force and represents about half of the unemployed ([1]). It is difficult, however, to estimate the durations of completed unemployment spells for jobseekers. Statistical calculations were carried out in the 2009 Employment in Europe report ([2]).

The Commission has proposed in the Annual Growth Survey and Joint Employment Report 2012 a number of priority measures to address unemployment and the increase in long-term unemployment. In the communication 'Towards a job-rich recovery' adopted on 18 April 2012, the Commission sets out further guidance on promoting job creation.

At this stage the Commission is not discussing with the Member States the possibility of issuing guidelines in support of healthcare for long term unemployed. The Commission understands, however, the urgency and needs that long-term unemployed may have for access to good quality healthcare.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1255&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&langId=en.

The rationale of macroeconomic conditionality is that the achievement of the objectives of cohesion policy depends on sound fiscal and economic policies. The application of such conditionality would be a gradual process, starting with revisions to the Partnership Contract and to the operational programmes. Any decision on suspension of payments or commitments would have to be proportionate and effective, taking into account the economic and social circumstances of the Member State concerned. The suspension would be lifted as soon as the Member State takes necessary action.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002483/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πολιτικοί κρατούμενοι στο Μπαχρέιν

Το Παρατηρητήριο Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων (HRW) ζήτησε σήμερα να αφεθούν ελεύθεροι οι πολιτικοί κρατούμενοι στο Μπαχρέιν, χαρακτηρίζοντας «άδικες» τις δίκες εκατοντάδων διαδηλωτών, κυρίως Σιιτών, για τη συμμετοχή τους πριν από ένα χρόνο στο κίνημα αμφισβήτησης του καθεστώτος.

«Η διεξαγωγή δικών τελείως άδικων σε στρατιωτικά και πολιτικά δικαστήρια είναι το κεντρικό στοιχείο της καταστολής του δημοκρατικού κινήματος στο Μπαχρέιν», δήλωσε ο Τζο Στορκ, αναπληρωτής διευθυντής του HRW για τη Μέση Ανατολή.

Σε μία έκθεση με τίτλο: «Καμία δικαιοσύνη στο Μπαχρέιν: άδικες δίκες σε στρατιωτικά και πολιτικά δικαστήρια», η οργάνωση προάσπισης ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων καταγγέλλει τις «σοβαρές παραβιάσεις» των διαδικασιών στη διάρκεια των δικών.

Το HRW αναφέρεται συγκεκριμένα «στην παραβίαση του δικαιώματος των κατηγορούμενων να έχουν πρόσβαση σε δικηγόρο» και «στην άρνηση να ερευνηθούν οι πειστικοί ισχυρισμοί για βασανιστήρια και κακομεταχείριση των κατηγορούμενων στη διάρκεια της ανάκρισής τους».

Πάνω από 1 000 άνθρωποι φυλακίστηκαν, ορισμένοι εκ των οποίων βασανίστηκαν μέχρι θανάτου, ενώ τουλάχιστον 35 άνθρωποι έχασαν τη ζωή τους μέσα σε ένα μήνα, τον Φεβρουάριο. Τον Νοέμβριο μία επιτροπή έρευνας που συνέστησε η μοναρχία έκρινε ότι έγινε χρήση «υπέρμετρης και αδικαιολόγητης βίας».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της και με ποιο τρόπο μπορεί να επέμβει ώστε να ελευθερωθούν οι πολιτικοί κρατούμενοι.

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος παρακολουθεί στενά τη δύσκολη κατάσταση που επικρατεί στο Μπαχρέιν όσον αφορά τον σεβασμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων. Από τη στιγμή της αναζωπύρωσης της εξέγερσης στο Μπαχρέιν, μόλις πριν ένα χρόνο, η ΥΕ/ΑΠ γνωστοποίησε τις απόψεις της μέσω μιας σειράς δημόσιων δηλώσεων. Όλες αυτές οι δηλώσεις βρίσκονται αναρτημένες στον δικτυακό τόπο της Ευρωπαϊκής Υπηρεσίας Εξωτερικής Δράσης (ΕΥΕΔ) και καθορίζουν την επίσημη θέση. Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ έχει εκφράσει προσωπικά τις ανησυχίες της σε συνεδριάσεις με τον βασιλιά του Μπαχρέιν και με τον Υπουργό Εξωτερικών (5 Δεκεμβρίου 2011), καθώς και σε τηλεφωνικές συνομιλίες μαζί τους. Τις ίδιες ανησυχίες όσον αφορά τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα εξέφρασαν και οι υπουργοί εξωτερικών της ΕΕ στη συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Εξωτερικών Υποθέσεων.

Η θέση της ΕΕ διαβιβάζεται επίσης τακτικά στις αρχές του Μπαχρέιν από την αντιπροσωπεία της ΕΕ στη Σαουδική Αραβία που είναι επίσης διαπιστευμένη στο Μπαχρέιν, στη διάρκεια αποστολών υψηλού επιπέδου της ΕΥΕΔ, καθώς και σε φόρουμ που δεν ελέγχονται από το κράτος.

Η δημοσίευση της έκθεσης της Ανεξάρτητης Εξεταστικής Επιτροπής για το Μπαχρέιν (BICI), στην οποία αναφέρεται η ερώτηση, παρέχει στο Μπαχρέιν την ευκαιρία να εξετάσει τη συμφιλίωση και την πρόοδο για όλους τους πολίτες του. Η ΕΕ έχει επανειλημμένα καταστήσει σαφές ότι παραμένει έτοιμη να στηρίξει την εφαρμογή των προτάσεων της έκθεσης της BICI, παρέχοντας συγκεκριμένη βοήθεια αν και εφόσον της το ζητήσει το Μπαχρέιν.

Η ΕΕ θα συνεχίσει να εκμεταλλεύεται κάθε ευκαιρία για να εκφράσει τις σοβαρές ανησυχίες της σχετικά με την κατάσταση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στο Μπαχρέιν και να παρακολουθεί στενά την κατάσταση, λαμβάνοντας τα απαραίτητα ή κατάλληλα κάθε φορά μέτρα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002483/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Political detainees in Bahrain

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has today requested the release of political detainees in Bahrain, claiming that the trials of hundreds of protestors, mainly Shi'ites, for taking part in last year's movement to reform the system were unfair.

'Grossly unfair military and civilian trials have been a core element in Bahrain's crackdown on pro-democracy protests,' commented Joe Stork, HRW Deputy Middle East Director.

In a report entitled 'No Justice in Bahrain: Unfair Trials in Military and Civilian Courts', the human rights organisation complains of 'serious violations' of procedures throughout the trials.

HRW specifically refers to 'denying defendants the right to counsel' and 'failure to investigate credible allegations of torture and ill-treatment during interrogation'.

More than 1 000 people were jailed and some of them were tortured to death, while at least 35 people died in the month of February. In November, a Commission of Inquiry set up by the royal family deemed that there had been an 'excessive and unjustified use of force'.

Will the Commission give its official position and say what action it might take to ensure the release of political detainees?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is following closely the difficult human rights situation in Bahrain. Since the re-ignition of the unrest in Bahrain just over a year ago, the HR/VP has made her views known through a series of public statements. All these statements are available on the website of the European External Action Service (EEAS) setting out the official position. The HR/VP has conveyed personally her concerns in meetings with the King of Bahrain and the Foreign Minister (5 December 2011), as well as in phone conversations with them. The same concerns focused on human rights were expressed by the EU Foreign Ministers meeting in the Foreign Affairs Council.

The EU position is also regularly transmitted by the EU Delegation in Saudi Arabia which is also accredited to Bahrain, during high-level missions from the EEAS, and in fora outside the public domain.

The publication of the report of the Bahraini Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), to which the question refers, provides an opportunity for Bahrain to address reconciliation and progress for all its citizens. The EU has repeatedly made clear that it remains ready to support the implementation of the BICI report recommendations, including through specific assistance, if and when requested by Bahrain.

The EU will continue to take every opportunity to repeat its serious concern at the situation of human rights in Bahrain and to closely monitor the situation, taking steps that prove necessary or appropriate.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002485/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προϋπολογισμός της Ένωσης

Περί τα 600 εκατομμύρια ευρώ υπεξαιρούνται κάθε χρόνο από τον προϋπολογισμό της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, όπως δήλωσε σήμερα η Φρανσουάζ λε Μπάιγ, διευθύντρια της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Δικαιοσύνης της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής.

«Υπάρχουν στοιχεία που μας κάνουν να πιστεύουμε ότι εξακολουθούν να χάνονται κάθε χρόνο 600 εκατομμύρια ευρώ από τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ» εξαιτίας οικονομικών απατών, σημείωσε η Λε Μπάιγ στη διάρκεια συνέντευξης Τύπου από τη Χάγη, προσθέτοντας: «Αυτό είναι μόνο η κορυφή του παγόβουνου».

Ο προϋπολογισμός της ΕΕ για το 2012 ανέρχεται σε 129 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ.

Ο πρόεδρος της Ευρωπαϊκής Μονάδας Δικαστικής Συνεργασίας (Eurojust) Άλεντ Γουίλιαμς δήλωσε από την πλευρά του ότι η τεχνολογία και το άνοιγμα των ευρωπαϊκών αγορών έχουν διευκολύνει αυτές τις εγκληματικές ενέργειες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της για αυτά τα στοιχεία.

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Μαΐου 2012)

Η ΕΕ και τα κράτη μέλη έχουν από κοινού την υποχρέωση να προστατεύουν τα οικονομικά συμφέροντα της ΕΕ και να καταπολεμούν την απάτη. Η εθνικές αρχές διαχειρίζονται το 80 % των δαπανών της ΕΕ.

Ο οικονομικός αντίκτυπος των εικαζόμενων απατών το 2010 εκτιμήθηκε σε 617 εκατ. ευρώ. Στο ποσό αυτό συμπεριλαμβάνονται υποθέσεις εικαζόμενης απάτης που εντοπίστηκαν και αναφέρθηκαν από τα κράτη μέλη στον τομέα των δαπανών και των εσόδων. Αυτό αντιστοιχεί στο 0,34 % των χορηγήσεων και στο 0,67 % των εισπραχθέντων παραδοσιακών ίδιων πόρων ([1]). Το 2009 το ποσό αυτό ήταν 283 εκατ. ευρώ.

Οι ετήσιες διακυμάνσεις θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπίζονται επιφυλακτικά, ιδίως όσον αφορά τον κυκλικό χαρακτήρα του προγραμματισμού ορισμένων τομέων (π.χ. δαπάνες της πολιτικής συνοχής με το κλείσιμο της περιόδου εκτέλεσης 2000-2006 ([2])). Ένα άλλο στοιχείο που πρέπει να ληφθεί υπόψη είναι η επιτυχής εισαγωγή και εφαρμογή του Συστήματος Διαχείρισης Παρατυπιών (ΣΔΠ), το οποίο βελτίωσε την αποτελεσματικότητα αναφοράς από τα κράτη μέλη.

Ταυτόχρονα, θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι το ποσό των 617 εκατ. ευρώ αφορά μόνο το αδίκημα της απάτης σύμφωνα με τα αναφέροντα κράτη μέλη, το οποίο όμως δεν είναι το μόνο είδος αδικήματος που θίγει τα οικονομικά συμφέροντα της Ένωσης. Η Επιτροπή έχει την πρόθεση να βελτιώσει την προστασία των οικονομικών συμφερόντων της Ένωσης, και, στη διάρκεια του τρέχοντος έτους, θα προτείνει νόμο ποινικού δικαίου με νομοθετική πρωτοβουλία. Επιπλέον, θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι, το 2010, η Επιτροπή ανέκτησε περίπου 1 δισεκατ. ευρώ από οικονομικές παρατυπίες που διαπιστώθηκαν κατά τα προηγούμενα έτη.

Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες, το Αξιότιμο Μέλος καλείται να συμβουλευτεί την έκθεση της Επιτροπής για την προστασία των οικονομικών συμφερόντων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης — Καταπολέμηση της απάτης — Ετήσια έκθεση 2010 που εκδόθηκε στις 29/9/2011, καθώς και το πρόγραμμα εργασίας της Επιτροπής για το 2012.

([1]) Έκθεση για την προστασία των οικονομικών συμφερόντων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, COM(2011)595 τελικό.
([2]) Έκθεση για την προστασία των οικονομικών συμφερόντων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, COM(2011)595 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002485/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: The EU budget

Around EUR 600 million is embezzled each year from the European Union budget, EC Director-General for Justice, Françoise Le Bail **stated today.**

'There are now figures that make us believe EUR 600 million of the European Union budget continues to be lost each year' as a result of fraud, noted Le Bail at a press conference in The Hague, adding: 'This is just the tip of the iceberg.'

The EU budget for 2012 amounts to EUR 129 billion.

The President of the European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit (Eurojust), Aled Williams, said that technology and the opening up of European markets have made these criminal acts easier.

Can the Commission give its official position on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2012)

The EU and the Member States share responsibility for the protection of the EU's financial interests and the fight against fraud. National authorities manage 80 % of EU expenditure.

The estimated financial impact of suspected fraud amounted to EUR 617 million in 2010. This includes cases of suspected fraud detected and reported by Member States in the field of expenditure and revenues. It represents 0.34 % of allocations and 0.67 % of collected traditional own resources ([1]). In 2009 this figure was EUR 283 million.

Variations from year to year are to be read with caution, in particular with regard to the cyclical nature of the programming of certain sectors (e.g. Cohesion Policy expenditure with the closures of the 2000-2006 implementing periods ([2])). Another element to be taken in consideration is the successful introduction and implementation of the Irregularity Management System (IMS), which has improved the efficiency of reporting by the Member States.

At the same time, it should be noted that the figure of EUR 617 million only relates to the offence of fraud as qualified by the reporting Member States, which is not the only offence type affecting the financial interests of the Union. The Commission is planning to improve the protection of EU financial interests by criminal law with a legislative initiative still this year. Furthermore, it should be noted that, in 2010, the Commission recovered about EUR 1 billion from financial irregularities detected in previous years.

For detailed information the Honourable Member is invited to consult the Commission's Report on the Protection of the European Union's financial interests — Fight against fraud — Annual Report 2010 issued on 29/09/2011, as well as the Commission Work Programme 2012.

([1]) Report on the Protection of the European Union's financial interests, COM(2011)595 final.
([2]) Report on the Protection of the European Union's financial interests, COM(2011)595 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002486/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παρότρυνση στους Βρετανούς ταξιδιώτες να εγγράφονται στο βρετανικό Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών όταν επισκέπτονται την Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με αναφορά της εφημερίδας Daily Mail, ο Υπουργός Εξωτερικών William Hague υπενθύμισε στους Βρετανούς πόσο σημαντικό είναι να ενημερώνουν την κυβέρνηση για την τοποθεσία στην οποία βρίσκονται. Οι Βρετανοί ταξιδιώτες που βρίσκονται στην Ελλάδα παροτρύνονται να εγγραφούν στο βρετανικό Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών για να είναι δυνατή η άμεση επικοινωνία μαζί τους σε περίπτωση επιδείνωσης της κοινωνικής αναταραχής στη χώρα.

Συμβουλεύει τους ταξιδιώτες να εγγράφονται στην τοπική «υπηρεσία εντοπισμού» του Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών και Κοινοπολιτείας, στην οποία καταγράφονται τα στοιχεία επικοινωνίας τους για να είναι δυνατός ο εντοπισμός τους από την τοπική πρεσβεία ή το προξενείο σε περίπτωση κρίσης ή έκτακτης ανάγκης. Οι ταξιδιώτες μπορούν να εγγραφούν μέσω του www.locate.fco.gov.uk

Οι ανεξάρτητοι τουριστικοί πράκτορες κατηγορούν τον Υπουργό Εξωτερικών William Hague για ανεύθυνη συμπεριφορά αφότου ο ίδιος παρότρυνε τους Βρετανούς που επισκέπτονται την Ελλάδα ή ζουν σε αυτήν να επικοινωνήσουν με το Προξενείο σε περίπτωση που κλιμακωθούν οι ταραχές στη χώρα.

Η ένωση ανεξάρτητων τουριστικών πρακτορείων (Association of Independent Tour Operators — AITO) εξέφρασε την έντονη δυσαρέσκειά της σχετικά με τις αναφορές που θέλουν το Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών και Κοινοπολιτείας να «αντιμετωπίζει ολόκληρη την Ελλάδα σαν πεδίο μάχης». «Η Ελλάδα είναι ασφαλής, πρόσφορη για τη δημιουργία επιχειρήσεων και προσμένει τους επισκέπτες του εξωτερικού το καλοκαίρι για ένα θερμό καλωσόρισμα. Η Ελλάδα διαθέτει μερικές από τις καλύτερες παραλίες της Μεσογείου, τις καθαρότερες θάλασσες και τη μοναδική φιλοξενία που χαρακτηρίζει τους Έλληνες.»

Σε αυτές τις δύσκολες εποχές για την Ελλάδα και για το μέλλον της ευρωζώνης, συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή με τα σχόλια του Υπουργού Εξωτερικών της Βρετανίας τα οποία παρουσιάζουν την Ελλάδα σας πεδίο μάχης, αυξάνοντας την αρνητική ρητορεία σχετικά με την κατάσταση της χώρας;

Πιστεύει η Επιτροπή ότι πρέπει να τεθούν παρόμοια αιτήματα στους πολίτες της ΕΕ που κατοικούν στο Λονδίνο, το Μάντσεστερ και το Μπέρμιγχαμ, δεδομένων των εξεγέρσεων και της κοινωνικής αναταραχής που επικράτησε το περασμένο καλοκαίρι στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο;

Απάντηση της κας Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Απριλίου 2012)

Τα κράτη μέλη είναι αρμόδια να προσδιορίζουν τους κατάλληλους μηχανισμούς για την προστασία των πολιτών τους όταν αυτοί ταξιδεύουν στο εξωτερικό.

Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η Ελλάδα έχει συγκριτικό πλεονέκτημα σε ό,τι αφορά τον πολιτισμό και τον τουρισμό, και ότι η στήριξη και ανάπτυξη του ελληνικού τουριστικού κλάδου είναι βασικό στοιχείο για την οικονομική ανάπτυξη και τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002486/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: British holidaymakers urged to register when visiting Greece

According to a report in the *Daily Mail,* Foreign Secretary William Hague has reminded Britons of the importance of letting the government know their whereabouts. British holidaymakers in Greece are being urged to register with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office so they can be contacted immediately if the social unrest in the country worsens.

Holidaymakers are advised to register with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's 'Locate' service, which takes a note of their contact details so the local embassy or consulate can get in touch in the event of a crisis or emergency. To register, holidaymakers can visit www.locate.fco.gov.uk.

Independent tour operators have accused Mr Hague of irresponsible behaviour after he urged Britons visiting or living in Greece to get in touch with the British Consulate in case civil unrest in the country escalates.

The Association of Independent Tour Operators said it was upset at reports that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was seemingly 'treating the whole of Greece as a war zone'. 'Greece is safe, open for business and looking forward to welcoming its overseas visitors with open arms this summer. Greece offers some of the Mediterranean's finest beaches, cleanest seas and the unique hospitality of the Greek people.'

During these critical times for Greece, and for the future of the eurozone, does the Commission agree with the UK Foreign Secretary's comments portraying all of Greece as a war zone and consequently adding to the negative rhetoric regarding the situation there?

Does the Commission believe that similar requests should be made to EU citizens living in London, Manchester and Birmingham, given the riots and social unrest witnessed last summer in the UK?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

It is for Member States to determine appropriate mechanisms to protect their citizens when they travel abroad.

The Commission considers that Greece has a comparative advantage in culture and tourism, and that supporting and developing tourism and the Greek tourist industry is key to bringing growth and jobs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002487/12
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Land mapping across the EU

The UK has efficiently mapped land use. In other areas of the EU, land mapping may be considered relaxed at best and negligent at worst. Can the Commission state if it has any plans to issue guidance to Member States about the quality and comprehensiveness of land mapping in order that countries that do engage in this are not left to feel that they are wasting their time?

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

Issues regarding the availability, quality, accessibility and sharing of spatial information are common to various policies and sectors and are experienced by all levels of public authorities. Measures required to solve these issues are addressed in Directive 2007/2/EC ([1]) on establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE).

INSPIRE Implementing Rules lay down technical arrangements for the interoperability and harmonisation of spatial data sets. INSPIRE does not require collection of new data but Member States have to ensure that all newly collected and extensively restructured spatial data sets are in conformity with the Implementing Rules.

INSPIRE covers various Spatial Data Themes, including Land Use. Related Data specifications will be included in future amendment of Commission Regulation 1089/2010 ([2]) and will be complemented by technical guidelines.

INSPIRE is coordinated by DG Environment, DG Eurostat and technically by the Commission's Joint Research Centre. More details are at INSPIRE website: http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

Within the Commission, DG Eurostat elaborates a European strategy for collecting, analysing and disseminating harmonised land cover/use data and statistics meeting the needs of the European data users in cooperation with the other Commission services, Member States and international organisations. In 2012 grants will be issued to Member States, which can be used for land cover/use statistical dissemination and/or proposing how to integrate national in-situ data collection activities with the European land cover/use survey LUCAS, which is implemented every three years.

([1]) Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2007 establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE), 14.3.2007.

([2]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 1089/2010 of 23 November 2010 implementing Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards interoperability of spatial data sets and services.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002488/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Situação na empresa Jado Ibéria (Grupo Ideal Standard International)

A empresa Jado Ibéria, pertencente ao grupo multinacional Ideal Standard International, instalada em Portugal, no distrito de Braga, recorreu, pela quarta vez, a um processo de lay-off (depois de o ter feito já, anteriormente, por três vezes, nos últimos quatro anos).

Trabalhadores e sindicatos acusam a empresa de recorrer abusivamente a este instrumento, usando a crise como argumento. Invariavelmente, sublinham, o resultado é o aumento da exploração dos trabalhadores: ritmos de trabalho mais intensos, durante os períodos de laboração, e diminuição considerável dos salários. São mais de uma centena os trabalhadores afetados por esta medida. Tudo isto num distrito em que se agrava o desemprego e se degrada acentuadamente a situação social.

Tendo em conta que a multinacional em causa beneficiou de diversos apoios, tanto nacionais como comunitários, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento de qual o montante de fundos comunitários canalizados para esta empresa?

2. Que medidas existem para evitar que multinacionais que recebem apoios comunitários recorram a expedientes que visam a intensificação da exploração dos seus trabalhadores?

3. Está disponível para discutir com esta multinacional medidas de estabilização da Jado Ibéria, defendendo os direitos, os interesses e os postos de trabalho dos seus trabalhadores?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2012)

1. As informações relativas ao montante dos fundos da UE concedidos à empresa Jado Ibéria foram solicitadas pelo Estado-Membro e serão enviadas ao Sr. Deputado em devido tempo.

2. No que respeita ao despedimento de trabalhadores, o Regulamento n.° 1083/2006/CE refere que os Estados-Membros devem assegurar que as empresas que recebem uma participação dos fundos não a podem reter se a operação em causa sofrer uma alteração substancial que afete a sua natureza ou as suas condições de execução ou proporcione uma vantagem indevida a uma empresa ou a um organismo público e resulte quer de uma mudança na natureza da propriedade de uma infraestrutura, quer da cessação de uma atividade produtiva. Além disso, a autoridade de gestão deve assegurar que as operações são selecionadas para financiamento em conformidade com os critérios aplicáveis ao programa operacional e que cumprem as regras da União e nacionais, durante todo o período da sua execução.

3. No caso de operações de reestruturação como as referidas pelo Sr. Deputado, podem ser aplicáveis várias diretivas da UE em matéria de informação e consulta dos trabalhadores, a saber, a Diretiva 2002/14/CE que estabelece um quadro geral relativo à informação e à consulta dos trabalhadores ([1]), a Diretiva 98/59/CE relativa aos despedimentos coletivos ([2]) e a Diretiva 2009/38/CE relativa à instituição de um Conselho de Empresa Europeu ([3]). Cabe às autoridades nacionais competentes, incluindo os tribunais, garantir que o direito é aplicado correta e eficazmente, tendo em conta as circunstâncias específicas de cada caso.

([1]) JO L 80 de 23.3.2002, p. 29.
([2]) JO L 225 de 12.8.1998, p. 16.
([3]) JO L 122 de 16.5.2009, p. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002488/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 March 2012)

Subject: Situation at Jado Ibéria (part of the Ideal Standard International group)

Jado Ibéria, a company owned by the multinational group Ideal Standard International and based in the Braga district of Portugal, is for the fourth time laying off its workers, having already done so three times in the last four years.

Workers and trade unions have accused the company of abusing this procedure, using the crisis as an excuse. They maintain that the end result is invariably greater exploitation of workers, that is to say, more intensive working patterns and swingeing wage cuts. More than 100 workers have been affected by the lay-off measure. All of this is taking place in a district where unemployment is on the rise and the social situation is visibly deteriorating.

Bearing in mind that Ideal Standard International has already benefited from both state and EU support,

1. Does the Commission know the total amount of EU funding granted to this company?

2. What measures are in place to ensure that multinational companies which receive EU support do not employ tactics designed to increase exploitation of their employees?

3. Is the Commission willing to hold talks with Ideal Standard International in order to find ways of bringing the situation at Jado Ibéria under control, while protecting its workers' rights, interests and jobs?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2012)

1. Information concerning EU funding granted to Jabo Ibéria Company has been requested from the Member State and will be sent to the Honourable Member in due course.

2. Concerning lay off employees, Regulation1083/2006/EC states that Member States shall ensure that companies receiving contribution from the Funds cannot retain that contribution in case of a substantial modification affecting its nature or its implementation conditions or giving to a firm or a public body an undue advantage and resulting either from a change in the nature of ownership of an item of infrastructure or the cessation of a productive activity. Moreover, the Managing authority shall assure that the operations are selected for funding in accordance with the criteria applicable to the operational programme and that they comply with Community and national rules for the whole of their implementation period.

3. In cases of restructuring operations such as the ones referred to by the Honourable Member, several EU directives providing for the information and consultation of employees could be applicable, in particular Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees ([1]), Directive 98/59/EC on collective redundancies ([2]) and Directive 2009/38/EC on European Works Councils ([3]). It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the law is correctly and effectively applied, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

([1]) OJ L 80, 23.3.2002, p. 29.
([2]) OJ L 225, 12.8.1998, p. 16.
([3]) OJ L 122, 16.5.2009, p. 28.