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Europäisches Parlament

ANFRAGEN ZUR SCHRIFTLICHEN BEANTWORTUNG MIT ANTWORT

2014/C 20 E/01 Anfragen der Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments zur schriftlichen Beantwortung und die entsprechenden Antworten eines Organs der Europäischen Union 1

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Hinweis für den Leser

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

Jede Anfrage und ihre Antwort werden zunächst in der Originalsprache und anschließend in den eventuellen Übersetzungen angegeben.

In einigen Fällen kann es vorkommen, dass die Antwort in einer anderen Sprache verfasst ist als die Anfrage. Dies hängt von der Arbeitssprache des Gremiums ab, das mit der Beantwortung beauftragt wurde.

Die vorliegenden Anfragen und Antworten werden gemäß den Artikeln 117 und 118 der Geschäftsordnung des Europäischen Parlaments veröffentlicht.

Alle Anfragen und Antworten sind auf der Internetseite des Europäischen Parlaments (Europarl) unter der Rubrik „parlamentarische Anfragen" verfügbar:

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

ABKÜRZUNGEN DER FRAKTIONEN

PPE	Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten)
S&D	Fraktion der Progressiven Allianz der Sozialisten und Demokraten im Europäischen Parlament
ALDE	Fraktion der Allianz der Liberalen und Demokraten für Europa
Verts/ALE	Fraktion der Grünen/Freie Europäische Allianz
ECR	Europäische Konservative und Reformisten
GUE/NGL	Konföderale Fraktion der Vereinigten Europäischen Linken/Nordische Grüne Linke
EFD	Fraktion „Europa der Freiheit und der Demokratie"
NI	Fraktionslos

DE

IV

(Informationen)

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EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT

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(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004180/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Zona euro — desemprego

Considerando que:

— De acordo com o relatório do executivo comunitário sobre o emprego e a situação social na União Europeia (UE), «a disparidade no desemprego entre o sul/periferia e o norte da zona do euro atingiu uma diferença sem precedentes de 10 pontos percentuais em 2012»;

— O mesmo relatório refere ainda que «a contenção dos orçamentos públicos afetou negativamente o emprego, tanto diretamente, através da redução do emprego no setor público, como indiretamente, através da redução da procura macroeconómica agregada».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que medidas pensa poder vir a tomar para inverter a referida situação?

Resposta conjunta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(7 de junho de 2013)

A solidez das finanças públicas não é uma alternativa, mas sim um pré-requisito para o crescimento sustentável e o emprego. Continuamos a sentir as repercussões — designadamente nos mercados de trabalho — de uma crise económica e financeira e os seus efeitos levam inevitavelmente tempo a ser ultrapassados. A Comissão empreende iniciativas em diferentes frentes, com vista não só a apoiar a sustentabilidade orçamental, mas também a eliminar os obstáculos ao crescimento e ao emprego, tal como sublinhado na Análise Anual do Crescimento de 2013 ([1]). A Comissão apelou, nomeadamente, à prossecução da consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento; à promoção do crescimento e da competitividade; ao combate ao desemprego e às consequências sociais da crise.

Na sequência da adoção do Pacote do Emprego ([2]), a Comissão aconselhou os Estados-Membros sobre medidas relacionadas com a criação de postos de trabalho, as competências e a concretização do mercado de trabalho da UE. No Pacote de Emprego dos Jovens ([3]), a Comissão propôs uma Garantia para a Juventude, apoiada atualmente pela Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens. O Pacote de Investimento Social ([4]) convidou os Estados-Membros a gastar de forma mais eficaz e eficiente para assegurar uma proteção social adequada e sustentável.

Através do Semestre Europeu, são promovidas reformas estruturais para eliminar os obstáculos ao crescimento e dar resposta aos desafios dos mercados de trabalho e da política social. A Comissão avaliará as medidas adotadas pelos Estados-Membros para promover o crescimento e o emprego e proporá recomendações políticas. Fará um relatório sobre os progressos realizados no sentido de atingir os objetivos da estratégia Europa 2020.

O Quadro Financeiro Plurianual irá representar um contributo substancial para os esforços dos Estados-Membros para a realização da estratégia Europa 2020. A Comissão propôs que uma quota mínima de 25 % do orçamento afetado à política de coesão fosse dedicada ao Fundo Social Europeu.

([1]) COM(2012) 750 de 28 de novembro de 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 173 de 18 de abril de 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 de 5 de dezembro de 2012.
([4]) COM(2013) 144 de 12 de março de 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003877/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Rekordne vysoká nezamestnanosť v Európskej únii

Podľa najnovších prieskumov nezamestnanosť v eurozóne stúpla na rekordne vysokých 12 %. Hospodárska kríza a s ňou súvisiaca politika úsporných opatrení túto situáciu ešte viac zhoršuje. Akoby absentovala stratégia a snaha kombinovať dlhodobú fiškálnu zodpovednosť s investíciami do rastu a zamestnanosti.

Má Komisia vôľu konkrétnymi krokmi hľadať alternatívy, ktoré by mohli byť prínosom a mohli by prispieť k ekonomicky rozumnej a sociálne vyváženej politike zameranej na znižovanie zadlženosti a poklesu vysokej miery nezamestnanosti?

Spoločná odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(7. júna 2013)

Zdravé verejné financie nie sú alternatívou, ale skôr predpokladom pre trvalo udržateľný rast a zamestnanosť. Stále vidíme dedičstvo hospodárskej a finančnej krízy, a to aj na trhu práce, a na to, aby sa jej dôsledky mohli zasa vstrebať, bude nevyhnutne potrebný určitý čas. Komisia na viacerých frontoch uskutočňuje iniciatívy zamerané nielen na podporu fiškálnej udržateľnosti, ale aj na odstránenie prekážok pre rast a zamestnanosť, ako sa uvádza v ročnom prieskume rastu na rok 2013 ([1]). Komisia okrem iného vyzvala na realizáciu diferencovanej fiškálnej konsolidácie zameranej na rast, ako aj na podporu rastu a konkurencie schopnosti, riešenie otázok nezamestnanosti a sociálnych dôsledkov krízy.

Po prijatí balíka opatrení v oblasti zamestnanosti ([2]) Komisia odporučila členským štátom opatrenia týkajúce sa tvorby pracovných miest, zručností a dobudovania trhu práce EÚ. V balíku opatrení v oblasti zamestnanosti mladých ľudí ([3]) Komisia navrhla systém záruk pre mladých, ktorý teraz získal oporu v podobe iniciatívy na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí. V balíku o sociálnych investíciách ([4]) boli členské štáty vyzvané, aby prostriedky vynakladali účinnejšie a efektívnejšie na zabezpečenie primeranej a udržateľnej sociálnej ochrany.

Prostredníctvom európskeho semestra sa presadzujú štrukturálne reformy na odstránenie prekážok rastu a riešenie problémov na trhu práce a v oblasti sociálnej politiky. Komisia posúdi opatrenia členských štátov na podporu rastu a zamestnanosti a navrhne odporúčania pre tvorbu politík. Bude podávať správy o pokroku dosiahnutom pri plnení cieľov stratégie Európa 2020.

Viacročný finančný rámec bude predstavovať významný príspevok k úsiliu členských štátov o splnenie cieľov stratégie Európa 2020. Komisia navrhla, aby sa minimálny podiel vo výške 25 % rozpočtu určeného na politiku súdržnosti vyhradil pre Európsky sociálny fond.

([1]) COM(2012) 750 z 28. novembra 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 173 z 18. apríla 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 727 – 728 – 729 z 5. decembra 2012.
([4]) COM(2013) 144 z 12. marca 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003877/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Record high unemployment in the European Union

According to the latest surveys, unemployment in the eurozone has risen to a record high of 12%. The economic crisis and the related policy of austerity measures make the situation even worse. It is as if there was no strategy or effort to combine long-term fiscal responsibility with investment in growth and jobs.

Does the Commission have the will to take concrete steps towards finding alternatives that might be beneficial and might contribute to an economically sensible and socially balanced policy aimed at reducing debt and lowering the high unemployment rate?

Question for written answer E-004180/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Euro area — unemployment

Given that:

— The Commission's report on the EU employment and social situation states that 'The unemployment rate gap between the south/periphery and the north of the euro area reached an unprecedented 10 percentage points in 2012';

— The same report also mentions that 'Tightening of public budgets has adversely affected employment both directly through reduced public sector employment and indirectly through lower aggregate macroeconomic demand';

What measures does the Commission think it could take to reverse this situation?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

Sound public finances are not an alternative but rather a pre-requisite for sustainable growth and employment. We still observe the legacy — including in labour markets — of an economic and financial crisis and its effects inevitably take time to be re-absorbed. The Commission puts in place initiatives on different fronts, aiming not only to support fiscal sustainability but also to eliminate obstacles to growth and employment, as outlined in the 2013 Annual Growth Survey ([1]). The Commission called, among others, for pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; promoting growth and competitiveness; tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis.

Following the adoption of the Employment Package ([2]), the Commission has advised Member States on measures related to job creation, skills and completion of the EU labour market. In the Youth Employment Package ([3]), the Commission proposed the Youth Guarantee, supported now by the Youth Employment Initiative. The Social Investment Package ([4]) invited Member States to spend more effectively and efficiently to ensure adequate and sustainable social protection.

Through the European Semester, structural reforms are promoted to tackle bottlenecks to growth and address challenges in labour markets and social policy. The Commission will assess Member States' measures to boost growth and jobs and propose policy recommendations. It will report on the progress towards the Europe 2020 targets.

([1]) COM(2012) 750 of 28 November 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 173 of 18 April 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 5 December 2012.
([4]) COM(2013) 144 of 12 March 2013.

The Multiannual Financial Framework will represent a substantial contribution to Member States' efforts to deliver on Europe 2020. The Commission proposed that a minimum share of 25% of the budget allocated to the Cohesion policy was dedicated to the European Social Fund.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003908/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Frankreichs Neuverschuldung 2013

Frankreich hat jetzt das von der EU vorgegebene Ziel, die Neuverschuldung 2013 auf 3,0 % zu senken, aufgegeben und will sich dieses Ziel für 2014 setzen.

Wie schätzt die Kommission angesichts der momentanen Entwicklungen in Frankreich und im Euro-Raum die möglichen Auswirkungen dieser Entscheidung Frankreichs auf den Euro-Raum ein?

Könnte es hier einen weiteren „Rettungsschirm"-Kandidaten geben?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Die Wirtschafts- und Haushaltsentwicklung in Frankreich wird von der Kommission kontinuierlich und sorgfältig überwacht. Frankreich hat seit Beginn der Krise mehrere Maßnahmen umgesetzt, um strukturelle und budgetäre Herausforderungen anzugehen. So kann das Land seit 2010 auch eine deutliche strukturelle Konsolidierung um durchschnittlich rund 1 Prozentpunkt des BIP pro Jahr vorweisen und erfüllt damit die Vorgaben der im Rahmen des Defizitverfahrens abgegebenen Empfehlung des Rates.

Unter den derzeitigen wirtschaftlichen Bedingungen wird dieses Anpassungstempo jedoch nicht ausreichen, um das nominale Defizit im Jahr 2013 unter 3 % des BIP zu senken. Der Stabilitäts- und Wachstumspakt bietet in diesem Fall die Möglichkeit, die Frist für die Korrektur des übermäßigen Defizits zu verlängern. Die Gewährung einer solchen Fristverlängerung für Frankreich erscheint auch aufgrund der schwachen Wachstumsaussichten sowohl in Frankreich als auch im Euroraum gerechtfertigt. Die Kommission plant, bis Ende Mai auf der Grundlage ihrer Frühjahrsprognose eine Empfehlung für eine Empfehlung des Rates im Rahmen des Defizitverfahrens gegen Frankreich vorzulegen.

Die Kommission bleibt zuversichtlich, dass das Land die nötigen Reformen weiter umsetzt, und schließt die Notwendigkeit einer Rettungsaktion für Frankreich deshalb kategorisch aus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003908/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: New borrowing by France in 2013

France has now abandoned the goal specified by the EU of reducing new borrowing in 2013 to 3.0% and wishes to set this as its goal for 2014.

In view of the current developments in France and the euro area, what potential impact does the Commission believe this decision by France could have on the euro area?

Could we have another candidate for a 'rescue package' here?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

Economic and budgetary developments in France are subject to continued and close monitoring by the Commission. Since the beginning of the crisis France has implemented measures to address its structural and budgetary challenges. In particular, France has been implementing a sizeable structural effort since 2010, averaging around 1 pp. of GDP per year, which is in line with the effort recommended by the Council in the context of the excessive deficit procedure.

However, under the current economic conditions, this sustained adjustment pace will not be sufficient to bring the nominal deficit below 3% of GDP in 2013. In such circumstances, the Stability and Growth Pact allows a postponement of the deadline for correcting the excessive deficit. Granting extra time to France appears also warranted in light of the weak growth prospects both in France and in the euro area. On the basis of the spring economic forecast, the Commission intends to present a recommendation for a Council Recommendation concerning the French excessive deficit procedure by the end of May.

The Commission remains confident that the country will keep on implementing the necessary reforms and therefore excludes categorically that France may need a bailout programme.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003909/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Ostafrikanische Flüchtlinge im Jemen

Im vergangenen Jahr wurden mehr als 100 000 Flüchtlinge, vorwiegend Äthiopier und Somalis, auf die Arabische Halbinsel geschleppt.

Diese Menschen flüchten vor politischer Verfolgung in ihrem Land, Armut und — natürlich — auch Dürre. Auf ihrer Flucht erfahren gerade junge Mädchen und Frauen einen unvorstellbaren Albtraum an mehrfachen Vergewaltigungen und schweren Misshandlungen.

1. Es wird davon ausgegangen, dass der Hohen Vertreterin diese katastrophalen humanitären Missstände bekannt sind. Welche Maßnahmen/Unterstützungen hat sie hier bereits herbeigeführt, um dieses unmenschliche Leid der Flüchtlinge zu lindern beziehungsweise diese Misshandlungen an den Frauen zu verhindern?

2. Ist der Hohen Vertreterin bekannt, ob diese misshandelten Frauen in den Flüchtlingscamps nicht nur Sicherheit, sondern auch wenigstens entsprechende psychologische Betreuung zur Aufarbeitung der schrecklichen Ereignisse erhalten?

(Mit der Bitte um ausführliche Erläuterungen.)

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juni 2013)

Der EU ist die katastrophale Lage bekannt, in der sich eine hohe Anzahl von Migranten wiederfindet, die das Meer zwischen dem Horn von Afrika und Jemen überqueren.

Die somalischen Migranten werden als Flüchtlinge „prima facie" anerkannt und erhalten entsprechenden Schutz, vor allem durch das Hochkommissariat der Vereinten Nationen für Flüchtlinge (UNHCR), das von der EU aus ihrem Haushalt für humanitäre Hilfe finanziell unterstützt wird. Das betreffende Programm umfasst medizinische Versorgung, rechtliche Unterstützung und psychosoziale Betreuung für Opfer geschlechtsspezifischer Gewalt. Dieser Ansatz wird mit anderen in Jemen tätigen Gebern und Organisationen eng abgestimmt.

Äthiopier, die den größten Teil der Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge ausmachen, haben in Jemen nicht dieselben Rechte. Sie durchqueren Jemen auf dem Weg nach Saudi-Arabien oder in die Golfstaaten. Diese Gruppe ist besonders stark von Not und Kriminalität betroffen. Die Hilfsorganisationen leisten Unterstützung in Form von Nahrungsmitteln und medizinischer Versorgung, während die bedürftigsten Gruppen unter den Neuankömmlingen (vor allem Frauen und Kinder) Schutz und Unterstützung durch die Bereitstellung von Unterkünften sowie durch medizinische Versorgung und psychosoziale Betreuung erhalten, vor allem von der Internationalen Organisation für Migration (IOM), die ebenfalls Finanzmittel von der EU erhält.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003909/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — East African refugees in Yemen

Last year more than 100 000 refugees, mainly from Ethiopia and Somalia, were taken to the Arabian Peninsula.

These people were fleeing political persecution in their country, poverty and — of course — also drought. During their journey, young girls and women in particular experience an unimaginable nightmare, being repeatedly raped and seriously ill-treated.

1. I assume the High Representative is aware of this appalling humanitarian situation. What steps/assistance has she already put in place here to relieve the inhuman suffering of the refugees or to prevent this ill-treatment of women?

2. Does the High Representative know whether, in the refugee camps, these ill-treated women are provided not only with safety, but also at least with appropriate psychological support to enable them to come to terms with these horrific events?

(Please provide detailed information.)

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

The EU is aware of the dire situation that large numbers of the migrants crossing the sea to Yemen from the Horn of Africa find themselves in.

Somali migrants are recognised as 'prima facie refugees' and receive protection accordingly, notably through UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees), financially supported by EU through the humanitarian aid budget. This programme includes medical care, legal assistance and psychosocial counselling for victims of gender violence. This approach is closely coordinated with other donors and organisations active in Yemen.

The Ethiopians, who constitute the bulk of the economic migrants, do not have the same rights in Yemen. They use Yemen as a country of transit to Saudi Arabia or the Gulf States. This group is particularly exposed to hardship and crime. Aid agencies provide some support in the form of food and medical care, while the most vulnerable groups among the new arrivals (particularly women and children) receive protection and support in the form of shelter, medical care and psychosocial counselling, notably through IOM (International Organisation for Migration) also funded by the EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003921/13
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(8 avril 2013)

Objet: Site Natura 2000 de Kaliakra

La Commission n'a de cesse de répéter son engagement à assurer la mise en œuvre pleine et entière du droit de l'environnement de l'UE. La Commission avait ouvert, dès novembre 2008, une procédure d'infraction à l'encontre de la Bulgarie pour mauvaise application des directives relatives aux oiseaux et aux habitats naturels dans les zones importantes pour la conservation des oiseaux (ZICO) et dans les zones de protection spéciale (ZPS) de Kaliakra. Or, pas moins de quatre ans plus tard, et plus de six ans après l'adhésion de la Bulgarie à l'Union européenne, la ZICO n'a pas encore été pleinement désignée, et les dégâts causés sur le site n'ont pas encore été réparés.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer si elle compte saisir la Cour de justice de cette affaire avant l'adhésion de la Croatie à l'Union, prévue dans le courant de l'année, en vue de garantir la pleine désignation de la ZICO de Kaliakra, le déplacement les parcs éoliens construits illégalement sur le site Natura 2000 de Kaliakra, et la restauration des habitats endommagés par ces constructions? En agissant de la sorte, la Commission renforcerait l' engagement qu'elle a pris de traduire la mise en œuvre du droit dans l'action.

Réponse commune donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2013)

La Commission confirme qu'une procédure d'infraction est ouverte concernant les questions soulevées par l'Honorable Parlementaire et qu'elle a émis un avis motivé le 22 juin 2012.

La Commission décidera des prochaines étapes sous peu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003911/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question on the Kaliakra peninsula case in Bulgaria

In its answers to my written questions E-000104/2011 and E-6100/2010, and to the Question Time Question H-000150/2011 concerning implementation of the birds and habitats directives in Bulgaria, and the ongoing damage to the Kaliakra Important Bird Areas (IBA) and Special Protection Areas (SPA), the Commission stated that it needed time to check and analyse large amounts of technical information.

This was two years ago. Could the Commission advise whether the Bulgarian authorities, who have now had more than four years to correct the situation, have removed the wind turbines from Kaliakra and made good the damage done to the protected habitats on this site?

If not, could the Commission advise whether it intends to take any action to ensure that the Kaliakra IBA is fully designated, and that the SPA is restored and protected? If so, by when?

Question for written answer E-003921/13
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Kaliakra Natura 2000 site

The Commission has repeatedly stated that it is committed to securing full implementation of EU environmental law. The Commission initiated infringement proceedings against Bulgaria for poor application of the birds and habitats directives in relation to the Kaliakra Important Bird Areas (IBA) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) as long ago as November 2008, yet more than four years later, and more than six years after Bulgaria's accession to the EU, the IBA has still not been fully designated and the damage done to the site has not been repaired.

Could the Commission advise whether it plans to refer this case to the European Court of Justice before Croatia's accession to the EU later this year, in order to secure full designation of the Kaliakra IBA; to remove illegally constructed wind farms from the Kaliakra Natura 2000 site; to restore the habitats damaged as a result of these actions, and by doing so, back up its commitment to implementation through action?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission confirms that it has an infringement procedure open on the issues raised by the Honourable Member and that it issued a Reasoned Opinion on 22 June 2012.

The Commission will decide on the next steps shortly.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003912/13
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(8 avril 2013)

Objet: Collagène prélevé sur des condamnés à mort

Le 13 septembre 2005, le quotidien anglais The Guardian livrait une enquête stupéfiante en matière d'industrie cosmétique qui révélait qu'une entreprise chinoise prélevait du collagène sur les corps de condamnés à mort exécutés et sur des fœtus pour fabriquer des produits de beauté vendus en Grande-Bretagne et probablement dans le reste de l'Union. Repris depuis lors régulièrement par la presse, cet article faisait part des préoccupations des autorités britanniques qui entendaient saisir la Commission européenne de cette question. Une question orale posée le 27 octobre 2005 (H-0772/2005) demandait à ce que la Commission propose une règlementation permettant d'encadrer les traitements cosmétiques afin de prévenir de tels abus. Dans sa réponse, la Commission affirmait qu'elle allait se saisir de cette question et que la commercialisation du collagène humain n'était pas dépourvue de cadre juridique puisqu'elle relevait de la directive (2004/23/CE) sur les tissus et les cellules, qu'elle interdisait leur usage pour fabriquer des produits cosmétiques.

Enfin la Commission faisait valoir qu'il revenait aux États membres de veiller:

— à ce que les importations de tissus et cellules humains en provenance de pays tiers soient effectuées par des établissements de tissus accrédités à cette fin;

— à ce que ces produits satisfassent à des normes de qualité et de sécurité équivalentes à celles qui sont établies par la directive et

— à ce que l'obtention de tissus ou de cellules humains satisfasse aux exigences de consentement ou d'autorisation en vigueur dans l'État membre concerné.

1. Depuis 2005, la Commission s'est-elle saisie de manière plus approfondie de cette question? Le cas échéant, quelles ont été ses conclusions?

2. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention d'interdire explicitement la commercialisation de collagène humain utilisé pour des produits cosmétiques?

3. Pourquoi, après avoir rappelé l'interdiction de principe d'une telle commercialisation, la Commission a-t-elle rappelé les conditions de commercialisation des tissus et cellules humains (accréditation, sécurité et consentement du donneur) et affirmé qu'il revenait aux États membres de prendre leurs responsabilités en la matière?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(30 mai 2013)

La Commission partage les préoccupations de l'auteur de la question quant à la suspicion d'utilisation de collagène humain dans la préparation de certains produits vendus dans l'Union européenne. La directive 76/768/CEE ([1]) interdit depuis 1995 l'utilisation de tissus, de cellules ou de produits d'origine humaine ([2]), y compris de collagène, dans les produits cosmétiques. Toutefois, les «combleurs collagène» — seringues préremplies de collagène — ne répondent pas à la définition de «produit cosmétique» et ne relèvent donc pas du champ d'application de ladite directive.

La directive 2004/23/CE ([3]) s'applique aux tissus et cellules humains destinés à des applications humaines et aux produits manufacturés dérivés de tissus et cellules humains et destinés à des applications humaines, dont elle régit les importations. En 2005, la Commission a adopté des exigences techniques précises relatives au don, à l'obtention et au contrôle de ces tissus et cellules et, en particulier, elle a défini les conditions à respecter s'agissant du consentement du donneur, de l'identification et de l'évaluation au sens de la directive 2006/17/CE de la Commission ([4]).

([1]) Directive du Conseil du 27 juillet 1976 concernant le rapprochement des législations des États membres relatives aux produits cosmétiques 76/768/CEE (JO L 262 du 27.9.1976, p. 169), qui sera remplacé par le règlement (CE) n° 1223/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 30 novembre 2009 (JO L 342 du 22.12.2009, p. 59) le 11 juillet 2013.
([2]) Voir point 416 de l'annexe II de la directive 76/768/CEE.
([3]) JO L 102 du 7.4.2004, p. 48.
([4]) JO L 38 du 9.2.2006, p. 40.

Récemment, à l'occasion de la révision de la législation relative aux dispositifs médicaux ([5]), la Commission a proposé de réglementer certains produits fabriqués à partir de cellules ou de tissus humains non viables qui ont fait l'objet d'une manipulation substantielle et qui ne sont pas visés par le règlement (CE) n° 1394/2007 concernant les médicaments de thérapie innovante ([6]), de manière à étendre à ces seringues remplies de collagène le champ d'application de la législation de l'UE relative aux dispositifs médicaux.

([5]) COM(2012) 542 final.
([6]) JO L 324 du 10.12.2007, p. 121.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003912/13
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Collagen removed from persons sentenced to death

On 13 September 2005, the English daily newspaper *The Guardian* published an alarming investigation into the cosmetics industry which revealed that a Chinese company was taking collagen from persons who had been sentenced to death and executed and from foetuses in order to manufacture beauty products sold in Great Britain and probably in the rest of the Union. The British authorities expressed their concern about this article, which has been regularly syndicated in the press since, and their intention to refer the question to the European Commission. An oral question asked on 27 October 2005 (H-0772/2005) called on the Commission to propose regulations that would provide a framework for cosmetic treatments in order to prevent such abuse. In its reply, the Commission confirmed that it intended to address this question and that the marketing of human collagen was not bereft of all legal framework, because it came under Directive 2004/23/EC on tissues and cells, which prohibited their use for the preparation of cosmetic products.

Finally, the Commission emphasised that it was up to the Member States to ensure:

— that human tissues and cells from third countries were imported by tissue establishments accredited for that purpose;

— that these products complied with quality and security standards equivalent to those laid down in the directive and

— that the human tissues or cells obtained satisfied consent or authorisation requirements in force in the Member State concerned.

1. Has the Commission addressed this question in greater depth since 2005? If so, what conclusions has it drawn?

2. Does the Commission intend to explicitly prohibit the marketing of human collagen used for the preparation of cosmetic products?

3. Why, having reiterated the ban in principle on such marketing, did the Commission reiterate the marketing conditions for human tissue and cells (accreditation, security and donor consent) and affirm that it was up to the Member States to assume their responsibilities in the matter?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern on the suspected use of human collagen in the preparation of certain products sold within the European Union. Directive 76/768/EEC ([1]) has prohibited the use of tissues, cells or products of human origin ([2]), including collagen, in cosmetics products since 1995. However, syringes pre-filled with collagen, so-called 'collagen filler', do not meet the definition of a 'cosmetic product' and therefore do not fall within the scope of this directive.

Directive 2004/23/EC ([3]) applies to human tissues and cells intended for human applications and to manufactured products derived from human tissues and cells intended for human applications. This directive regulates the import of human tissues and cells. Since 2005, the Commission has adopted detailed technical requirements on the donation, procurement and testing of human tissues and cells and, in particular, the conditions to be met in terms of donor consent, identification and evaluation in the form of Commission Directive 2006/17/EC ([4]).

([1]) Council Directive of 27 July 1976 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products 76/768/EEC (OJ L 262, 27.9.1976, p. 169), which will be replaced by Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 (OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59) on 11 July 2013.
([2]) See entry 416 of Annex II to Directive 76/768/EEC.
([3]) OJ L 102 7.4.2004, p. 48.
([4]) OJ L 38 9.2.2006, p. 40.

Lastly, in the context of the revision of the medical devices legislation ([5]), the Commission has proposed to regulate certain products manufactured utilising non-viable human tissues or cells that have undergone substantial manipulation and are not covered by Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 on advanced therapy medicinal products ([6]) which would thus bring such collagen-filled syringes within the scope of EU medical devices legislation.

([5]) COM(2012) 542 final.
([6]) OJ L 324, 10.12.2007, p. 121.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003913/13
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(8 avril 2013)

Objet: Perturbateurs endocriniens

L'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS) et le programme des Nations unies pour l'environnement (PNUE) ont récemment pointé du doigt les perturbateurs endocriniens. Soupçonnés d'avoir des conséquences néfastes sur la fertilité, sur les milieux naturels ou encore de faire partie des facteurs causant des troubles neurocomportementaux, ils sont désormais perçus comme une menace mondiale pour la santé publique. Le 14 mars 2013, le Parlement européen a également pris position en adoptant le rapport d'initiative relatif à la protection de la santé publique contre les perturbateurs endocriniens qui demande à ce que la Commission européenne se saisisse rapidement du sujet, notamment par la voie d'une révision de sa stratégie sur les perturbateurs endocriniens. Le 2 avril 2013, l'association de consommateurs «UFC que choisir» a publié une enquête alarmante sur les perturbateurs endocriniens révélant les résultats des tests réalisés sur 66 produits cosmétiques et d'hygiène de la grande distribution.

À des fins de protection des consommateurs, j'adresse les questions suivantes à la Commission:

1. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de renforcer le cadre règlementaire, en application du principe de précaution, via la prise en compte de l'effet cocktail des molécules dans l'évaluation de la toxicité des produits? Le cas échéant, dans quels délais?

2. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention d'organiser des recherches indépendantes sur l'impact de ces molécules sur la santé humaine et sur l'environnement?

3. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de renforcer le cadre règlementaire en ce qui concerne l'obligation d'information des professionnels en les obligeant à réaliser des étiquetages complets sur la composition réelle de leurs produits et à retirer de leurs formulations les molécules étant des perturbateurs endocriniens avérés ou suspectés?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(27 juin 2013)

La question des «effets cocktail» de molécules (notamment des perturbateurs endocriniens) est évoquée dans la communication de la Commission sur les effets combinés des produits chimiques ([1]). Conformément à la communication, la Commission a établi un groupe de travail *ad hoc* constitué des services et agences concernés afin de renforcer la coordination dans l'ensemble de la législation et de promouvoir l'évaluation intégrée des mélanges prioritaires. Le groupe travaille actuellement sur l'identification des mélanges prioritaires devant faire l'objet d'une évaluation intégrée dans le cadre de la législation en vigueur.

Depuis l'adoption, en 1999, de la stratégie communautaire relative aux perturbateurs endocriniens ([2]), 38 projets collaboratifs concernant la perturbation endocrinienne ont été financés au titre des programmes-cadres, à hauteur de plus de 110 millions d'euros de fonds de l'UE. La proposition de la Commission relative au programme-cadre «Horizon 2020» ([3]) prévoit de poursuivre le soutien en faveur de l'étude des effets des substances chimiques sur la santé humaine ([4]), notamment des perturbateurs endocriniens.. Il n'est toutefois pas possible de prévoir l'affectation des fonds en faveur de ce domaine de la recherche à ce stade de la procédure législative.

([1]) COM(2012) 252.
([2]) COM(1999) 706.
([3]) Programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation (2014-2020).
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:en:PDF

REACH ([5]), le règlement relatif aux produits phytopharmaceutiques ([6]), et le règlement relatif aux produits biocides ([7]) exigent déjà, dans certaines conditions, la suppression progressive des perturbateurs endocriniens. En outre, le règlement relatif aux produits cosmétiques ([8]) prévoit que la Commission réexamine ce règlement en ce qui concerne les perturbateurs endocriniens, une fois que des critères permettant d'identifier les perturbateurs endocriniens seront disponibles, ou au plus tard en janvier 2015. L'évaluation et la révision en cours de la stratégie concernant les perturbateurs endocriniens et l'élaboration de critères relatifs à l'identification des perturbateurs endocriniens visent à rendre ces exigences opérationnelles.

([5]) Règlement (CE) n° 1907/2006 concernant l'enregistrement, l'évaluation et l'autorisation des substances chimiques.
([6]) Règlement (CE) n° 91/1107/CEE concernant la mise sur le marché des produits phytopharmaceutiques.
([7]) Règlement (CE) n° 528/2012 concernant la mise à disposition sur le marché et l'utilisation des produits biocides.
([8]) Règlement (CE) n° 1223/2009 relatif aux produits cosmétiques.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003913/13
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Endocrine disrupters

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recently highlighted the problem of endocrine disrupters. Suspected of having harmful effects on fertility and the natural environment and even of being one of the factors that causes neurobehavioural problems, they are now seen as a global threat to public health. On 14 March 2013, the European Parliament took a stand by adopting an own initiative report on the protection of public health from endocrine disrupters, in which it calls on the European Commission to take prompt action to address the matter, basically by revising its strategy on endocrine disrupters. On 2 April 2013, the consumer association UFC Que Choisir published an alarming survey on endocrine disrupters containing the results of tests carried out on 66 widely-used cosmetic and hygiene products.

For the purpose of consumer protection, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it intend to strengthen the regulatory framework, in applying the precautionary principle, by taking account of the cocktail effect of molecules when evaluating the toxicity of products? If so, by when?

2. Does the Commission intend to organise independent research into the impact of these molecules on human health and on the environment?

3. Does the Commission intend to strengthen the regulatory framework governing the duty of information of professionals, by requiring them to provide full labelling of the real composition of their products and to remove molecules which are proven or suspected endocrine disrupters from their formulae?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2013)

The issue of cocktail effects of molecules (including of endocrine disruptors) is addressed in the Commission Communication on the combination effects of chemicals ([1]). In line with the communication, the Commission established an ad hoc working group of relevant services and Agencies to strengthen coordination across the legislation and to promote the integrated assessment of priority mixtures. The group is currently working on the identification of priority mixtures to be subject to integrated assessment within the frame of existing legislation.

Since the adoption of the Community Strategy for Endocrine Disruptors ([2]) in 1999, 38 collaborative projects related to endocrine disruption have been funded under Framework Programmes, receiving over 110 million euro from the EU. The Commission proposal for Horizon 2020 ([3]), envisages further support for studying impact of chemicals on human health ([4]), which includes also endocrine disruptors.. However, at this stage of the legislative process, it is not possible to predict the possible allocation of funds to this area.

REACH ([5]), the Plant Protection Products Regulation ([6]) and the Biocidal Product Regulation ([7]) already require under certain conditions the phasing out of endocrine disruptors. Furthermore, the Cosmetic Products Regulation ([8]) requires the Commission to review this regulation with regard to endocrine disruptors, when criteria for identifying endocrine disruptors are available, or at the latest by January 2015. The ongoing review and revision of the Endocrine Strategy and the development of criteria for identification of endocrine disruptors intend to make these requirements operational.

([1]) COM(2012) 252.
([2]) COM(1999) 706.
([3]) The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020).
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:en:PDF.
([5]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals.
([6]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market.
([7]) Regulation (EC) No 528/2012 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products.
([8]) Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 on cosmetic products.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003915/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(8 april 2013)

Betreft: Istanbul als smokkelnest voor emigranten naar de EU (vervolgvraag)

In antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-000467/2013 schrijft de Commissie: „De Europese Commissie heeft geen enkele overeenkomst gesloten met de Turkse regering die erop is gericht, op te treden tegen mensensmokkelaars, maar hoopt zo snel mogelijk de overnameovereenkomst namens de Europese Unie te tekenen. […] Turkije ontvangt financiële steun via het instrument voor pretoetredingssteun (IPA), onder meer voor de omschakeling en institutionele opbouw op het gebied van justitie en binnenlandse zaken. In het kader van de financiële vooruitzichten 2007-2013 is ongeveer 272 miljoen euro toegewezen aan 32 projecten op dit gebied."

In antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-002733/2012 schrijft de Commissie echter: „Een intensievere samenwerking met Turkije zou aanzienlijk helpen om de illegale migratie een halt toe te roepen. De Commissie bevordert bijgevolg de dialoog met Turkije om de concrete samenwerking te versterken, met name door de bestrijding van criminele netwerken die zich bezighouden met de smokkel van illegale migranten."

1. Heeft de Commissie op enigerlei wijze nu wel of niet een dialoog met Turkije gehad? Zo ja, welke resultaten heeft deze dialoog gehad, en waarom heeft deze dialoog niet tot afspraken met Turkije geleid? Zo neen, waarom heeft de Commissie een dergelijke dialoog dan wel in het vooruitzicht gesteld?

2. Waarom is er geld toegezegd zonder resultaatverplichting?

In antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-001128/2011 schrijft de Commissie bovendien: „Turkije en de Europese Unie moeten meer inspanningen leveren om illegale migratie naar de EU aan te pakken en de overname van illegale migranten moet een belangrijk onderdeel worden van een dergelijke samenwerking."

3. Is de Commissie voornemens voorts nog iets te doen aan het door haarzelf geconstateerde feit dat Turkije een belangrijk doorvoerland voor illegale immigratie is, óf blijft de Commissie vertrouwen op een land waarmee zij geen enkele overeenkomst heeft weten te sluiten ondanks miljoenenbetalingen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(11 juni 2013)

De Commissie benut elke gelegenheid om illegale migratie van Turkije naar de EU met de Turkse autoriteiten te bespreken en om hen aan te sporen maatregelen te nemen om dit fenomeen te voorkomen, of ten minste de gevolgen ervan aan te pakken. Bovendien heeft op 20 maart 2012 in Ankara een aan illegale migratie gewijde ad-hocvergadering plaatsgevonden.

De dialoog tussen de Commissie en de Turkse autoriteiten over illegale migratie heeft geleid tot een betere samenwerking tussen Turkije en de EU in dit opzicht. Het memorandum van overeenstemming met Frontex is in mei 2012 ondertekend en de overnameovereenkomst tussen de EU en Turkije is in juni 2012 geparafeerd. De Turkse autoriteiten hebben hun inspanningen om illegale migratie te bestrijden, verhoogd. Deze inspanningen hebben bijgedragen tot een sterke daling van het aantal illegale grensoversteken van de Griekse landgrens.

De Commissie heeft de Turkse autoriteiten voorgesteld om een meer structurele dialoog over migratie, mobiliteit en veiligheidskwesties aan te gaan en ziet ernaar uit om via de IPA-fondsen de uitvoering van maatregelen te steunen die zouden bijdragen tot een sterkere samenwerking tussen de EU en Turkije in deze aangelegenheden, en tot de opbouw van de capaciteit van Turkije.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003915/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Istanbul as the smuggler capital for EU-bound migrants (follow-up question)

In response to Written Question E-000467/2013, the Commission writes: 'The European Commission has not concluded with the Turkish government any agreement aimed at combating the criminals engaged in human smuggling, but looks forward to sign as soon as possible, on behalf, of the European Union, the readmission agreement. […] Turkey receives financial support via the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), including for transition assistance and institution building in the area of Justice and Home Affairs. For the 2007-2013 framework an approximate allocation of EUR 272 million have been allocated for 32 projects in this area.'

However, in response to Written Question E-002733/2012 the Commission writes: 'A dialogue and reinforced cooperation with Turkey could seriously help to tackle irregular migration. The Commission is therefore promoting such a dialogue that is also aimed at identifying ways to strengthen concrete cooperation, including by combating criminal networks that are behind the smuggling of irregular migrants.'

1. Has the Commission conducted any kind of dialogue with Turkey? If so, what results has this dialogue produced, and why has it not led to agreements with Turkey? If not, why did the Commission then envisage such a dialogue?

2. Why was money pledged without an obligation to produce a result?

The Commission writes in response to Written Question E-001128/2011: 'Turkey and the European Union should step up their efforts to tackle irregular migration coming to the EU and that the readmission of irregular migrants is to be an important part of such cooperation.'

3. Does the Commission intend to do anything more about the fact that, as it has stated itself, Turkey is a major transit country for illegal immigrants, or will the Commission continue to trust a country with which it has failed to reach a single agreement despite paying it millions of euros?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission takes any available opportunity to discuss with Turkish authorities irregular migration reaching the EU from Turkey and to encourage them to take measures to prevent its phenomenon or at least address its consequences. Furthermore, an ad-hoc meeting specifically destined to discuss irregular migration took place on 20 March 2012 in Ankara.

The dialogue between the Commission and Turkish authorities on irregular migration lead the latter to enhance their cooperation with the EU in this matter. The Memorandum of Understanding with Frontex was signed in May 2012 and the EU-Turkey readmission agreement initialled in June 2012. The Turkish authorities have also increased their efforts to combat irregular migration, efforts that have contributed to the serious decrease of unauthorised border crossings of the Greek land border.

The Commission has proposed to Turkish authorities to hold a dialogue on migration, mobility and security matters in a more structured manner and looks forward to assist through the IPA funds the implementation of actions which would contribute to further strengthen the EU-Turkey cooperation in these matters as well as to build up the capacities of Turkey.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003916/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(8 april 2013)

Betreft: Shariarechtbanken

Het televisieprogramma „BBC Panorama" heeft met een verborgen camera vastgelegd hoe shariarechtbanken in Groot-Brittannië functioneren: een vrouw vertelt dat zij door haar echtgenoot geregeld wordt geslagen én dat zij daarvan aangifte wil doen bij de politie. De shariarechter stelt dat het inschakelen van de politie „de laatste optie" zou zijn. Het zou volgens hem beter zijn wanneer de vrouw samen met haar man voor de shariarechtbank zou verschijnen.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het beeldmateriaal „Secret filming at Sharia council shows women at risk" ([1])? Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie dit?

2. Hoe staat de Commissie tegenover shariarechtspraak in de EU? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat shariarechtspraak illegaal is in de EU? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat shariarechtspraak in strijd is met artikel 2 VEU? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat uit het beeldmateriaal overduidelijk blijkt dat de shariarechtspraak de nationale wetgeving resp. de Europese wetgeving ondermijnt en dat dat kwalijk is? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het verwerpelijk is als een shariarechter een vrouw, die door haar echtgenoot geregeld wordt geslagen, ervan weerhoudt naar de politie te stappen? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat dit het probleem van geweld jegens islamitische vrouwen niet oplost maar juist in de hand werkt? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(14 juni 2013)

De Commissie is niet bekend met de beelden die door het televisieprogramma „Panorama" van de BBC zijn gemaakt.

De Commissie herinnert eraan dat „sharia" een algemeen concept is dat verschillende juridische aspecten omvat en op verschillende manieren wordt geïnterpreteerd ([2]). De Commissie herinnert er eveneens aan dat alle EU-wetgeving in overeenstemming moet zijn met het Handvest van de grondvesten van de Europese Unie ([3]).

De Commissie streeft naar een krachtige beleidsaanpak om alle vormen van geweld tegen vrouwen te bestrijden, zoals in het programma van Stockholm en de Strategie voor de gelijkheid van vrouwen en mannen (2010-2015) ([4]) is uiteengezet De Commissie zet zich in voor de zelfbeschikking van vrouwen, bewustmaking, het bevorderen van de uitwisseling van goede praktijken, een betere gegevensverzameling en financiële steun aan transnationale projecten via het Daphne III-programma.

De Commissie maakt volledig gebruik van de EU-bevoegdheden om doeltreffende maatregelen op het gebied van burgerlijk recht en strafrecht te nemen om de lidstaten te ondersteunen bij de uitroeiing van geweld tegen vrouwen.

Richtlijn 2012/29/EU waarin minimumnormen voor de rechten en de bescherming van slachtoffers van misdrijven en voor slachtofferhulp zijn vastgesteld (termijn voor omzetting 16 november 2015), zal een aanzienlijke meerwaarde bieden ten opzichte van het huidige wettelijke kader uit hoofde van het kaderbesluit inzake de status van het slachtoffer in de strafprocedure. Het recht op steun is een van de belangrijkste rechten in deze richtlijn. Ze is erop gericht slachtoffers en hun familieleden kosteloos toegang te verschaffen tot ondersteuningsdiensten die op vertrouwelijke basis informatie en advies, emotionele en psychologische steun en praktische bijstand verlenen. Slachtoffers van strafbare feiten zouden zo snel mogelijk na de feiten steun moeten kunnen krijgen, ongeacht of de feiten zijn aangegeven of niet.

([1]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22046892.
([2]) Zie de antwoorden op de schriftelijke vragen E-009450/2011 en E-001463/2011.
([3]) COM(2010)573 definitief. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/intro/doc/com_2010_573_en.pdf
([4]) COM(2010) 491 definitief, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:nl:PDF .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003916/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Sharia Courts

The BBC television program, *Panorama,* secretly filmed how Sharia courts function in Great Britain: a woman tells a Sharia judge that her husband regularly hits her and that she wants to report this to the police. The judge says that involving the police should be 'the last resort'. It would be better, according to him, if the woman and her husband appeared before the Sharia court.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the video footage 'Secret filming at Sharia council shows women at risk' ([1])? What is the Commission's view of it?

2. What is the Commission's stand on Sharia law in the EU? Does the Commission agree that Sharia law is illegal in the EU? Does the Commission agree that Sharia law is in conflict with Article 2 of the TEU? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree that the footage clearly shows that Sharia law undermines national and European legislation and that that is wrong? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission agree that it is reprehensible that a Sharia judge should advise a woman regularly hit by her husband against going to the police? Does the Commission agree that this does not solve the problem of violence against Muslim women but just makes it worse? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the video footage filmed by the BBC television programme, Panorama.

The Commission recalls that 'Sharia' is a general concept that encompasses several legal aspects and is the subject of varying interpretations ([2]). The Commission also recalls that any EU legislation must comply with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([3]).

The Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women, as seen in the Stockholm Programme and the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015) ([4]). The Commission works for the empowerment of women, awareness raising, the promotion of exchanges of good practices, the improvement of data collection, and financial support for transnational projects through the Daphne III programme.

Making full use of EU competences, the Commission is also taking effective civil and criminal justice measures to support the Member states in eradicating violence against women.

Directive 2012/29/EU, which establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of the victims of crime (transposition deadline 16 November 2015), will bring significant value added compared to the current legal framework under the 2001 Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings. The right to support is one of the core rights in the directive. Its purpose is to ensure that victims, and their family members, have access to confidential and free of charge support services which provide information and advice, emotional and psychological support and practical assistance. Support should be available from the earliest possible moment after the commission of a crime irrespective of whether it has been reported.

([1]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22046892.
([2]) See response to Written Questions E-009450/2011 and E-001463/2011.
([3]) COM(2010)573 final. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/intro/doc/com_2010_573_en.pdf
([4]) COM(2010) 491 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003917/13
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Schienengüterverkehrskorridore und ihre Folgen

Die EU erklärt Schienenbestandsstrecken zu Hochleistungskorridoren für den Güterverkehr (P7_TA(2010)0203). Das hat Auswirkungen auf Mensch und Umwelt.

Durch welche rechtlichen Vorgaben schützt die EU im Gegenzug die Bevölkerung vor den Folgen dieser Entscheidung in Bezug auf Gesundheitsschädigung durch Lärm und Vernichtung von Vermögenswerten?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(3. Juni 2013)

1. In der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 913/2010 ([1]) werden die Hauptrouten von neun Güterverkehrskorridoren festgelegt. Darin werden keine Eisenbahnstrecken zu Hochleistungskorridoren für den Güterverkehr erklärt. Dieses Konzept existiert in den EU-Rechtsvorschriften nicht. Ziel der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 913/2010 ist eine bessere grenzübergreifende Koordinierung von Investitionen (Artikel 11). In der Verordnung sind weder Verpflichtungen für Investitionen enthalten noch werden Investitionen festgelegt. Sie wirkt sich somit nicht unmittelbar auf Eigentumsverhältnisse oder die Lärmsituation aus.

2. Folgende Legislativmaßnahmen betreffen Schienengüterverkehrslärm und Vermögenswerte:

— Gemäß der Richtlinie 2011/92/EU ([2]) müssen die Mitgliedstaaten gewährleisten, dass Projekte, bei denen mit erheblichen Auswirkungen auf die Umwelt zu rechnen ist, erst nach einer Prüfung der Umweltauswirkungen genehmigt werden. Diese Prüfung muss sich unter anderem auf durch den Betrieb des Projekts verursachte Geräuschemissionen sowie die Auswirkungen auf Bevölkerung und Sachgüter und die Wechselwirkungen zwischen diesen Faktoren erstrecken.

— Gemäß der Richtlinie 2002/49/EG ([3]) müssen die Mitgliedstaaten für wichtige Infrastrukturen einschließlich der Eisenbahn Lärmkarten und Aktionspläne ausarbeiten, um die Lärmbelastung in der Umgebung der in den Karten ermittelten Problempunkte zu verringern.

— Die Richtlinie 2012/34/EU ([4]) bietet die Möglichkeit, nach dem Lärmpegel der Wagen gestaffelte Trassenentgelte zu erheben.

— In der technischen Spezifikation für die Interoperabilität (TSI) „Lärm“, die derzeit überarbeitet wird, sind für neue Schienenfahrzeuge Lärmgrenzwerte festgelegt. Die Senkung der aktuellen Grenzwerte für neue Wagen und Lokomotiven wird in Betracht gezogen.

Zu beachten ist außerdem, dass auf Eisenbahnstrecken geplante Investitionen gemäß Artikel 345 AEUV den einschlägigen Bestimmungen des nationalen Eigentumsrechts unterliegen.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 913/2010 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 22. September 2010 zur Schaffung eines europäischen Schienennetzes für einen wettbewerbsfähigen Güterverkehr, ABl. L 276 vom 20.10.2010, S. 22-32.

([2]) Richtlinie 2011/92/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 13. Dezember 2011 über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei bestimmten öffentlichen und privaten Projekten, ABl. L 26 vom 28.1.2012, S. 1-21.

([3]) Richtlinie 2002/49/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 25. Juni 2002 über die Bewertung und Bekämpfung von Umgebungslärm — Erklärung der Kommission im Vermittlungsausschuss zur Richtlinie über die Bewertung und Bekämpfung von Umgebungslärm, ABl. L 189 vom 18.7.2002, S. 12-25.

([4]) Richtlinie 2012/34/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 21. November 2012 zur Schaffung eines einheitlichen europäischen Eisenbahnraums, ABl. L 343 vom 14.12.2012, S. 32-77.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003917/13
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Rail freight corridors and their impact

The EU has classified certain railway lines as high-speed freight corridors (P7_TA(2010)0203). This impacts on man and the environment.

What legal specifications does the EU impose in order to protect the public from the impact of this decision in terms of the damage to their health from the noise and the destruction of property?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

1. Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 ([1]) defines principal routes of nine Rail Freight Corridors (RFC). It does not classify any railway lines as high-speed freight corridors. The latter concept does not exist in EU legislation. Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 aims at a better cross-border coordination of investments (Art 11). It does not contain any obligations for and does not define any investments. Thus it does not directly affect property ownership or noise conditions.

2. The following legal measures relate to rail freight noise and property:

— Directive 2011/92/EU ([2]) requires Member States to ensure that before consent is given projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are made subject to an assessment of their environmental effects. Such an assessment has to cover *inter alia* issues like noise emission from the operation of the project as well as impact on population and material assets and the interrelationship between these factors.

— Directive 2002/49/EC ([3]) requires Member States to elaborate noise maps concerning major infrastructures including rail and draw up action plans in order to reduce noise exposure near hot spots identified in the mapping;

— Directive 2012/34/EU ([4]) provides for a possibility to differentiate infrastructure charges in respect of the noise levels of wagons;

— The Technical Specification for Interoperability (TSI) on Noise sets maximum levels of noise for new railway vehicles and is currently under revision; lowering existing noise limits for new wagons and locomotives is under consideration;

Finally, it needs to be stressed that investments foreseen on any railway lines are subject to relevant provisions of national law on property ownership, in accordance with Article 345 TFEU.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight, OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 22-32.

([2]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1-21.

([3]) Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2002 relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise — Declaration by the Commission in the Conciliation Committee on the directive relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise, OJ L 189, 18.7.2002, p. 12-25.

([4]) Directive 2012/34/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 establishing a single European railway area , OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 32-77.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003918/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sylvana Rapti (S&D)
(8 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις των προγραμμάτων δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής

Στην τριμηνιαία επισκόπηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής (26.3.2013) για την «Απασχόληση και την κοινωνική κατάσταση στην ΕΕ», είναι εμφανείς οι αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στην απασχόληση και την ανάπτυξη, κυρίως στις χώρες που ακολουθούν προγράμματα δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής.

Όπως επισημαίνεται στην εν λόγω επισκόπηση, η δημοσιονομική προσαρμογή στα κράτη μέλη έχει επιδεινώσει άμεσα και έμμεσα την απασχόληση. Άμεσα, λόγω του περιορισμού του δημοσίου τομέα (13% στην Ελλάδα) και των δημόσιων χρηματοδοτήσεων και, έμμεσα, λόγω της προκαλούμενης ύφεσης, καθώς αναγνωρίζεται ότι οι παρούσες οικονομικές συνθήκες ευνοούν μεγαλύτερους δημοσιονομικούς πολλαπλασιαστές. Είναι χαρακτηριστικό ότι στην Ελλάδα η ανεργία έχει ανέλθει, τον Φεβρουάριο του 2013, στο 26,4%, από το 9,6% που ήταν στα τέλη του 2009.

Επιπλέον, η μείωση, λόγω των αναγκών δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και των κοινωνικών δαπανών, η οποία είναι πολύ μεγαλύτερη σε σχέση με παλαιότερες περιόδους οικονομικής ύφεσης, εξουδετερώνει τη λειτουργία της οικονομικής σταθεροποίησης των συστημάτων κοινωνικής προστασίας σε πολλά κράτη μέλη και οδηγεί στην επιδείνωση της ύφεσης. Τα νοικοκυριά χαμηλού εισοδήματος έχουν πληγεί ακόμα περισσότερο από την υποβάθμιση των συστημάτων κοινωνικών παροχών αλλά και από τις περικοπές στους μισθούς και την φορολογία, αντιμετωπίζοντας δραματική μείωση του βιοτικού τους επιπέδου. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα δεδομένα αυτά και με βάση τους στόχους των Συνθηκών στο άρθρο 3 της ΣΕΕ και τα άρθρα 151, 152 και 153 της ΣΛΕΕ για την κοινωνική πρόοδο, την προώθηση της απασχόλησης και τη βελτίωση των συνθηκών διαβίωσης, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποια νομική βάση στηρίζεται προκειμένου να προτάσσει ως προτεραιότητα τους οικονομικούς δείκτες έναντι της απασχόλησης και της κοινωνικής συνοχής;

— Πώς σκοπεύει να αξιοποιήσει τα συμπεράσματα της τριμηνιαίας επισκόπησης για την Απασχόληση και την Κοινωνική Κατάσταση στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση;

— Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να προτείνει για την αντιμετώπιση των δυσμενών κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων των προγραμμάτων δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής που η ίδια έχει εισηγηθεί και επιβλέπει την τήρησή τους ως μέλος της τρόικα;

— Εξετάζει την πιθανότητα αναθεώρησης του ρυθμού δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής των κρατών μελών, όπως έχει προταθεί και από το ψήφισμα 2013 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου σχετικά με το Ευρωπαϊκό Εξάμηνο για τον συντονισμό των οικονομικών πολιτικών: απασχόληση και κοινωνικές πτυχές στην ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης 2013 (P7_TA(2013)0053 της 7.2.2013);

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει προβεί σε καμία πρόταση για πρόταξη των οικονομικών δεικτών έναντι της απασχόλησης και των κοινωνικών δεικτών. Παρακολουθεί και αναλύει με ιδιαίτερη προσοχή και ενδιαφέρον την απασχόληση και την κοινωνική κατάσταση στην Ευρώπη.

Η ετήσια ανασκόπηση για την «Απασχόληση και Κοινωνικές Εξελίξεις στην Ευρώπη» και οι τριμηνιαίες ανασκοπήσεις για την «Εργασιακή και Κοινωνική Κατάσταση» αποτελούν ανάλυση των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής που τροφοδοτεί την ανάπτυξη πολιτικών.

Η Ετήσια Έρευνα για την Ανάπτυξη το 2013 ήδη καθιστά σαφές ότι χρειάζεται πιο αποφασιστική πολιτική δράση για την επιστροφή στην ανάπτυξη και τη μείωση των υψηλών επιπέδων ανεργίας. Η δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση ήταν απαραίτητη σε πολλά κράτη μέλη για να θέσουν τις οικονομίες τους σε βιώσιμη βάση, αλλά η Επιτροπή έχει υπογραμμίσει ότι αυτό πρέπει να γίνεται κατά τρόπο κοινωνικά δίκαιο, όσο το δυνατόν πιο φιλικό προς την ανάπτυξη και ότι η κατάλληλη φορολογική πολιτική θα εξαρτηθεί από την ιδιαίτερη κατάσταση του κάθε κράτους μέλους.

Τον Φεβρουάριο του 2013, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε δέσμη μέτρων για τις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις, η οποία παρέχει καθοδήγηση στα κράτη μέλη για τη χάραξη αποδοτικότερων και αποτελεσματικότερων κοινωνικών πολιτικών, που να ανταποκρίνονται στις σημαντικές προκλήσεις που αυτά αντιμετωπίζουν.

Με βάση την ανάλυση που έχει ήδη πραγματοποιηθεί, η Επιτροπή θα εξακολουθήσει να αξιολογεί τις κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις των μακροοικονομικών προγραμμάτων σταθεροποίησης στα οποία συμμετέχει ως μέλος της «Τρόικα» και θα επιδιώξει να βοηθήσει τα κράτη μέλη να ελαχιστοποιούν τις αρνητικές κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις.

Ο ρυθμός της δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής που συνιστά η Επιτροπή το 2013 είναι χαμηλότερος από ό,τι το 2012, γεγονός που αντικατοπτρίζει την πραγματικότητα μιας απροσδόκητα παρατεταμένης ύφεσης και την ανάγκη στήριξης της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης. Η Επιτροπή αναζητεί επίσης τρόπους ώστε οι επενδυτικές δαπάνες να τυγχάνουν ευνοϊκότερης μεταχείρισης στο πλαίσιο του Συμφώνου Σταθερότητας και Ανάπτυξης σε σχέση με τα μέχρι σήμερα δεδομένα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003918/13
to the Commission
Sylvana Rapti (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Social impact of fiscal adjustment programmes

The European Commission's EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review dated 26 March 2013 clearly illustrates the negative impact on employment and growth, especially in countries under fiscal adjustment programmes.

As noted in the aforementioned review, fiscal adjustment in the Member States has affected employment both directly and indirectly: directly due to cutbacks in the public sector (13% in Greece) and in public spending and indirectly due to the recession which it has caused, as it is widely recognised that the present economic conditions favour larger fiscal multipliers. For example, unemployment in Greece has risen from 9.6% at the end of 2009 to 26.4% in February 2013.

Furthermore, reduced social spending due to the demands of fiscal consolidation, which is much higher than in previous periods of economic recession, is negating the effects of economic stabilisation of social protection systems in numerous Member States and exacerbating the recession. Low-income households have been worst hit by the reduction in social security benefits and wage cuts and taxation and have seen their living standards plummet. In view of these data and based on the objectives set out in Article 3 TEU and in Articles 151, 152 and 153 TFEU to achieve social progress, promote employment and improve living conditions, will the Commission say:

— On what legal basis is its proposal to give economic indicators priority over employment and social cohesion based?

— To what use does it intend to put the conclusions of the EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review?

— What measures does it intend to propose in order to address the adverse social impact of the fiscal adjustment programmes which it introduced and imposed as a member of the Troika?

— Is it considering the possibility of reviewing the rate of fiscal adjustment of the Member States, as proposed in the European Parliament's 2013 resolution 'European semester for economic policy coordination: employment and social aspects in the annual growth survey 2013' (P7_TA(2013)0053 dated 7 February 2013)?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission has not made any proposal to give economic indicators priority over employment and social ones. It monitors and analyses the employment and social situation in Europe with great care and concern.

The annual 'Employment and Social Developments in Europe' review and the quarterly 'Employment and Social Situation' reviews constitute Commission services' analysis that feeds into policy development.

The 2013 Annual Growth Survey already makes clear that more decisive policy action is needed to return to growth and reduce the dramatic levels of unemployment. Fiscal consolidation has been necessary in many Member States to put their economies on a sustainable footing, but the Commission has emphasised that this must be done in a manner that is socially fair, as growth-friendly as possible, and that the appropriate fiscal policy would depend on the specific situation of the Member State.

In February 2013, the Commission adopted a Social Investment Package which offers guidance to Member States on more efficient and effective social policies in response to the significant challenges they face.

Building on the analysis already undertaken, the Commission will continue to assess the social impact of macroeconomic stabilisation programmes in which it is involved as member of the 'Troika' and will seek to help Member States to minimise any negative social impacts.

The pace of fiscal adjustment recommended by the Commission in 2013 is lower than in 2012, reflecting the reality of a longer-than-expected recession and the need to support economic growth. The Commission is also looking into ways how investment expenditure could be treated more favourably in the context of the Stability and Growth Pact than has been the case so far.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003919/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(8 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη αποτελεσματικής προσφυγής για δημόσια έργα

Με προσφυγή του στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, ο Πανελλήνιος Σύνδεσμος Τεχνικών Εταιριών (ΣΑΤΕ) ζητά την παρέμβασή της για την κατάργηση της θέσπισης παραβόλου ύψους 50 000 ευρώ για την κατάθεση αίτησης ασφαλιστικών μέτρων, πριν από τη σύναψη σύμβασης για την ανάθεση δημοσίων έργων, τονίζοντας ότι, «το υπερβολικό παράβολο παραβιάζει το ενωσιακό δίκαιο, αλλά και κάθε έννοια προστασίας από παράνομες ενέργειες των υπηρεσιών». Πιο συγκεκριμένα, ο ΣΑΤΕ καταγγέλλει ότι ο Νόμος 4111/25-1-2013 (άρθρο 28), δεν συνάδει με την Οδηγία 2007/66/ΕΚ, σύμφωνα με την οποία «Τα κράτη μέλη λαμβάνουν τα αναγκαία μέτρα ώστε, όσον αφορά τις συμβάσεις που εμπίπτουν στο πεδίο εφαρμογής της οδηγίας 2004/18/ΕΚ, οι αποφάσεις που λαμβάνουν οι αναθέτουσες αρχές να υπόκεινται στην άσκηση αποτελεσματικών και, ιδίως, όσο το δυνατόν ταχύτερων προσφυγών …».

Δεδομένου ότι, το προηγούμενο νομικό καθεστώς για την κατάθεση αίτησης προσφυγής είχε γίνει μετά από καταδικαστική για την Ελλάδα, απόφαση του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου (C-236/95), σύμφωνα με την οποία, η Ελλάδα δεν είχε θεσπίσει «τις αναγκαίες νομοθετικές, κανονιστικές και διοικητικές διατάξεις … περί της εφαρμογής των διαδικασιών προσφυγής στον τομέα της συνάψεως συμβάσεων κρατικών προμηθειών και δημοσίων έργων» για την πλήρη συμμόρφωσή της με την οδηγία 89/665/ΕΟΚ,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Η απαίτηση του Άρθρου 28 του Ν. 4111/2013, συνάδει με την ανωτέρω απόφαση του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου αλλά και με την απαίτηση της Οδηγίας 2007/66/ΕΚ «οι αποφάσεις που λαμβάνουν οι αναθέτουσες αρχές να υπόκεινται στην άσκηση αποτελεσματικών και, ιδίως, όσο το δυνατόν ταχύτερων προσφυγών»;

2. Τι μέτρα θα λάβει η Επιτροπή για να καθησυχάσει την κοινή γνώμη στην Ελλάδα, η οποία αντιλαμβάνεται ότι με το άρθρο 28 του Ν. 4111/2013 το μόνο που επιτυγχάνεται είναι η προστασία όσων αυθαιρετούν και παρατυπούν στην ανάθεση δημοσίων έργων, ενώ ενθαρρύνονται φαινόμενα έμμεσων και άμεσων εκβιασμών, παράνομων συναλλαγών, αλλά και εκδηλώσεις διοικητικής αλαζονείας και αυθαιρεσίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Μαΐου 2013)

Οι οδηγίες για τις προσφυγές (δηλ. οι οδηγίες 89/665/ΕΟΚ και 92/13/ΕΟΚ, όπως τροποποιήθηκαν με την οδηγία 2007/66/ΕΚ) έχουν μεταφερθεί στην ελληνική νομοθεσία με τον νόμο 3886/2010. Επιπλέον, το άρθρο 28 του ν. 4111/2013, που τέθηκε σε ισχύ τον Ιανουάριο του 2013, προβλέπει ότι για το παραδεκτό της αίτησης ασφαλιστικών μέτρων, κατά τη διάρκεια της διαδικασίας του διαγωνισμού, πρέπει να κατατεθεί εκ των προτέρων παράβολο, το ύψος του οποίου ανέρχεται σε ποσοστό 1% της προϋπολογισθείσας αξίας της σύμβασης (περιλαμβανομένου του ΦΠΑ). Η νομοθεσία προβλέπει επίσης ότι το παράβολο αυτό δεν μπορεί να υπερβαίνει το ποσό των 50 000 ευρώ και ότι, σε περίπτωση αποδοχής της αίτησης ασφαλιστικών μέτρων, το ποσό αυτό αποδίδεται στον αιτούντα.

Οι οδηγίες για τις προσφυγές δεν ρυθμίζουν το ζήτημα των παραβόλων. Ωστόσο, τα παράβολα θα πρέπει να είναι ανάλογα με την αξία της σύμβασης και να μην είναι υπερβολικά, με αποτέλεσμα να καθίσταται αδύνατη ή κατ' ουσία πιο δυσχερής η άσκηση αποτελεσματικών μέσων προσφυγής από τους ζημιωθέντες υποψηφίους. Από την άλλη πλευρά, το επίπεδο στο οποίο καθορίζεται το ύψος του παραβόλου θα μπορούσε να λειτουργήσει ως κατάλληλο αποτρεπτικό στοιχείο, σε περιπτώσεις όπου η λήψη ασφαλιστικών μέτρων επιδιώκεται καταχρηστικά σε αδικαιολόγητες και αβάσιμες περιπτώσεις, έχοντας επομένως αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στη διεξαγωγή και την ταχεία ολοκλήρωση των διαδικασιών υποβολής προσφορών.

Η Επιτροπή θα επιθυμούσε να διαβεβαιώσει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος ότι παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την εφαρμογή του συστήματος προσφυγών στα κράτη μέλη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003919/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Need for effective remedies for public works

The Association of Greek Contracting Companies (SATE) has filed an application with the European Commission, asking it to intervene in order to obtain annulment of the EUR 50 000 injunction fee payable before entering into a public works contract, on the grounds that the 'extortionate fee is in breach of Union law and any concept of protection from illegal action on the part of the authorities'. SATE complains that Article 28 of Law 4111 passed on 25 January 2013 conflicts with Directive 2007/66/EC, which states: 'Member States shall take the measures necessary to ensure that, as regards contracts falling within the scope of Directive 2004/18/EC, decisions taken by the contracting authorities may be reviewed effectively and, in particular, as rapidly as possible […]'.

The previous scheme for applying for a remedy was introduced following judgment against Greece by the European Court of Justice (C-236/95), which held that Greece had failed to adopt 'the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply fully with Council Directive 89/665/EEC […] relating to the application of review procedures to the award of public supply and public works contracts'.

1. Is the requirement laid down in Article 28 of Law 4111/2013 in keeping with the above judgment by the European Court of Justice and with the requirement of Directive 2007/66/EC that 'decisions taken by contracting authorities must be subject to effective and, in particular, rapid review'?

2. What measures will the Commission take to reassure the public in Greece, who realise that all Article 28 of Law 4111/2013 achieves is to protect those acting in an arbitrary and illegal manner in the award of public works contracts and to encourage indirect and direct coercion, illegal transactions and arrogance and high-handedness on the part of the administration?

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

The Remedies Directives (i.e. Directives 89/665/EEC and 92/13/EEC, as amended by Directive 2007/66/EC) have been transposed into Greek law by means of Law 3886/2010. In addition, Article 28 of Law 4111/2013 which came into force in January 2013 provides that for the purposes of seeking interim relief during the tendering procedure a fee has to be paid in advance, the amount of which is set at 1% of the estimate contract value (VAT included). The legislation also provides that this fee cannot exceed the amount of 50 000 euros and that in case interim relief is granted, this will be returned to the applicant.

The Remedies Directives do not regulate the question of fees. However, the fees should be proportionate with the contract value and not be excessive so as to render the enforcement of effective means of redress by aggrieved tenderers impossible or substantially more difficult. On the other hand, the level at which the fee is set could act as an appropriate deterrent in cases where interim relief is abusively sought in unjustified and unfounded cases, thereby having a negative impact on the conduct and prompt completion of tendering procedures.

The Commission would like to reassure the Honourable Member that it closely monitors the application of the remedies system in the Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-003920/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(8 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανακεφαλαιοποίηση Εθνικής Τράπεζας και Eurobank

Η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση, το Ελληνικό Ταμείο Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας (ΕΤΧΣ) και η Τράπεζα της Ελλάδας, αρχικά είχαν δεσμευτεί υπέρ της προώθησης της συγχώνευσης Εθνικής Τράπεζας-Eurobank, πριν την ανακεφαλαιοποίησή τους από το ΕΤΧΣ και ζητούσαν παράταση ενός μήνα προκειμένου να ολοκληρωθεί η σχετική συγχωνευτική διαδικασία. Η τρόικα, αιφνιδιαστικά, απαίτησε να γίνουν ξεχωριστές αυξήσεις μετοχικού κεφαλαίου, ακυρώνοντας έτσι στην πράξη τις διαδικασίες συγχώνευσης.

Είναι ευρύτατη η πεποίθηση στην Ελλάδα ότι η μεταστροφή της τρόικας συνδέεται με την πρόθεση τραπεζικών συμφερόντων που σχετίζονται με δανειστές της Ελλάδας, να αποτρέψουν τη συγχώνευση, διότι επιθυμούν να έχουν προνομιακή θέση ενόψει της εκποίησης της Εθνικής Τράπεζας.

Με δεδομένο ότι ο Διευθύνων Σύμβουλος της Εθνικής Τράπεζας, όσον αφορά τη συγχώνευση των δύο τραπεζών δήλωσε ότι «όλες οι εγκρίσεις έχουν δοθεί από όλους τους θεσμικούς παράγοντες της Ελλάδας και του εξωτερικού», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πού στηρίζει τις αντιρρήσεις της, όσον αφορά τη συγχώνευση του σχήματος Εθνικής-Eurobank και την μετέπειτα ανακεφαλαιοποίησή του;

2. Υπάρχουν υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής που να έχουν τοποθετηθεί θετικά στη συγχώνευση των δύο τραπεζών; Τι έχει γνωμοδοτήσει μέχρι σήμερα η αρμόδια Γενική Διεύθυνση Ανταγωνισμού της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής;

3. Μπορεί να πείσει τον ελληνικό λαό ότι η αιφνιδιαστική αλλαγή της στάσης της, δεν συνδέεται με τραπεζικά συμφέροντα που επιθυμούν την αγορά της Εθνικής Τράπεζας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Μαΐου 2013)

Ούτε η Eurobank ούτε η Εθνική Τράπεζα της Ελλάδας (ΕΤΕ) πρόκειται να εκκαθαριστούν, όπως άφησε να εννοηθεί το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου. Αντίθετα, θα ανακεφαλαιοποιηθούν από το ΕΤΧΣ [1] και, ει δυνατόν, με τη συμμετοχή ιδιωτών επενδυτών. Αμφότερες οι τράπεζες θα παραμείνουν πλήρως λειτουργικές χωρίς να μεταβληθεί το νομικό τους καθεστώς.

Δεδομένου ότι οι δύο τράπεζες δήλωσαν πως η νόμιμη συγχώνευση δεν μπορεί να γίνει πριν από τη λήξη της προθεσμίας ανακεφαλαιοποίησης, στα τέλη Απριλίου, όπως συμφωνήθηκε στο πλαίσιο του ΜΣ [2], οι ελληνικές αρχές ζήτησαν από τις διοικήσεις των δύο τραπεζών να προβούν σε ανακεφαλαιοποίηση ως ξεχωριστές νομικές οντότητες με το ίδιο πλαίσιο που εφαρμόζεται σε όλες τις ελληνικές τράπεζες. Αν οι δύο τράπεζες δεν καταφέρουν να συγκεντρώσουν την ελάχιστη συμμετοχή 10% του ιδιωτικού τομέα [3], το πλήρες ποσό θα καλυφθεί από το ΕΤΧΣ.

Σε περίπτωση που και οι δύο τράπεζες ανακεφαλαιοποιηθούν πλήρως από το ΕΤΧΣ, ο νέος βασικός μέτοχος θα μπορεί να αποφασίζει για κάθε ενδεχόμενη συνένωση των βασικών τραπεζών, αφού αναπτύξει μια ολοκληρωμένη στρατηγική για τον τραπεζικό τομέα.

[1] Ελληνικό Ταμείο Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας.
[2] Μνημόνιο Συμφωνίας της Πρώτης Επανεξέτασης του Δεύτερου Προγράμματος Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα, που δημοσιεύθηκε τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm).
[3] Το οποίο είναι απαραίτητο, όπως προβλέπεται από τον σχετικό νόμο (νόμος 3864/2010 για το ΕΤΧΣ), προκειμένου το ΕΤΧΣ να διατηρήσει τον ιδιωτικό έλεγχο της τράπεζας.

Η επανεξέταση της εξαγοράς δεν ενέπιπτε στις αρμοδιότητες της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής βάσει των κανόνων για τον έλεγχο των συγκεντρώσεων. Για τον λόγο αυτό, η συγκεκριμένη εξαγορά επανεξετάστηκε από την Ελληνική Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού ([4]), η οποία και την ενέκρινε. Η Γενική Διεύθυνση Ανταγωνισμού της Επιτροπής ενεπλάκη μόνο σε ό,τι αφορούσε τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις. Η ΕΤΕ έλαβε πράγματι κρατική ενίσχυση, έπρεπε όμως να διασφαλιστεί ότι καμία κρατική ενίσχυση δεν χρησιμοποιήθηκε για τη χρηματοδότηση της εξαγοράς, καθώς και ότι η τελευταία δεν θα ήταν εις βάρος της μακροπρόθεσμης βιωσιμότητας τόσο της ΕΤΕ όσο και της Eurobank. Με βάση τα κριτήρια αυτά, η ανάλυση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής δεν αποκάλυψε στοιχεία που να δικαιολογούν την ακύρωση της εξαγοράς βάσει των κανόνων περί κρατικών ενισχύσεων. Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή κοινοποίησε στις ελληνικές αρχές ότι, βάσει των κανόνων περί κρατικών ενισχύσεων, δεν είχε καμία αντίρρηση για την προτεινόμενη εξαγορά.

([4]) http://www.epant.gr/img/x2/news/news508_1_1360856699.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003920/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Recapitalisation of National Bank and Eurobank

The Greek Government, the Greek Financial Stability Fund (GFSF) and the Bank of Greece initially undertook to promote the National Bank-Eurobank merger prior to their recapitalisation by the GFSF, and accordingly sought a one-month extension for completion of the necessary formalities. The Troika then abruptly announced that the two banks must be recapitalised separately, effectively freezing the merger.

It is widely felt in Greece that this sudden change of heart by the Troika was motivated by a desire to protect the banking interests of Greece's creditors, who are seeking to ensure favourable treatment in connection with the winding up of the National Bank and are accordingly opposed to the projected merger.

In view of the statement issued by the National Bank governing board that full official approval for the prospective merger between the two banks had been secured from all quarters both in Greece and abroad:

1. What were the reasons for the Commission's objections to the National Bank-Eurobank merger and subsequent recapitalisation?

2. Were any of the Commission services in favour of the proposed merger? What has been the position of the Commission's Directorate-General for Competition to date?

3. Is the Commission able to convince the Greek public that its sudden change of course was in no way prompted by those with vested interests in the liquidation of the National Bank?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

Neither Eurobank nor NBG will be resolved as the Honourable Member implied. On the contrary, they will be recapitalised by the HFSF ([1]) and if possible also with private investors contribution. Both banks will remain fully operational without any change in their legal status.

As the two banks indicated that the legal merger cannot take place before the recapitalisation deadline of end-April as agreed in the MoU ([2]), the Greek authorities requested the management of the two banks to execute their recapitalisation as separate legal entities under the same framework applicable to all Greek banks. In case the two banks will not be able to collect the minimum private sector participation of 10% ([3]) the full amount will be provided by the HFSF.

If both banks will be recapitalised fully by the HFSF, the new majority owner may decide on any potential consolidation among the core banks, after having developed a comprehensive banking sector strategy.

The review of the acquisition did not fall under the Commission's jurisdiction under merger control rules, but it has been reviewed by the Hellenic Competition Commission ([4]), which authorised it. The Directorate-General for Competition of the Commission has been involved only from a state aid perspective. NBG has indeed received state aid but it had to be ensured that no state aid was used to fund that acquisition and that the acquisition was not damaging the long-term viability of both NBG and Eurobank. Based on these criteria, the analysis of the Commission did not reveal elements which would allow for blocking the acquisition under state aid rules. On that basis, the Commission communicated to the Greek authorities that, under state aid rules, it had no objections to the proposed acquisition.

([1]) Hellenic Financial Stability Fund.
([2]) Memorandum of Understanding of First Review of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece published in December 2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm).
([3]) As provided in the HFSF Law (Law No 3864/2010), necessary in order to retain private control of the bank.
([4]) http://www.epant.gr/img/x2/news/news508_1_1360856699.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003922/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Rights of Palestinians prisoners

There are currently over 4 700 Palestinian political prisoners being held in Israeli prisons, of whom170 are administrative detainees. Israeli authorities use administrative detention to hold prisoners indefinitely on secret information without charging them or allowing them to stand trial. Neither the detainees nor their lawyers are informed of the accusations or evidence against them. Some prisoners are held without charge or trial for years on end.

This form of detention is a clear violation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that anyone who is arrested must be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for his arrest and which condemns arbitrary arrest or detention.

Samer Issawi was arrested in July 2012. This was his third arrest. He has been on hunger strike since 1 August 2012 in protest to his unjust detention. Mr Issawi's health has now deteriorated to dangerous levels and his life is at risk.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative condemn the detention of Palestinians by use of administrative detention?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that the Israeli policy on prisons must be changed?

3. What steps will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that the Israeli authorities respect international law, stop the arbitrary detention of Palestinians and allow all prisoners to have a fair trial?

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

The European Union (EU) has on various occasions drawn the attention of the Israeli authorities to its concerns particularly with regard to hunger strikers and to the extensive use by Israel of administrative detention without formal charge. Under international law, detainees have the right to be informed about the reasons underlying any detention and to have the legality of their detention determined without undue delay.

On 16 February, the HR/VP publicly called for the full respect of international human rights obligations towards all Palestinian detainees and prisoners. She has also publicly welcomed the agreement reached last year between Israeli prison authorities and representatives of Palestinian prisoners aimed at improving conditions of detention and guaranteeing family visiting rights and also called for the agreement to be fully implemented.

The EU has also called for solutions to be found to enable hunger strikers to end their hunger strike and in this regard welcomes the deal that was reached in the case of Samer Issawi who will eventually be released and will be able to return to Jerusalem.

The EU shall continue engaging with the Israeli authorities at all levels with a view to ensuring the respect of all international human rights obligations for all prisoners.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003923/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Rights of Palestinian minors being kept as prisoners

There are currently over 4 700 Palestinian political prisoners being held in Israeli prisons, of whom about 240 are minors. During their imprisonment, they are subjected to shocking forms of interrogation, including intimidation, threats and physical violence. The majority of Palestinian children have been arrested for nothing more than throwing stones.

The maximum penalty for minor inmates aged between 12 and 13 years is six months, and up to 20 years for those over the age of 14.

Article 37 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that no child should be subjected to cruel treatment or punishment, nor should they 'be deprived of their liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily'. Furthermore, the detention of a child should be in conformity with the law and only used as a last resort for the shortest appropriate period of time. The Israeli authorities are in clear violation of the Convention in their treatment of Palestinian minors.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative condemn the unjust detention of Palestinian minors by Israeli authorities?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative condemn the abusive treatment by Israeli authorities of minors detained in Israeli prisons?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that the Israeli policy on prisons must be changed?

4. What steps will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that the Israeli authorities respect international law and stop the arbitrary detention of Palestinians?

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

The EU has repeatedly voiced its concerns about the treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli judicial and detention system. As reported in the 2013 ENP ([1]) Country Progress Report on Israel, by the end of 2012 there were 21 children under 16 years of age and 156 between the age of 16 and 18 in custody.

Although the raising of the majority age from 16 to 18 in the military law applicable to Palestine in September 2011 was a welcome development, concerns remain about insufficient protection of children during arrest and detention, in particular the failure in the majority of cases to permit children to be accompanied by a lawyer and parent during questioning. Palestinian minors do not enjoy the same level of protection as is provided for under Israel's Youth Law or required by international law. The new military order (No 1685), which reduces from eight to four days the time within which detained children must be brought before the military court, does not provide enough protection for children, who are at their most vulnerable in the first 48 hours of detention.

The EU has repeatedly conveyed its concerns about these practices in the framework of its regular political and human rights dialogue with Israel. It has stated, most recently at the July 2012 EU-Israel Association Council, that any future upgrade in relations must be based on the shared values of both parties, including democracy and respect for human rights. The EU welcomes Israel's positive response to the report published by Unicef on 6 March 2013, 'Children in Israeli detention — observations and recommendations', and the statement made by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs that it will study the conclusions of the report and will work to implement them through ongoing cooperation with Unicef.

([1]) European Neighbourhood Policy.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003924/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(8 april 2013)

Betreft: Nieuwe stemming wegens misleiding door de Commissie (follow-up)

Volgens een rapport dat is opgesteld in opdracht van de City of London Corporation kan de door de Europese Unie geplande belasting op financiële transacties de kosten van de uitgifte van een staatslening door het VK verhogen met 3,95 miljard GBP. Deze kosten zouden ontstaan, ondanks het feit dat Groot-Brittannië zich niet achter het voorstel schaart ([1]). Soortgelijke gevolgen van de belasting op financiële transacties worden verwacht in andere lidstaten die niet aan de nauwere samenwerking deelnemen.

Tsjechisch premier Petr Nečas heeft ook de aandacht gevestigd op het feit dat de geplande belasting op financiële transacties schadelijk zal zijn voor de EU-economie, deze op het gebied van financiële diensten minder concurrerend zal maken en in sommige gevallen zelfs schadelijk kan zijn voor de lidstaten die niet aan de nauwere samenwerking deelnemen. Hij bracht de mogelijkheid te berde hierover een zaak aanhangig te maken bij het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie ([2]).

1. Is de Commissie zich bewust van de reële gevolgen van de belasting op financiële transacties? Hoe reageert zij op de twee bovenvermelde verklaringen?

2. Op basis van welke rechtsgrond zijn de lidstaten die niet aan de nauwere samenwerking deelnemen, verplicht voor kosten als gevolg van de belasting op financiële transacties op te draaien?

3. Kan de Commissie uitleggen hoe zij de artikelen 326 en 327 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU) interpreteert, wat het basisprincipe van nauwere samenwerking betreft, namelijk dat deze geen gevolgen mag hebben voor de lidstaten die niet aan de nauwere samenwerking deelnemen?

4. Handhaaft de Commissie nog steeds haar standpunt dat de voorgestelde belasting op financiële transacties voldoet aan alle criteria waarin is voorzien in de Verdragen?

5. Welke gevolgen zou een uitspraak van het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie hebben dat de belasting op financiële transacties niet strookt met de Europese wetgeving? Hoe kan de reeds aangerichte schade worden hersteld?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(3 juni 2013)

1. De Commissie is op de hoogte van deze verklaringen en beschouwt ze als ongegrond.

2. Het voorstel van de Commissie voor een richtlijn van de Raad betreffende de totstandbrenging van een nauwere samenwerking inzake een belasting op financiële transacties ([3]), dat momenteel in behandeling is bij de Raad, bevat geen regels voor de inning van de FTT in niet-deelnemende lidstaten. Indien de voorgestelde richtlijn wordt aangenomen en overeenkomstig de behoeften van specifieke gevallen, kunnen de belastingdiensten van de deelnemende lidstaten, zoals ook het geval is bij andere nationale belastingen en heffingen, met inbegrip van belastingen op financiële transacties, een beroep doen op bijstand van de belastingdiensten uit andere lidstaten uit hoofde van Richtlijn 2010/24/EU om de geharmoniseerde FTT te innen. De dekking van extra kosten die het gevolg zijn van een dergelijke bijstand, wordt in deze richtlijn uitvoerig behandeld.

3. De Commissie heeft reeds geanalyseerd of de nauwere samenwerking die door 11 lidstaten is gevraagd, in overeenstemming is met de Verdragen. Uit deze analyse is gebleken dat een dergelijke samenwerking in overeenstemming is met de toepasselijke artikelen van de Verdragen. Dit standpunt werd eveneens gedeeld door de Raad, die de door de Commissie voorgestelde machtiging met gekwalificeerde meerderheid heeft goedgekeurd (zie Besluit 2013/52/EU ([4])). Zoals hierboven reeds is vermeld, is het voorstel van de Commissie voor een richtlijn van de Raad betreffende de totstandbrenging van de nauwere samenwerking in kwestie nog in behandeling bij de Raad.

4. Ja, zie ook het antwoord op vraag 3.

([1]) http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-02/eu-financial-transaction-tax-seen-costing-britain-6-billion.html
([2]) http://praguemonitor.com/2013/04/04/czech-pm-finance-transaction-tax-will-harm-eu-economy.
([3]) COM(2013) 71 final van 14.2.2013.
([4]) Besluit 2013/52/EU van de Raad van 22 januari 2013 houdende machtiging om een nauwere samenwerking aan te gaan op het gebied van belasting op financiële transacties.

5. Zie het antwoord op vraag 1. Tot dusver heeft het Verenigd Koninkrijk de nietigverklaring van Besluit 2013/52/EU van de Raad gevorderd. Zoals reeds is vermeld, is de richtlijn betreffende de totstandbrenging van een nauwere samenwerking nog niet goedgekeurd. De richtlijn kan pas na goedkeuring worden aangevochten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003924/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Revote on the grounds of Commission's misguidance (follow-up)

According to a report commissioned by the City of London Corporation, the European Union's planned tax on financial transactions could add GBP 3.95 billion to the cost of issuing UK Government debt. This expense would arise even though Britain has not signed up to the proposal ([1]). Similar consequences of the financial transaction tax are also expected in other Member States not participating in enhanced cooperation.

The Czech Prime Minister, Petr Nečas, also drew attention to the fact that the planned financial transaction tax will harm the EU economy, will make it less competitive in the area of financial services and, in some cases, may even harm those Member States not participating in enhanced cooperation. He raised the possibility of litigation before the European Court of Justice in this matter ([2]).

1. Is the Commission aware of the real consequences of the financial transaction tax? What does it think of the two aforementioned statements?

2. What is the legal basis of the obligation of Member States who do not participate in enhanced cooperation to cover amounts incurred from the financial transaction tax?

3. Could the Commission share its interpretation of Articles 326 and 327 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) with me in light of the basic principle of enhanced cooperation, i.e. that it shall not have any effect on Member States which do not participate in enhanced cooperation?

4. Does the Commission still maintain its opinion that the proposed financial transaction tax meets all of the criteria defined in the Treaties?

5. What would be the consequences of a judgment by the European Court of Justice that the financial transaction tax is not in line with European law? How would it be possible to repair the damage already done?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of these statements which it considers unfounded.

2. The Commission proposal for a Council Directive implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax ([3]), currently pending before the Council, does not contain any rules regarding collection of FTT in non-participating Member States. As it is the case with other national taxes and duties, including taxes on financial transactions, the tax administrations from the participating Member States could — if the Council were to adopt the directive proposed, and according to the needs of individual cases — resort to the assistance of tax administrations of other Member States under Directive 2010/24, for the purposes of collecting the harmonised FTT. The coverage of any costs incurred due to such assistance is exhaustively dealt with in that directive.

3. The Commission already conducted an analysis on whether the enhanced cooperation requested by the 11 Member States is in line with the Treaties. The outcome of the analysis was that such cooperation is in line with the relevant articles in the Treaties. This view was shared by the Council, who adopted the authorisation proposed by the Commission by qualified majority (cf. Decision 2013/52/EU ([4])). As mentioned above, the Commission proposal for a directive implementing the enhanced cooperation in question is still pending before the Council.

4. Yes, cf. also answer to question 3.

5. Cf. answer to question 1. So far, annulment of Council Decision 2013/52/EU has been sought by the UK. As mentioned, the directive implementing enhanced cooperation has not yet been adopted and could be challenged only after such adoption.

([1]) http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-02/eu-financial-transaction-tax-seen-costing-britain-6-billion.html
([2]) http://praguemonitor.com/2013/04/04/czech-pm-finance-transaction-tax-will-harm-eu-economy.
([3]) COM(2013)71 final, 14.2.2013.
([4]) Council Decision 2013/52/EU of 22 January 2013 authorising enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003927/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(8 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μέτρα στήριξης του κυπριακού λαού μετά το κούρεμα καταθέσεων

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα μέτρα που λαμβάνει για την προστασία του λαού της Κύπρου από τις αποφάσεις του Eurogroup για εξοντωτικό κούρεμα των καταθέσεων στις κυπριακές τράπεζες και την καταστροφή του χρηματοπιστωτικού συστήματος της χώρας;

Ποια είναι τα μέτρα που προτίθεται να πάρει για να προστατεύσει τους Κύπριους-Ευρωπαίους πολίτες από την βέβαιη εκτίναξη της ανεργίας, την μαζική φτώχεια και την κοινωνική δυστυχία;

Ποια είναι η θέση της απέναντι στην πρωτοφανή και χωρίς προηγούμενο απόφαση του Eurogroup να εξαναγκάσει την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία να επιβάλει κούρεμα καταθέσεων, κατά παραβίαση του χάρτη Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ, που προβλέπει την προστασία του δικαιώματος ιδιοκτησίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Κύπρος αποτελεί μοναδική περίπτωση εξαιτίας του μεγέθους και της δομής του τραπεζικού της τομέα, του βαθμού ανάληψης κινδύνου και της ανεπαρκούς εποπτείας. Τα μέτρα που λαμβάνονται είναι προσαρμοσμένα στις πολύ ιδιαίτερες συνθήκες της Κύπρου και στοχεύουν στην αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας ενός μικρότερου τραπεζικού τομέα και, ταυτόχρονα, στην προστασία όλων των καταθέσεων κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των προβλημάτων που δημιουργεί η τρέχουσα οικονομική και χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση σε ό,τι αφορά τις κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις και βρίσκεται στο πλευρό των κρατών μελών σ' αυτούς τους εξαιρετικά δύσκολους καιρούς.

Η αύξηση της ανεργίας υπογραμμίζει την ανάγκη για μια συνολική αξιολόγηση των πολιτικών ενεργοποίησης καθώς και των διαθέσιμων μέσων για τη στήριξη του εισοδήματος μετά τη λήξη των ασφαλιστικών παροχών ανεργίας. Με τις κυπριακές αρχές συμφωνήθηκε η μεταρρύθμιση της δημόσιας βοήθειας, έτσι ώστε η κοινωνική πρόνοια να λειτουργεί ως δίχτυ προστασίας για την εξασφάλιση ενός ελάχιστου εισοδήματος για όσους δεν είναι σε θέση να έχουν ένα στοιχειώδες βιοτικό επίπεδο. Παράλληλα, συμφωνήθηκε να δοθούν κίνητρα για απασχόληση και να διασφαλιστεί η συνοχή με τη μεταρρύθμιση του συστήματος κοινωνικής πρόνοιας.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τη σοβαρότητα της οικονομικής κατάστασης, η Επιτροπή συγκροτεί αυτή τη στιγμή ομάδα στήριξης για την ανάκαμψη της κυπριακής οικονομίας. Προτίθεται δε να συνδράμει τις κυπριακές αρχές στις προσπάθειές τους να αναμορφώσουν το συντομότερο δυνατό το μοντέλο ανάπτυξης της κυπριακής οικονομίας. Στόχος της Επιτροπής είναι να καταβάλει κάθε δυνατή προσπάθεια για την ελάφρυνση των κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων της οικονομικής κρίσης, διευκολύνοντας την ταχεία ανάπτυξη νέων οικονομικών δραστηριοτήτων, διαθέτοντας πόρους από διάφορους μηχανισμούς της ΕΕ και στηρίζοντας τις κυπριακές αρχές στις προσπάθειές τους να αποκαταστήσουν τη χρηματοπιστωτική, οικονομική και κοινωνική σταθερότητα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003927/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Measures to support the people of Cyprus following the 'haircut' on deposits

Will the Commission say:

What measures is it taking to protect the people of Cyprus from the Eurogroup's decision to carry out a savage 'haircut' on deposits in Cypriot banks and destroy the country's financial system?

What steps does it intend to take to protect Cypriots — who are EU citizens — from the certainty of soaring unemployment, mass poverty and social misery?

What is its position regarding the unprecedented decision by the Eurogroup to force the Republic of Cyprus to impose a haircut on deposits, in violation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which provides for the protection of the right to property?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures taken are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100,000 in accordance with the EU principles.

The Commission is aware of the challenges posed by the current economic and financial crisis in terms of social consequences. The Commission stands fully at the side of the Member States during these very challenging times.

The increase in unemployment underlines the need for an overall assessment of activation policies and available instruments for income support after the expiration of unemployment insurance benefits. A reform of public assistance has been agreed with the Cypriot authorities and should ensure that social assistance serves as a safety net to ensure a minimum income for those unable to support a basic standard of living, while safeguarding incentives to take up work, ensuring consistency with the reform of the welfare system.

Considering the gravity of the economic situation, the Commission is setting up a Support Group for the recovery of the Cypriot economy. It will assist the Cypriot authorities in their efforts to reform the growth model of the Cypriot economy as soon as possible. Its objective is to do everything possible to alleviate the social consequences of the economic shock by allowing a quick emergence of new types of economic activity, by mobilising funds from EU instruments and by supporting the Cypriot authorities' efforts to restore financial, economic and social stability.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003928/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(8 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επίπεδο των πληρωμών από 31ης Μαρτίου 2013

Μετά την έγκριση του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού 6/2012, η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε, κατόπιν αιτήματος της αρμόδιας επί του προϋπολογισμού αρχής το σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού 2/2013, που ανέρχεται σε 11,2 δισ. ευρώ και θα επιτρέπει την κάλυψη όλων των νομίμων υποχρεώσεων πληρωμών οι οποίες εκκρεμούσαν στα τέλη του 2012 από τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το σύνολο των ανωτέρω και δεδομένου ότι το επίπεδο των πληρωμών για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 είναι κατά 5 δισ. κατώτερο σε σχέση με τις εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής στο σχέδιο προϋπολογισμού για τις ανάγκες πληρωμών, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει λεπτομερή στοιχεία για το επίπεδο των πληρωμών που παρελήφθησαν έως την 31η Μαρτίου 2013; Θα μπορούσε συγκεκριμένα η Επιτροπή να παράσχει πληροφορίες για τις πληρωμές που ελήφθησαν κατά τους μήνες Ιανουάριο, Φεβρουάριο και Μάρτιο του 2013, κατανεμημένες κατά κράτος μέλος και τομέα πολιτικής ή πρόγραμμα;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Λεπτομερής ανάλυση των έγκυρων αιτημάτων πληρωμών ([1]) που υποβλήθηκαν τον Μάρτιο για τα χρηματοδοτούμενα από το ΕΚΤ, το ΕΤΠΑ και το ΤΣ επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα της περιόδου 2007-2013 παρατίθεται στο Παράρτημα I της παρούσας απάντησης, ενώ τα στοιχεία σχετικά με το ΕΓΤΑΑ και το ΕΤΑ παρατίθενται στο παράρτημα II. Τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία του πίνακα προκύπτουν από τη σύγκριση των αιτημάτων πληρωμής που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Μαρτίου 2013 με εκείνα που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Φεβρουαρίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αποφασίσει την αλλαγή χαρακτηρισμού ενός αιτήματος πληρωμής από «Αποδεκτό» σε «Πλήρως απορριφθέν» ή «Επιστραφέν προς διόρθωση» και, συνεπώς, τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία των παραρτημάτων της παρούσας απάντησης ενδέχεται να αποτελέσουν αντικείμενο περαιτέρω προσαρμογών.

Ανάλογα δεδομένα για τους μήνες Ιανουάριο και Φεβρουάριο διατέθηκαν στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-001090/2013 και E-003237/2013 ([2]), αντίστοιχα.

([1]) Με εξαίρεση τα ποσά που έχουν απορριφθεί πλήρως.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003928/13
to the Commission
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Level of payments as of 31 March 2013

After the approval of Draft Amending Budget No 6/2012, the Commission, at the request of the budgetary authority, came forward with Draft Amending Budget No 2/2013, amounting to EUR 11, 2 billion, which will allow for all of the legal payment obligations left pending at the end of 2012, as well as those arising before the end of 2013, to be covered in the 2013 budget.

Taking all of the above into consideration and given the fact that the level of payments for the 2013 budget is EUR 5 billion lower than the Commission's draft budget estimates for payment needs, could the Commission provide detailed information on the level of payments received by 31 March 2013? Specifically, could the Commission provide information on payments received in the months of January, February and March 2013, broken down by Member State and policy area/programme?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

A detailed breakdown of the valid payment claims ([1]) received in March for the 2007-2013 ESF, ERDF and CF-funded operational programmes is provided in Annex I to this reply while for EFF and EAFRD the data is included in Annex II. The figures in the table result from comparing valid payment claims submitted until the end of March 2013 with those submitted until the end of February 2013. The Commission may decide to change the status of a payment claim from 'Accepted' to 'Fully rejected' or 'Returned for corrections' and therefore the figures presented in the annexes to this reply could still undergo further adjustments.

Similar data for the months of January and February were provided by the Commission to Written Questions E-001090/2013 and E-003237/2013 ([2]), respectively.

([1]) Excluding fully rejected amounts.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003929/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE) y Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(8 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Derechos de los presos palestinos

Desde 1967, han sido detenidos y encarcelados más de 750 000 palestinos en virtud de la legislación militar israelí. Esto supone el índice de encarcelación más alto del mundo. Esta situación sigue siendo crítica, dado que hay más de 4 740 presos políticos palestinos en cárceles israelíes, entre ellos menores de edad. Además, los servicios de seguridad israelíes detuvieron a más de 3 800 palestinos en 2012 esgrimiendo como justificación motivos de seguridad. Según el Comité Público contra la Tortura en Israel, tales detenciones también se han producido en manifestaciones pacíficas.

El trato que Israel da a los detenidos viola el Derecho internacional de varias maneras, como son la detención de palestinos por periodos de tiempo indefinidos, la aplicación de la Ley sobre combatientes ilegales (un tipo de detención sin cargos, juicio ni garantías judiciales) y la violación del derecho a recibir visitas de familiares. También es importante destacar que los presos y detenidos palestinos están siendo cada vez más víctimas de torturas y malos tratos frecuentes y arbitrarios, como en el caso de Arafat Yaradat, que murió tras sufrir torturas en la cárcel en febrero de 2012.

El 13 de marzo de 2013, el Parlamento aprobó una Resolución sobre el caso de Arafat Yaradat y la situación de los presos palestinos en cárceles israelíes. La Resolución pide a las autoridades israelíes que respeten los derechos de los presos palestinos y que protejan su salud, su dignidad y sus vidas.

1. ¿Condena la vicepresidenta y alta representante estos actos de violencia contra el pueblo palestino?

2. A la vista de estos hechos, ¿cree la vicepresidenta y alta representante que la política penitenciaria israelí tiene que cambiar?

3. ¿Qué medidas va a tomar la vicepresidenta y alta representante para garantizar que el trato dado a los presos palestinos será acorde con el Derecho internacional?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de mayo de 2013)

La UE ha manifestado en repetidas ocasiones ante las autoridades israelíes su preocupación por la situación de los detenidos palestinos, especialmente la de aquellos que se encuentran en huelga de hambre o bajo detención administrativa.

El 16 de febrero, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta solicitó que se restableciera inmediatamente el derecho de visita de los familiares y se garantizara el pleno respeto de las obligaciones internacionales en materia de derechos humanos en relación con todos los detenidos y presos palestinos. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta recordó además la importancia de la plena adhesión de todas las partes al Acuerdo de 14 de mayo de 2012 sobre los derechos de los presos palestinos.

La UE viene manifestando desde hace tiempo su preocupación por el uso de las órdenes de detención administrativa por parte de Israel. En virtud del Derecho internacional, cualquier detenido tiene derecho a ser informado acerca de los motivos que han llevado a su detención, y la propia orden de detención debe someterse a un riguroso proceso de evaluación. La UE solicita a Israel que proceda a la imputación formal de todo detenido, de forma que pueda ser sometido a un juicio justo, sin demoras injustificadas. La UE aborda periódicamente la cuestión de los presos palestinos con Israel a todos los niveles, incluso a nivel del Consejo de Asociación. La cuestión se examina periódicamente en el grupo de trabajo de derechos humanos en el marco del actual Acuerdo de Asociación y las preocupaciones de la UE quedan reflejadas en sus informes de actividad anuales.

Israel rechaza la acusación de que Arafat Jaradat muriera tras haber sido torturado. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta apoya el llamamiento de las Naciones Unidas para que se lleve a cabo una investigación independiente y transparente de las circunstancias que rodearon la muerte del Sr. Jaradat, cuyo resultado se haga público lo antes posible.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003929/13
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE)
et Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(8 avril 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Droits des prisonniers palestiniens

Plus de 750 000 Palestiniens ont été arrêtés, détenus et emprisonnés au nom de la loi militaire israélienne depuis 1967. Il s'agit du taux d'incarcération le plus élevé du monde. La situation demeure critique, étant donné que quelque 4 740 prisonniers politiques palestiniens, dont des mineurs, sont toujours détenus dans des prisons israéliennes. En outre, les services de sécurité israéliens ont détenu plus de 3 800 Palestiniens en 2012, arguant de raisons de sécurité. Des détentions de cette nature ont également fait suite à des manifestations pacifiques, selon le Comité public contre la torture en Israël.

Le sort que réserve Israël à ses détenus représente une violation du droit international à plusieurs niveaux, notamment via la détention de Palestiniens pour des durées indéterminées, l'application de l'*Unlawful Combatant Law* (qui est une forme de détention administrative, sans chef d'accusation ni procès ni garantie judiciaire) et la violation des droits de visite des membres de la famille. Il est également important de noter que les prisonniers et détenus palestiniens font de plus en plus régulièrement l'objet d'actes arbitraires de torture et de violence physique, comme dans le cas d'Arafat Jaradat, décédé après avoir été torturé en prison en février 2012.

Le 14 mars 2013, le Parlement a adopté une résolution sur le cas d'Arafat Jaradat et la situation des prisonniers palestiniens dans les prisons israéliennes. La résolution invite les autorités israéliennes à respecter les droits des prisonniers palestiniens et à protéger leur santé, leur dignité et leur vie.

1. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante condamne-t-elle ces actes de violence à l'encontre du peuple palestinien?

2. Compte tenu de ces faits, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est-elle d'avis que la politique israélienne en matière de prisons doit être modifiée?

3. Quelles mesures la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante prendra-t-elle afin de garantir que le traitement des prisonniers palestiniens soit conforme au droit international?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Catherine Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(31 mai 2013)

À plusieurs reprises, l'UE s'est émue auprès des autorités israéliennes de la situation des détenus palestiniens, notamment les grévistes de la faim et les détenus administratifs.

Le 16 février, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a demandé le rétablissement immédiat du droit de visite des familles et le plein respect des obligations internationales contractées en matière de Droits de l'homme pour tous les détenus et prisonniers palestiniens. Elle a en outre rappelé combien il est important que toutes les parties respectent pleinement l'accord du 14 mai 2012 sur les droits des prisonniers palestiniens.

Le recours aux ordonnances de détention administrative par Israël préoccupe l'UE depuis longtemps. En vertu du droit international, les détenus ont le droit d'être informés des raisons de leur détention et la décision de mise en détention elle-même doit faire l'objet d'une véritable procédure d'examen. L'UE demande à Israël d'inculper officiellement les personnes détenues pour leur permettre de bénéficier d'un procès équitable, sans délai excessif. Elle aborde régulièrement la question des prisonniers palestiniens avec Israël à tous les niveaux, y compris à l'échelon du Conseil d'association. Ce dossier est examiné périodiquement au sein du groupe de travail sur les Droits de l'homme dans le cadre de l'actuel accord d'association et l'UE fait part de ses préoccupations dans ses rapports annuels de suivi.

Israël conteste qu'Arafat Jaradat soit mort après avoir été torturé. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante soutient la demande des Nations unies relative à l'ouverture d'une enquête indépendante et transparente sur les circonstances de la mort de M. Jaradat, dont les résultats devraient être rendus publics dans les meilleurs délais.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003929/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE) en Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(8 april 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Rechten van Palestijnse gevangenen

Sinds 1967 zijn meer dan 750 000 Palestijnen gearresteerd, vastgehouden en gevangen gezet op grond van het Israëlische krijgsrecht. Dit is het hoogste opsluitingscijfer ter wereld. De situatie is nog steeds kritiek, met meer dan 4 740 Palestijnse politieke gevangenen in Israëlische gevangenissen, inclusief minderjarigen. Voorts hielden de Israëlische veiligheidsdiensten in 2012 meer dan 3 800 Palestijnen vast, met als verantwoording veiligheidsredenen. Volgens het Openbaar comité tegen foltering in Israël is er ook sprake van dit soort van detenties bij vreedzame betogingen.

Israëls behandeling van zijn gevangenen schendt het internationale recht op diverse manieren, met name door de detentie van Palestijnen voor onbepaalde duur; de toepassing van de wet op onwettige strijders (een vorm van detentie zonder aanklacht, proces of gerechtelijke garanties); en de schending van het bezoekrecht voor familieleden. Belangrijk is ook de vaststelling dat de Palestijnse gevangenen en opgeslotenen steeds vaker worden onderworpen aan geregelde en willekeurige foltering en mishandeling, als in het geval van Arafat Jaradat, die in februari 2013 is overleden na in de gevangenis te zijn gefolterd.

Op 13 maart 2013 keurde het Parlement een resolutie over de zaak van Arafat Jaradat en de situatie van Palestijnse gedetineerden in Israëlische gevangenissen goed. In deze resolutie wordt er bij de Israëlische autoriteiten op aangedrongen dat zij de rechten van Palestijnse gedetineerden eerbiedigen en hun gezondheid, waardigheid en levens beschermen.

1. Veroordeelt de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger de hierboven beschreven gewelddaden tegen het Palestijnse volk?

2. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger gelet op bovenstaande feiten van mening dat het Israëlische gevangenissenbeleid moet worden veranderd?

3. Welke stappen zal de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de behandeling van Palestijnse gevangenen voldoet aan de eisen van het internationale recht?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(31 mei 2013)

De EU heeft de aandacht van de Israëlische autoriteiten reeds herhaaldelijk gevestigd op haar bedenkingen met betrekking tot Palestijnse gedetineerden, en met name in verband met hongerstakingen en administratief gedetineerden.

Op 16 februari heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter opgeroepen tot de onmiddellijke herinvoering van familiebezoekrecht en de volledige naleving van internationale mensenrechtenverbintenissen ten aanzien van alle Palestijnse gedetineerden en gevangenen. Daarnaast heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter herinnerd aan het belang van de volledige naleving door alle partijen van de overeenkomsten betreffende de rechten van Palestijnse gevangenen van 14 mei 2012.

De EU heeft reeds lange tijd bedenkingen bij het gebruik van administratieve aanhoudingsbevelen door Israël. Krachtens internationaal recht hebben gedetineerden het recht geïnformeerd te worden over de redenen voor hun hechtenis en moet de hechtenis zelf onderworpen worden aan een adequate evaluatieprocedure. De EU roept Israël op om formele aanklachten in te dienen tegen personen die worden vastgehouden om hun zonder onnodige vertraging een eerlijk proces te geven. De EU kaart de kwestie van de Palestijnse gevangenen geregeld aan bij Israël op alle niveaus, ook in de associatieraad. De kwestie wordt geregeld besproken in de werkgroep mensenrechten in het kader van de bestaande associatieovereenkomst. De bezwaren van de EU komen eveneens tot uiting in de jaarlijkse voortgangsverslagen.

Israël betwist dat Arafat Jaradat is overleden ten gevolge van folteringen. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter steunt de oproep van de Verenigde Naties tot een onafhankelijk en transparant onderzoek naar de omstandigheden van de dood van Arafat Jaradat. De resultaten van daarvan zouden zo spoedig mogelijk bekend moeten worden gemaakt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003929/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE) and Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Rights of Palestinian prisoners

Since 1967, more than 750 000 Palestinian people have been arrested, detained and imprisoned under Israeli military law. This represents the highest rate of incarceration worldwide. The situation is still critical, since there are over 4 740 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails, including minors. Furthermore, Israeli security services detained more than 3 800 Palestinians in 2012, using reasons of security as justification. Detentions of this nature have also occurred at peaceful demonstrations, according to the Public Committee against Torture in Israel.

Israel's treatment of its detainees violates international law in a number of ways, including the detention of Palestinians for indefinite periods; the application of the Unlawful Combatants Law (which is a form of detention without charge, trial or judicial guarantees); and the violation of family visitation rights. Also, it is important to note that Palestinian prisoners and detainees have been increasingly subjected to regular and arbitrary torture and ill-treatment, as in the case of Arafat Jaradat, who died after being tortured in jail in February 2012.

On 13 March 2013, Parliament approved a resolution on the case of Arafat Jaradat and the situation of Palestinian prisons in Israeli jails. The resolution calls on the Israeli authorities to respect the rights of Palestinian prisoners and to protect their health, dignity and lives.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative condemn these acts of violence against the Palestinian people?

2. In light of these facts, does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that the Israeli policy on prisons needs to be changed?

3. What steps will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that the treatment of Palestinian prisoners will respect international law?

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

The EU has repeatedly drawn the attention of the Israeli authorities to its concerns regarding Palestinian detainees, notably with regard to hunger-strikers and to administrative detainees.

On 16 February, the HR/VP called for the immediate restoration of family visiting rights and the full respect of international human rights obligations towards all Palestinian detainees and prisoners. The HR/VP further recalled the importance of full adherence by all sides to the 14 May 2012 agreement on the rights of Palestinian prisoners.

The EU has longstanding concerns over Israel's use of administrative detention orders. Under international law, detainees have the right to be informed about the reasons underlying any detention, and the decision on detention itself must be subject to a meaningful review process. The EU calls on Israel to bring formal charges against any individuals detained, with a view to bringing them to a fair trial without undue delay. The EU regularly raises the issue of Palestinian prisoners with Israel at all levels, including at the level of the Association Council. The question is regularly discussed in the human rights working group under the existing Association Agreement and EU concerns are reflected in its annual progress reports.

Israel disputes the claim that Arafat Jaradat died after being tortured. The HR/VP supports the call by the United Nations for an independent and transparent investigation into the circumstances of Mr Jaradat's death, the results of which should be made public as soon as possible.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003930/13
à la Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(8 avril 2013)

Objet: Barrières au fonctionnement du marché intérieur pour la vente à distance de vin

La vente directe de vin est la première source de revenus des petites et moyennes entreprises vitivinicoles, qui sont pour la majeure partie des entreprises familiales. Le développement de l'œnotourisme et les circuits courts de vente directe sont d'ailleurs encouragés par la politique européenne de développement rural.

Même si le particulier peut, comme le prévoit la directive 2008/118/CE du Conseil, acquérir jusqu'à 90 litres de vins tranquilles et jusqu'à 60 litres de vins mousseux pour besoin personnel et les transporter lui-même vers un État membre autre que l'État membre où les produits sont acquis, on constate cependant de sévères disfonctionnements du marché intérieur en ce qui concerne la vente à distance.

Les droits d'accises doivent être réglés dans l'État membre de destination si l'acquéreur ne se rend pas physiquement dans l'État membre d'acquisition. Les vignerons souhaitant exporter des quantités réduites de vins à des particuliers sont obligés de passer par un représentant fiscal pour le paiement des accises dans le pays de destination, ce qui entraîne inévitablement une hausse considérable du prix de vente, au point de décourager les clients potentiels d'acheter le produit. Les procédures administratives varient d'ailleurs sensiblement d'un État membre à l'autre.

Ces complications administratives inutiles ne posent certainement que peu de problèmes au grand négoce qui peut compter sur la couverture intracommunautaire de son réseau de distribution mais excluent les petites et moyennes entreprises vitivinicoles du marché intérieur.

1. La Commission entend-elle prendre des mesures visant à permettre aux petites et moyennes entreprises de participer pleinement au marché intérieur par le biais d'une simplification administrative?

2. Les fonds destinés au développement rural, et notamment à la promotion de l'œnotourisme, ne seraient-ils pas plus efficaces si on permettait aux viticulteurs d'entretenir une relation commerciale avec les touristes, et ce au-delà de leur séjour dans la région?

3. Convenez-vous du fait que ce sujet touche aux responsabilités de plusieurs commissaires, notamment MM. Cioloş, Semeta, De Gucht, Tajani, Hahn et Barnier?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(27 mai 2013)

1. La Commission a connaissance des dysfonctionnements du marché intérieur liés au régime des ventes à distance de marchandises soumises à accise mises à la consommation, et en particulier dans le commerce du vin, qui touche principalement les petites et moyennes entreprises vitivinicoles.

La Commission a mis en place un groupe de projet composé de 19 États membres ([1]) afin de contribuer à la simplification et à l'harmonisation des procédures de suivi pour les mouvements de marchandises soumises à accise mises à la consommation. Celui-ci devrait faire rapport sur ses travaux d'ici le milieu de l'année 2014.

La Commission souhaite réduire les charges et les complications administratives auxquelles font face tous les acteurs concernés par ces opérations pour rendre le marché unique plus efficace, ce qui réduirait forcément les coûts pour ce secteur de l'économie.

2. Dans sa proposition de politique de développement rural pour la période de programmation 2014-2020 ([2]), la Commission a présenté le cadre qui permettrait de soutenir le tourisme rural. Conformément au principe de subsidiarité, il appartient aux États membres de définir le soutien qu'ils veulent accorder au tourisme du vin dans leurs programmes de développement rural, ainsi que de choisir les projets les plus efficaces.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?Lang=FR
([2]) COM(2011)627 final 2 du 19.10.2011.

3. La question soulevée par l'Honorable Parlementaire porte essentiellement sur la fiscalité et relève donc de la compétence du commissaire chargé de la fiscalité, des douanes, des statistiques, de l'audit et de la lutte antifraude. À cet égard, il convient de rappeler que toutes les décisions adoptées par la Commission doivent respecter le principe de collégialité.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003930/13
to the Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Distance selling of wine: internal market inefficiencies

Small and medium-sized wine producers, the majority of which are family businesses, generate most of their income through direct sales. What is more, European rural development policy encourages wine tourism and the use of direct marketing methods which bypass wholesalers and retailers.

Although Council Directive 2008/118/EC authorises private individuals to purchase up to 90 litres of still wine and up to 60 litres of sparking wine for their personal use in one Member State and transport the wines themselves to another Member State, the internal market is much less efficient when it comes to distance selling.

If the buyer does not travel to the Member State in which the goods are purchased, excise duty must be paid in the Member State of destination. Wine growers who wish to export limited quantities of wine to private individuals are forced to appoint a tax representative, who then pays the excise duty in the country of destination. This inevitably increases the price of the wine substantially, to the extent that potential customers are put off. The administrative procedures involved also vary considerably from one Member State to another.

Whilst large concerns with EU-wide distribution networks can shrug them off, these unnecessary administrative complications serve to exclude small and medium-sized wine producers from the internal market.

1. Does the Commission intend to simplify the administrative arrangements in question so that small and medium-sized firms can participate fully in the internal market?

2. Does it not agree that funding for rural development, and in particular for the promotion of wine tourism, would be more effective if wine growers were able to continue selling their products directly to tourists even after the latter have returned home?

3. Does it agree that this matter falls within the remit of several Commissioners, including Mr Cioloş, Mr Semeta, Mr De Gucht, Mr Tajani, Mr Hahn and Mr Barnier?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the internal market inefficiencies due to the arrangements for distance selling of excise goods released for consumption and in particular in the trade of wine, which mostly affects small and medium-sized wine producers.

The Commission has launched a Project Group with 19 Member States ([1]) in order to contribute to the simplification and harmonisation of procedures for the movement of excise goods released for consumption. It is expected to report by the middle of 2014.

The Commission wishes to reduce the administrative burdens and complications, which hit all the actors involved in these transactions in order to make the single market more efficient, which would inevitably lead to reducing the costs for this sector of the economy.

2. The Commission, in its proposal for the rural development policy for the next programming period 2014-2020 ([2]), has provided the necessary framework to support rural tourism. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, it is up to the Member States to define further support for wine tourism in their rural development programmes as well as chose the most effective projects.

3. The issue raised by the Honourable Member basically relates to taxation and falls within the remit of the Member of the Commission responsible for Taxation, Customs, Statistics, Audit and Anti-Fraud. In this respect, please bear in mind that all decisions adopted by the Commission must respect the collegiality principle.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/
([2]) COM(2011) 627 final 2 of 19.10.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003931/13
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Ausbildung von Piloten

Personen, die auf privater Basis eine Ausbildung zum Linienflugzeug-Piloten absolviert haben, benötigen, um eine feste Anstellung bei einer Airline als Pilot zu bekommen, eine aufrechte Musterberechtigung (Type-Rating) zum Führen eines bestimmten Flugzeugtypen. Um diese zu erlangen, fallen bei vielen europäischen Linienfluggesellschaften Kosten in einer Bandbreite von etwa 25.000,00 EUR bis zu 45.000,00 EUR für den Piloten/die Pilotin an. Nur wenige Airlines übernehmen die Kosten für den Erwerb der Musterberechtigung und meist müssen sich die Piloten im Gegenzug für einige Jahre verpflichten.

1. Ist es von den Airlines rechtens, für die benötigten Musterberechtigungen einen Kostenbeitrag in derartiger Höhe einzufordern?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, die Modalitäten für den Erwerb einer Musterberechtigung europaweit zu vereinheitlichen, insbesondere was das offensichtlich sehr unterschiedliche Kostenniveau angeht?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(3. Juni 2013)

Die gemeinsamen Anforderungen bezüglich der Ausbildung für Musterberechtigungen sowie der Ausbildungsorganisationen, die die Ausbildung für die Musterberechtigung erteilen, sind in der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1178/2011 der Kommission in der geänderten Fassung der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 290/2012 der Kommission ([1]) festgelegt. Diese technischen Anforderungen wurden von der Europäischen Agentur für Flugsicherheit (EASA) entwickelt. Sie dienen der Schaffung eines einheitlichen, hohen Sicherheitsniveaus der Zivilluftfahrt in der gesamten Europäischen Union.

Die Kosten der Ausbildung sind in diesen Rechtsinstrumenten nicht geregelt, da sie in den Zuständigkeitsbereich der Mitgliedstaaten und der Luftverkehrsunternehmen fallen.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 290/2012 der Kommission vom 30. März 2012 zur Änderung der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1178/2011 zur Festlegung technischer Vorschriften und von Verwaltungsverfahren in Bezug auf das fliegende Personal in der Zivilluftfahrt gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 216/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, ABl. L 100 vom 5.4.2012, S. 1-56.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003931/13
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Training of pilots

People who have trained privately as an airline pilot need a good type rating that entitles them to fly a particular type of aircraft if they are to find permanent employment with an airline as a pilot. In order to achieve this, the pilot faces costs ranging between about EUR 25 000 and EUR 45 000, which are charged by many European airlines. Only a small number of airlines absorb the costs for acquiring the type rating and in return pilots have to commit to several years' service in most of these cases.

1. Is it right for the airlines to demand such high charges for the necessary type ratings?

2. Is the Commission considering standardising the arrangements for acquiring a type rating throughout Europe, in particular in relation to the obviously very variable cost level?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The common requirements concerning training for type ratings as well as training organisations providing type rating training are laid down in Commission Regulation 1178/2011 as amended by Commission Regulation 290/2012 ([1]). These technical requirements have been developed by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and serve the purpose of establishing a high uniform level of civil aviation safety throughout the European Union.

These legal instruments do not cover the pricing for training as this issue falls under the responsibility of the Member States and airlines.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 290/2012 of 30 March 2012 amending Regulation (EU) No 1178/2011 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures related to civil aviation aircrew pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 100, 5.4.2012, p. 1-56.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003941/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Kinder und Jugendliche mit Bluthochdruck

Der Gesundheitszustand europäischer Kinder und Jugendlicher wird offenbar immer schlechter.

In Deutschland gibt es geschätzt 700 000 Kinder und Jugendliche, die an Bluthochdruck leiden; dies sei auf Bewegungsmangel und Adipositas zurückzuführen.

1. Kann die Kommission eine Einschätzung dazu abgeben, wie viele Kinder und Jugendliche europaweit betroffen sind?

2. Wie viele Kinder und Jugendlicher sind in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten betroffen?

3. Gedenkt die Kommission, diesbezüglich langfristige Studien zu veranlassen, um eine deutliche Besserung der gegenwärtigen Situation herbeizuführen?

4. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission den Mitgliedstaaten empfehlen, um diesem gravierenden Gesundheitsproblem der Jugendlichen entgegenzuwirken und damit gleichzeitig die Gesundheits- und Sozialkosten langfristig zu senken?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission erfasst nicht, wie viele Kinder unter Bluthochdruck leiden.

Wie im Dokument „Ernährung, Übergewicht, Adipositas: Eine Strategie für Europa“ ([1]) festgelegt, fördert die Kommission seit 2007 EU-Maßnahmen für mehr Bewegung und eine gesündere Ernährung. Diese Strategie wird in Zusammenarbeit mit den Mitgliedstaaten und den Interessenträgern in der EU umgesetzt.

Vorrangiges Ziel der EU-Strategie sind Maßnahmen zugunsten von Kindern und Menschen aus den unteren sozioökonomischen Gruppen. Die übrigen Prioritäten sind besser informierte Verbraucher, die Bereitstellung gesunder Lebensmittel, die Bewegungsförderung und der Aufbau von Überwachungssystemen und einer Evidenzbasis zur Unterstützung des Vorgehens. Wichtig ist, dass die Mitgliedstaaten weiterhin Maßnahmen auf regionaler und lokaler Ebene ausarbeiten und durchführen.

Im Einklang mit den Zielen der Strategie hat die Kommission 2007 eine hochrangige Gruppe für Ernährung und Bewegung ([2]) eingerichtet. Da der Salzkonsum bei der Regulierung des Blutdrucks eine wichtige Rolle spielt, hat die hochrangige Gruppe 2008 einen gemeinsamen EU-Rahmen für einzelstaatliche Salz-Initiativen mit dem gemeinsamen Ziel eines europäischen Ansatzes zur Senkung des Salzverbrauchs vereinbart.

Ferner werden die Ziele der Strategie mithilfe von Projekten verwirklicht, die aus dem 7. Forschungsrahmenprogramm der EU finanziert werden und u. a. folgende Themenbereiche abdecken: Neuformulierung von Lebensmittelrezepturen, Bereitstellung gesunder Lebensmittel und Verstehen des Verbraucherverhaltens.

([1]) KOM(2007)279 endg.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003941/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Children and adolescents with high blood pressure.

The health of Europe's children and adolescents is obviously deteriorating.

It is estimated that there are 700 000 children and adolescents in Germany who suffer from hypertension due to obesity and a lack of exercise.

1. Can the Commission offer an estimate of the number of children and adolescents affected throughout Europe?

2. How many children and adolescents are affected in the individual Member States?

3. Does the Commission propose to launch long-term studies on this issue aimed at significantly improving the current situation?

4. What measures will the Commission recommend to the Member States in order to counter this serious health problem among young people, thereby also reducing health and social costs in the long term?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission does not collect data on the number of children suffering from hypertension.

Since 2007, the Commission promotes EU action to enhance physical activity levels and promote healthier diets, as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]). The strategy is implemented through cooperation with Member States and EU Stakeholders.

Action targeted at children and people from low socioeconomic groups is a priority of the EU Strategy. The other priority areas are better informed consumers; making the healthy option available; encouraging physical activity; and developing monitoring systems and the evidence base to support policy making. It is essential that actions continue to be developed and carried out by Member States at regional and local levels.

In line with the objectives of the strategy, the Commission established in 2007 a High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2]). As salt intake plays a critical role in regulating blood pressure, the High Level Group jointly agreed in 2008 to a common EU Framework for National Salt Initiatives with common vision for a European approach towards salt reduction.

Furthermore, projects funded under the 7th EU Research Framework Programme aim to contribute to the objectives of the strategy, e.g. in the area of reformulation, making the healthy option available and understanding consumer behaviour.

([1]) COM(2007)279 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003942/13
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Begrenzung langer Beförderungen von Tieren bei Tiertransporten

Wie aus dem Kommissionsbericht ([1]) hervorgeht, hat sich die Anzahl der langen Beförderung von Tieren nicht verringert, sondern sich zwischen 2005 (dem Jahr des Inkrafttretens der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005) und 2009 um 32 % ([2]) erhöht. Das in Erwägungsgrund 5 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 erklärte Ziel, dass „aus Tierschutzgründen […] lange Beförderungen von Tieren — auch von Schlachttieren — auf ein Mindestmaß begrenzt werden [sollten]", wurde somit nicht erreicht.

Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission unternommen und welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission in naher Zukunft, um die Anzahl der langen Beförderungen von Tieren zu reduzieren?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2013)

Erwägungsgründe enthalten keine verbindlichen Bestimmungen. Mit ihnen wird dargelegt, warum der Rechtsakt erlassen wird, und es werden die wesentlichen Bestimmungen des verfügenden Teils begründet. Daher ist der Wortlaut von Erwägung 5 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport ([3]) als Begründung für die Rechtsvorschriften zu betrachten und nicht als Ziel, zu dessen Erreichung die Kommission bestimmte Maßnahmen ergreifen muss.

Erwägungsgrund 5 besagt, dass lange Beförderungen von Tieren — auch von Schlachttieren — aus Tierschutzgründen auf ein Mindestmaß begrenzt werden sollten. Dieser Erwägungsgrund spiegelt sich in den Vorschriften des Artikels 3 Buchstaben a und f wider, denen zufolge die Beförderung so zu planen ist, dass ihre Dauer so kurz wie möglich ist, und der Transport zum Bestimmungsort ohne Verzögerungen erfolgen sollte.

Damit das Ziel nach Maßgabe des Erwägungsgrunds erreicht werden kann, muss die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 ordnungsgemäß durchgesetzt werden. Dies ist Aufgabe der Mitgliedstaaten. Wie im Bericht der Kommission über den Schutz von Tieren ([4]) dargelegt, ergreift die Kommission aber Maßnahmen, um die Durchsetzung zu verbessern. Ein Beispiel hierfür ist die Annahme eines Kommissionsbeschlusses betreffend die Jahresberichte der Mitgliedstaaten über Kontrollen von Tiertransporten ([5]). Gemäß Anhang II Teil 2 Nummer 4 dieses Beschlusses erstatten die Mitgliedstaaten Bericht über ihre Kontrollen zur Überprüfung der Anwendung des Artikels 3 Buchstaben a und h der Verordnung.

([1]) Bericht der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat über die Auswirkungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport KOM(2001)0700.

([2]) Wie aus Tabelle 2 des Kommissionsberichts hervorgeht, betrug die Zahl der Sendungen mit lebenden Tieren, welche über lange Strecken, d. h. mehr als acht Stunden, befördert wurden, im Jahr 2005 99 244 (= 83 513 + 15 731 Sendungen) und im Jahr 2009 131 439 (= 114 820 + 16 619 Sendungen). Dies entspricht einem Anstieg von 32,4 %. Diese Zahlen schließen nicht die Beförderungen über lange Strecken innerhalb einzelner Mitgliedstaaten, sondern nur grenzüberschreitende Fahrten innerhalb der EU und EU-Importe/Exporte ein.

([3]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 des Rates vom 22. Dezember 2004 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport und damit zusammenhängenden Vorgängen. ABl. L 3 vom 5.1.2005, S. 1.

([4]) Bericht der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat über die Auswirkungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport, KOM(2011)700 endg.

([5]) Durchführungsbeschluss der Kommission vom 18. April 2013 betreffend die Jahresberichte über nichtdiskriminierende Kontrollen gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport, 2013/188/EU, ABl. L 111 vom 23.4.2013, S. 107.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003942/13
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Limiting the transport of animals over long journeys

As the report of the Commission ([1]) points out, the transport of animals over long journeys has not reduced, but has rather increased by 32% ([2]) between 2005 (the year in which Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 entered into force) and 2009. Thus, the declared aim of the fifth recital of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 that 'for reasons of animal welfare the transport of animals over long journeys, including animals for slaughter, should be limited as far as possible' has not been achieved.

What steps has the Commission taken and what steps is it planning in the near future to reduce the transport of animals over long journeys?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

A recital to legislation does not include normative provisions; it rather specifies the statement of reasons for the adoption of the legislation and motivates the chief provisions of the enacting terms. Hence, the wording of recital (5) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([3]) should be seen as an explanation to why the requirements of the legislation is in place, and not as an objective in relation to which the Commission is supposed to take specific actions.

Recital 5 states that 'For reasons of animal welfare the transport of animals over long journeys, including animals for slaughter, should be limited as far as possible.' This recital is reflected through the requirements of Articles 3(a) and (f), according to which the journey should be planned so that its length is minimised, and the transport should be carried out without delay to the place of destination.

The proper enforcement of Regulation 1/2005 is what ensures that the objective of the recitals is fulfilled. Enforcement is the responsibility of Member States. The Commission is however taking steps to improve enforcement by carrying out a number of actions as described in the Commission Report on animal welfare during transport ([4]). One example is the adoption of a Commission Decision on Member States' annual reports on controls of animal transports ([5]). According to Annex II, Part 2, point 4 to that Decision, Member States shall report on their controls of the implementation of Articles 3(a) and (h).

([1]) The Commission's report to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the welfare of animals in transport, COM(2001) 0700.

([2]) As is evident from Table 2 of the Commission's report, the number of consignments of live animals transported over long distances, i.e. for more than eight hours, numbered 99 244 (83 513 + 15 731 consignments) in 2005 and 131 439 (= 114 820 + 16 619 consignments) in 2009. This amounts to a rise of 32.4%. These figures only cover cross-border transport within the EU and EU imports/exports and do not include transport over long distances within individual Member States.

([3]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.

([4]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, COM(2011) 700 final.

([5]) Commission implementing Decision of 18 April 2013 on annual reports on non-discriminatory inspections carried out pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, 2013/188/EU, OJ L 111, 23.4.2013, p. 107.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003943/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Israelische Gasförderung im Tamar-Feld — Streit um Seegrenzen

Anfang April 2013 wurde erstmals Erdgas aus der 2009 entdeckten Lagerstätte im östlichen Mittelmeer — in der 255 Milliarden Kubikmeter Erdgas lagern sollen — über eine kilometerlange Pipeline zum israelischen Festland transportiert. Im Hinblick auf die (außer mit Zypern) rechtlich nicht abgesicherten Seegrenzen ist bei Förderungen im Tamar-Feld und im Leviathan-Feld ein Streit um Seegrenzen praktisch vorprogrammiert. Insbesondere die Seegrenze zum Libanon gilt als umstritten. Die dort regierende iranfreundliche schiitische Hisbollah hat schon mehrfach angekündigt, sich von Israel nicht ihr Gas „stehlen" zu lassen

Welche Vorbereitungen werden auf EU-Ebene für die absehbare Verschlechterung der Sicherheitslage im Nahen Osten getroffen?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Der EU ist die fragile Sicherheitslage in der Region voll und ganz bewusst und sie engagiert sich aktiv an mehreren Fronten. So hat sie immer wieder zu einer umfassenden Friedenslösung in Nahost aufgerufen, die auch Syrien und Libanon einbezieht. Die EU hat die arabische Friedensinitiative begrüßt, die unter anderem die Aussicht auf eine Normalisierung der Beziehungen zwischen Israel und der arabischen Welt bietet. Die Entdeckung umfangreicher Gasvorkommen im östlichen Mittelmeer zeigt deutlich, welcher Nutzen aus einer Zusammenarbeit gezogen werden könnte. Die Kommission wird im Rahmen ihrer bilateralen Beziehungen weiter die Ratifizierung und konzertierte Umsetzung des Seerechtsübereinkommens der Vereinten Nationen sowie eine bessere Bewirtschaftung der Meeresgebiete auf subregionaler Ebene im Mittelmeerraum fördern, wie sie in ihrer Mitteilung vom 9. September 2009 ([1]) hervorgehoben hat.

([1]) KOM(2009)466 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003943/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Israeli gas extraction in the Tamar Field — disputed sea borders

At the beginning of April 2013, natural gas was brought ashore in Israel for the first time using a pipeline measuring several kilometres in length from a field that was discovered in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea in 2009 and that is believed to contain 255 billion cubic metres of natural gas. In view of the fact that the sea borders are not legally secured (except with Cyprus), a dispute over sea borders is almost inevitable in relation to extractions from the Tamar and Leviathan Fields. The sea border with Lebanon is particularly contentious. The Shiite Hezbollah Government there is friendly towards Iran and has already stated several times that is not going to allow Israel to 'steal' its gas.

What preparations are being made at EU level for a foreseeable deterioration of the security situation in the Middle East?

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

The EU is acutely aware of the fragile security situation in the region and remains actively engaged on several fronts. It has consistently called for comprehensive peace in the Middle East, including the Syrian and the Lebanese track. The EU has welcomed the Arab Peace Initiative, which also holds out the prospect of normalisation of relations between Israel and the Arab world. The discovery of extensive gas deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean underlines the benefits which could be secured from cooperation. The Commission will continue to encourage the ratification and concerted implementation of the United Nations (UN) Convention of the Law of the Sea in its bilateral relations, as well as improved governance of the marine space at sub-regional level in the Mediterranean, as underlined in its communication of 11 September 2009 ([1]).

([1]) COM(2009) 466 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003944/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Bienenschutz

Auf EU-Ebene widmet man sich ja nun dem massiven Bienensterben. Wichtig für die Bienen ist indes auch eine ökologische Gestaltung von öffentlichen Flächen und eine Sensibilisierung der Bevölkerung. Beispielsweise ist es hilfreich, wenn Wiesenflächen nicht allzu oft gemäht werden, so dass sie blühen können. Biologische Landwirtschaft, bei der auf den Einsatz von Insektiziden verzichtet wird, spielt auch eine wichtige Rolle für den Bienenschutz.

1. Werden auf EU-Ebene Initiativen für Bienenschutz gefördert?

2. Laufen EU-weite Projekte, um Gemeinden und Bevölkerung hinsichtlich des Bienenschutzes zu sensibilisieren?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung des Bienenzuchtsektors werden auf EU-Ebene im Rahmen der Verordnung über die einheitliche Gemeinsame Marktorganisation (EG) Nr. 1234/2007 ([1]) und der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1698/2005 über die Förderung der Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums ([2]) bezuschusst. Mehrere dieser Fördermaßnahmen haben sich positiv auf den Schutz der Bienenpopulation ausgewirkt.

Insbesondere ist in Artikel 105 der Verordnung über die einheitliche GMO vorgesehen, dass die Mitgliedstaaten nationale Dreijahresprogramme zur Förderung der Bienenzucht auflegen können. Zu den Maßnahmen, die für entsprechende Beihilfen infrage kommen, zählen laut Artikel 106 dieser Verordnung die technische Hilfe für Imker und Imkereivereinigungen, die Bekämpfung der Varroatose, die Rationalisierung der Wanderimkerei, die Förderung der Analyse physikalisch-chemischer Merkmale des Honigs durch Labors, die Wiederauffüllung des gemeinschaftlichen Bienenbestands und die Zusammenarbeit mit Organisationen, die auf die Durchführung von Programmen der angewandten Forschung auf dem Gebiet der Bienenzucht und der Bienenzuchterzeugnisse spezialisiert sind. In allen Mitgliedstaaten sind nationale Bienenzuchtprogramme in Kraft, und die EU finanziert 50 % der von den Mitgliedstaaten hierfür getätigten Ausgaben.

Außerdem werden im Rahmen der Reform der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik mehrere allgemeine Maßnahmen für mehr Nachhaltigkeit in der Landwirtschaft vorgeschlagen. Über spezielle Maßnahmen wie die Förderung des Erhalts bestimmter Flächen, auf denen Honigpflanzen wachsen, wird ebenfalls diskutiert.

Die EU hat schon in der Vergangenheit mehrere Projekte zum Schutz der Bienen durchgeführt und tut dies auch weiterhin. Einige dieser Projekte beinhalten die Verbreitung entsprechender Informationen in der Öffentlichkeit, insbesondere über die Website der Kommission ([3]) und in wissenschaftlichen Veröffentlichungen, so z. B. in einem Buch zur Standardisierung von Forschungsarbeiten zu Bienen ([4]).

([1]) ABl. L 299 vom 16.11.2007.
([2]) ABl. L 277 vom 21.10.2005.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.coloss.org/beebook.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003944/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Protection of the bee population

The EU is now focusing on the massive collapse of the bee population. Important measures to encourage bees include the environmental design of public spaces and the raising of awareness among the public. For example, it is helpful if meadows are not mown too frequently to allow them to flower. Organic farming practices avoiding the use of insecticides also play an important role in protecting bees.

1. Are initiatives to protect the bee population funded at EU level?

2. Are there any EU-wide projects aimed at raising awareness among the public of the importance of protecting bees?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

Measures to support the apiculture sector are funded at EU level in the framework of the single Common Market Organisation Regulation ([1]) (EC) No 1234/2007 and of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development programme ([2]). Several of these support measures have a positive effect on the protection of bee population.

In particular, Article 105 of the single CMO Regulation provides that Member States may draw up a triennal national apiculture programme. In line with Article 106 of this regulation, the measures eligible for aid include technical assistance to beekeepers and grouping of beekeepers, control of varroasis, rationalisation of transhumance, support for laboratories carrying out analyses of honey, restocking of hives and cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of applied research programmes in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products. All Member States have national apiculture programmes in place and the Union provides part financing for these apiculture programmes equivalent to 50% of the expenditure borne by Member States.

Additionnally, several general measures to promote a more sustainable agriculture are proposed in the frame of the reform of the common agricultural policy. Specific measures such as encouraging the maintenance of certain areas with melliferous plants are also discussed.

The EU has conducted and is continuing to carry out several projects in relation to the protection of bees. Several of these projects include the dissemination of information towards the public in particular through the website of the Commission ([3]) and scientific publications such as a book dedicated to the standardisation of research studies on bees ([4]).

([1]) OJ L 299,16.11.2007.
([2]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.coloss.org/beebook.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003945/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Euro-Krise verschlechtert Zugang zu medizinischer Versorgung

Das Europäische Observatorium für Gesundheitssysteme und Gesundheitspolitik kam in einer Studie zu dem Schluss, dass die rigide Sparpolitik in den Krisenstaaten der Euro-Zone mitverantwortlich ist für eine drastische Verschlechterung des Gesundheitszustands der Bürger vor allem in Griechenland, Spanien und Portugal. In Griechenland hätten Krankenhäuser Probleme, überhaupt die medizinischen Mindeststandards zu halten. Es soll bereits zu besorgniserregenden Ausbrüchen von Krankheiten wie Malaria, West-Nil- oder Denguefieber gekommen sein. Erstmals brechen in Europa also Epidemien wie Malaria aus.

1. Ist der Kommission diese Studie bekannt?

2. Was wird auf EU-Ebene diesbezüglich unternommen?

3. Welche Auswirkungen auf andere Mitgliedstaaten werden in diesem Zusammenhang, etwa hinsichtlich Ausbreitung von Epidemien, Arztkostenerstattung für Touristen, Operationstourismus, Migration von Ärzten etc. erwartet?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission kennt die Veröffentlichung „Finanzkrise, Sparzwänge und Gesundheit in Europa" von Karanikolos et al in der Online-Version von The Lancet vom 27. März 2013.

Übertragbare Krankheiten wie Malaria, West-Nil- oder Denguefieber sind in der Entscheidung Nr. 2119/98/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über die Schaffung eines Netzes für die epidemiologische Überwachung und die Kontrolle übertragbarer Krankheiten in der EU routinemäßig erfasst. Daher werden sie auf europäischer Ebene aktiv beobachtet. Die Koordinierung von Maßnahmen, darunter Information der Öffentlichkeit sowie aktive Überwachungs- und Vektorbekämpfungsmaßnahmen, wurden in den Ländern, in denen Fälle ermittelt wurden, unverzüglich ergriffen.

Informationen über die möglichen Auswirkungen solcher Ausbrüche werden unter den öffentlichen Gesundheitsbehörden auf EU-Ebene ausgetauscht. Spezifische Konsultationen werden mit den Mitgliedstaaten, dem Europäischen Zentrum für die Prävention und die Kontrolle von Krankheiten und der Weltgesundheitsorganisation durchgeführt. Die Kommission überwacht weiterhin die Situation im Hinblick auf diese Krankheiten. Bisher ist die Lage unter Kontrolle.

In der angesprochenen Studie wird auch erwähnt, dass eine allgemeine Bewertung der Auswirkungen der rezenten Politikreformen im Bereich des Zugangs zu Pflege- und Gesundheitsleistungen noch nicht möglich ist. Es heißt weiter, das volle Ausmaß der Konsequenzen in ernsthaft betroffenen Ländern werde erst in einigen Jahren erkennbar werden. Daher hat die Kommission zu diesem Zeitpunkt keinen umfassenden Überblick über die allgemeinen Gesundheitsfolgen der jüngsten Reform der Haushaltspolitik.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003945/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Euro crisis leads to poorer access to healthcare services

A study carried out by the European Observatory on Health Policies and Health Systems has come to the conclusion that rigid austerity policies in the crisis countries of the euro area are partly responsible for a drastic deterioration in the health of citizens, particularly in Greece, Spain and Portugal. In Greece, hospitals are apparently experiencing problems maintaining even minimum medical standards. Reports suggest that there have already been worrying outbreaks of illnesses such as malaria, West Nile fever or Dengue fever virus. This is the first time that Europe has experienced outbreaks of epidemics like malaria.

1. Is the Commission aware of this study?

2. What steps are being taken at EU level in this respect?

3. What impact on other Member States is expected in this context, for example in terms of the spread of epidemics, the reimbursement of medical costs for tourists, medical tourism, the migration of doctors, etc.?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the publication 'Financial crisis, austerity and health in Europe' by Karanikolos et al in the Lancet online version of 27 March 2013.

Communicable diseases such as malaria, West Nile fever and dengue are routinely covered under Decision 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a European network for surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the EU. Thus they are actively monitored at European level and coordination of measures, including information to the public, active surveillance and vector control measures have been promptly undertaken in the countries in which cases have been identified.

Information about the potential impact of any such outbreaks is shared among the public health authorities at EU level. Specific consultation with the Member States, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the World Health Organisation is carried out. The Commission continues to monitor the situation with these diseases which so far has been under control.

The study in question further notes that a general assessment of the effects of recent policy reforms on access to care and health outcomes is not yet possible. It further states that 'the full scale of consequences in severely affected countries will become apparent only in several years'. Consequently, the Commission does not have, at this stage, a comprehensive overview of overall health impacts resulting from recent fiscal reform measures.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003946/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Evergreening von Arzneimittel-Patenten

Für 20 Jahre sichern Patente den großen Pharmakonzernen ein exklusives Verkaufsrecht für Medikamente. Nach Ablauf der Frist können auch andere Firmen die Präparate als Generika herstellen und zu einem Bruchteil des Originalpreises herstellen. Kritiker werfen Pharmafirmen vor, vor Ablauf des Patentes Arzneimittel zurückzuziehen, um sie danach, in leicht veränderter Form, wieder teuer auf den Markt zu bringen — sog. „Evergreening". Bis 2015 sollen weltweit Patente für Arzneimittel mit einem Jahresumsatz von 150 Milliarden US-Dollar auslaufen.

Aus diesem Grund werden etwa in Indien nur noch neue Medikamente geschützt, wenn eine „erhöhte therapeutische Wirksamkeit" nachweisbar ist. Anfang April 2013 hat der Pharmakonzern Novartis den Patentstreit um sein Krebsmittel Glivec in Indien vor dem Höchstgericht verloren.

Ist der Kommission das Problem des sog. „Evergreening" von Medikamenten bewusst und wie wird damit auf EU-Ebene umgegangen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(3. Juni 2013)

Forschung, die auf eine schrittweise Weiterentwicklung abzielt, ist wichtig, da sie zu erheblichen Verbesserungen der bestehenden Produkte führen kann. Die Ergebnisse dieser Forschung können durch Patente geschützt werden, sofern die normalen Patentierbarkeitserfordernisse Neuheit, erfinderische Tätigkeit und gewerbliche Anwendbarkeit erfüllt sind.

Jedoch kann die Lancierung eines Produktes der zweiten Generation in der Tat als Szenario gesehen werden, in dem der Originalpräparatehersteller unter Umständen von Instrumenten Gebrauch machen möchte, die den Marktzugang von Generika verzögern, die den Produkten der ersten Generation entsprechen. Patentstrategien wie das sogenannte „Evergreening" wurden von der Kommission im Rahmen ihrer Untersuchung des Wettbewerbs im Pharmasektor geprüft. Je nach Fallkonstellation können bestimmte Praktiken in diesem Zusammenhang in den Anwendungsbereich des Wettbewerbsrechts fallen. Die Kommission verfolgt ihre sektorspezifische Untersuchung weiter und achtet genau auf die Einhaltung des Wettbewerbsrechts.

Darüber hinaus ist der Regelungsrahmen für Arzneimittel in der Europäischen Union, nämlich die Richtlinie 2001/83/EG und die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 726/2004, so konzipiert, dass „Evergreening"-Strategien weniger attraktiv sind. In der Regel wird eine Umstellung auf Nachfolgeerfindungen oder Produkte der zweiten Generation Generikahersteller nicht davon abhalten, generische Kopien der Produkte der ersten Generation auf den Markt zu bringen, sobald die vorgeschriebene Datenschutzfrist für diese Produkte abgelaufen ist. Dies gilt auch dann, wenn der Originalpräparatehersteller sein Produkt der ersten Generation vom Markt zurückzieht. Folglich muss der Originalpräparatehersteller den betreffenden Markt unter Umständen mit konkurrierenden Generikaherstellern teilen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003946/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Evergreening of medicinal product patents

Patents allow the large pharmaceuticals companies to enjoy exclusive sales rights for medicinal products for 20 years. After this period, other companies can produce generic forms of the preparations at a fraction of the original price. Critics accuse the pharmaceuticals companies of withdrawing products before the patent runs out only to relaunch them on the market in a slightly altered form but at the same high price — a process known as 'evergreening'. By 2015, patents with an annual value of USD 150 billion worldwide are set to run out.

This is why in India, for example, new medicinal products are only protected if it is established that they offer 'increased therapeutic effectiveness'. At the beginning of April 2013, the Novartis pharmaceutical group lost the patent case for its cancer drug Glivec in the Indian Supreme Court.

Is the Commission aware of the problem of 'evergreening' in relation to medicinal products and how is this dealt with at EU level?

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

Incremental research is important as it can lead to significant improvements of existing products. Result of such research can be protected by patents provided the normal patentability requirements of novelty, inventive step, and industrial applicability are met.

Yet the launch of a second generation product can indeed be a scenario in which an originator company might want to make use of instruments that delay the market entry of generic products corresponding to the first generation product. Patent strategies such as 'evergreening' were examined by the Commission in its competition sector inquiry into the pharmaceutical sector. Depending on the individual circumstances of each case certain practices in this context may fall within the scope of competition law. The Commission is following up its sector inquiry and carefully ensuring compliance with competition law.

Moreover, the regulatory framework for medicinal products within the European Union, namely Directive 2001/83/EC and Regulation (EC) No 726/2004, is designed in a way that makes 'evergreening' strategies less attractive. Under normal circumstances, a switch to follow-up inventions or second generation products will not prevent generic companies from entering the market with generic copies of the first generation product, once the regulatory data protection period for that product has expired. This is even the case, where the originator company will withdraw its first generation product from the market. Consequently, the originator company may have to share the particular market with generic competitors.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003947/13
alla Commissione
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(9 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Caso Ilva di Taranto

Il 16 luglio 2012 la magistratura di Taranto ha ordinato il sequestro dello stabilimento siderurgico Ilva di Taranto perché le sue emissioni tossiche avrebbero causato seri danni ambientali. Lo Stato italiano con la legge n. 231 del 24 dicembre 2012 ha autorizzato la ripresa dell'attività produttiva dello stabilimento dichiarandolo sito di interesse nazionale, obbligando però la società ad ottemperare alle prescrizioni previste dalla nuova autorizzazione integrata ambientale (AIA). L'Ilva, secondo l'Agenzia Regionale Protezione Ambiente, non starebbe rispettando le prescrizioni dell'AIA continuando di fatto ad inquinare e le manifestazioni dei cittadini di Taranto dei giorni scorsi confermerebbero tale circostanza.

Nell'ipotesi inauspicabile di una chiusura o della necessità di riconvertire il sito industriale e preso atto che lo stabilimento Ilva di Taranto è il più grande stabilimento siderurgico europeo, sarebbe secondo la Commissione possibile:

1. la riallocazione delle somme non spese previste dai fondi Fesr e FSE destinati alla Regione Puglia al fine di promuovere un piano di riconversione industriale della società nonché un reinserimento occupazionale dei lavoratori;

2. l'accesso ad un cofinanziamento da parte della BEI ed eventualmente con quali modalità;

3. il ricorso al Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione per un sostegno all'impiego ed alla riqualificazione dei lavoratori;

4. la previsione di innovativi percorsi produttivi compatibili con il rispetto della salute dei cittadini e dell'assetto del territorio?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2013)

Gli strumenti finanziari FESR ([1]) non investono in imprese in difficoltà ([2]). Tuttavia, il programma per la Puglia cofinanziato dal FESR prevede la dotazione di 260 milioni di euro per «progetti integrati per la rigenerazione urbana e rurale».

L'FSE ([3]) può intervenire per sostenere il reimpiego e la riqualificazione di lavoratori in mobilità in seguito alla possibile chiusura o riconversione di impianti. Gli interventi possono essere effettuati su iniziativa dell'autorità di gestione del PO FSE ([4]) in Puglia, in conformità con il contenuto del programma e con le risorse disponibili.

La BEI è pronta a prendere in considerazione il sostegno finanziario ([5]) per lo sviluppo sociale, ambientale ed economico e per la rigenerazione dell'area, congiuntamente con l'intervento dei Fondi strutturali, malgrado le ben note complessità connesse all'impianto siderurgico ILVA di Taranto.

Nel contesto dell'attuale regolamento FEG sono ammissibili solo i licenziamenti provocati dalla globalizzazione del commercio; sembra che nella fattispecie la globalizzazione non sia la causa dei licenziamenti. Se tuttavia licenziamenti si verificano all'ILVA e se l'Italia può stabilire un collegamento tra di essi e la globalizzazione del commercio ([6]), l'Italia può decidere di applicare il sostegno del FEG ([7]), in modo tale che i lavoratori licenziati possano essere assistiti nel trovare nuovi posti di lavoro quanto prima possibile.

([1]) Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.
([2]) Nel senso degli orientamenti comunitari sugli aiuti di Stato per il salvataggio e la ristrutturazione delle imprese in difficoltà a decorrere dal 10 ottobre 2004 (articolo 45 del regolamento (CE) n. 1828/2006).
([3]) Fondo sociale europeo.
([4]) Programma operativo regionale del Fondo sociale europeo.
([5]) Come per tutti gli altri progetti l'accesso al cofinanziamento BEI è possibile a condizione che il progetto sia non solo finanziariamente sostenibile, ma che esso sia inoltre conforme a severi requisiti di carattere economico, tecnico, ambientale e sociale.
([6]) Ad esempio, derivante da una rapida perdita della quota di mercato UE o dall'aumento delle importazioni originarie dei paesi terzi o dalla delocalizzazione verso paesi al di fuori dell'UE.
([7]) Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.

Per il periodo 2014-2020 la Commissione ha proposto di introdurre un criterio di crisi come uno dei criteri di ammissibilità al potenziale sostegno FEG. Il sostegno del Parlamento sarà essenziale nel processo legislativo al fine di garantire l'adozione finale di questo elemento.

La Commissione appoggia la creazione di percorsi innovativi di produzione nell'UE con varie iniziative e strumenti ([8]).

([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/support/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003947/13
to the Commission
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: The case of the ILVA steelworks in Taranto

On 16 July 2012, the judiciary in Taranto ordered the seizure of the ILVA steelworks in Taranto on the grounds that its toxic emissions had caused serious environmental damage. By Law No 231 of 24 December 2012, the Italian State authorised resumption of production at the plant, declaring it to be a site of national interest, though compelling the company to comply with the requirements of the new integrated environmental authorisation (IEA). According to Italy's Regional Environmental Protection Agency, ILVA is failing to meet the IEA requirements, and is thus continuing to pollute, as protests by the citizens of Taranto in recent days would seem to confirm.

In the undesirable event of closure or of the need to convert the industrial site, and given that the ILVA works in Taranto is the largest steel plant in Europe, does the Commission believe it would be possible:

1. to reallocate unspent ERDF and ESF funds earmarked for the Puglia Region in order to promote a plan for the industrial redevelopment of the company as well as for the re-employment of workers;

2. to access EIB co-financing and if so how;

3. to use the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund to provide employment support and worker retraining;

4. to provide innovative production paths compatible with respect for citizens' health and spatial planning?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

ERDF ([1]) financial instruments shall not invest in firms in difficulty ([2]). However, the programme for Puglia co-financed by the ERDF provides for an allocation of EUR 260 million for 'integrated projects for urban and rural regeneration'.

The ESF ([3]) could intervene to support the re-employment and requalification of workers in mobility following the possible closure or the reconversion of the plant. The interventions can take place under the initiative of the Management Authority of the ESF OP ([4]) in Puglia, in accordance with the content of the programme and with the available resources.

EIB is ready to consider financial support ([5]) for the social, environmental and economic development, and regeneration of the area, jointly with the Structural Funds intervention, notwithstanding the well-known complexities related to the ILVA steelwork plant in Taranto.

Under the current EGF Regulation only redundancies caused by trade related globalisation are eligible and it would seem here that globalisation is not the cause of the redundancies. However, if redundancies occur in ILVA, and if Italy can establish a link between these redundancies and trade-related globalisation ([6]), Italy may decide to apply for support from the EGF ([7]), so that the redundant workers can be helped to find new jobs as quickly as possible.

([1]) European Regional Development Fund.
([2]) within the meaning of the Community Guidelines on state aid for rescuing and restructuring firms in difficulty as of 10 October 2004 (Article 45 of (EC) Regulation 1828/2006).
([3]) European Social Fund.
([4]) European Social Fund Regional Operational Programme.
([5]) As for any other project access to EIB co-financing would be conditional upon the project not only to be financially viable, but also to comply with strict economic, technical, environmental, and social standards.
([6]) e.g. resulting from a rapid loss of EU market share, or from rising imports originating in non-EU countries, or by delocalisation to countries outside the EU.
([7]) European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

For the period of 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed to introduce a crisis criterion as one of the criteria for potential EGF support. Parliament's support will be critical in the legislative process to ensure the final adoption of this element.

The Commission supports the creation of innovative production paths in the EU with various initiatives and instruments ([8]).

([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/support/index_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-003948/13
adresată Consiliului
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(9 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Scandalul financiar Offshore Leaks

În aprilie 2013, în urma a câtorva ani de investigații efectuate de Consorțiul Internațional al Jurnaliștilor de Investigație, împreună cu 36 de ziare internaționale, scandalul financiar Offshore Leaks a divulgat detalii privind 130 000 de conturi offshore. De asemenea, organizația Tax Justice Network a estimat că între 16 și 25 de trilioane EUR se află ascunse în conturi offshore. În ultimele decenii, paradisurile fiscale s-au înmulțit rapid și au provocat perturbări grave pe pieţele financiare internaționale, inclusiv la nivel european, așa cum s-a dovedit recent în cazul economiei Ciprului. Evaziunea fiscală și evitarea plății impozitelor afectează interesele financiare ale Uniunii. Statele membre împreună cu Comisia sunt responsabile de propria lor protecție, în conformitate cu dispozițiile Tratatului privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene.

În urma scandalului financiar Offshore Leaks, ce măsuri concrete intenționează să pună în aplicare Consiliul pentru a proteja interesele financiare ale Uniunii și pentru a elimina posibilitatea deturnării fluxurilor financiare de la circuitele financiare normale? Vă rog să precizați termenul preconizat pentru punerea în aplicare a acestor măsuri.

Răspuns
(1 iulie 2013)

Combaterea fraudei constituie o prioritate principală pentru Consiliu. În cadrul reuniunii sale din 22 mai 2013, Consiliul European a subliniat importanța combaterii evaziunii fiscale și a fraudei fiscale și a lansat un apel în vederea realizării de progrese rapide cu privire la o gamă de măsuri menite să abordeze acest aspect.

Consiliul European a reamintit de asemenea concluziile Consiliului din 14 mai 2013, care sprijină eforturile suplimentare la nivel național, al UE, al G8, al G20, al OCDE și la nivel global în ceea ce privește schimbul automat de informații și îmbunătățirea punerii în aplicare și a asigurării respectării standardelor în materie de informații privind beneficiarul real care sunt pertinente pentru scopuri fiscale.

Consiliul a subliniat de asemenea instrumentul-pilot de schimb multilateral cu privire la care anumite state membre desfășoară activități. Instrumentul este menit să asigure transparența prin schimbul automat de informații între administrații, cu scopul de a contribui la un nou standard global.

Noi progrese în acest domeniu au fost înlesnite prin adoptarea, de către Consiliul din 14 mai, a unui mandat de negociere cu Elveția, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Andorra și San Marino, în scopul extinderii schimbului de informații la aceste țări terțe în domeniul impozitării veniturilor din economii.

Această nouă evoluție ar trebui să permită Directivei privind impozitarea veniturilor din economii, în forma sa revizuită care ar acoperi lacune importante din forma existentă, să fie adoptată curând, astfel cum a solicitat Consiliul European.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003948/13
to the Council
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Offshore leaks financial scandal

In April 2013, the offshore leaks financial scandal disclosed the details of 130 000 offshore accounts, following years of investigations carried out by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, together with 36 international newspapers. Moreover, the Tax Justice Network estimated that between EUR 16 and 25 trillion is hidden in offshore accounts. Over recent decades, tax havens have mushroomed in quantity and have led to major disruptions in international financial markets, including at EU level, as recently demonstrated with the Cyprus economy. Tax evasion and avoidance are affecting the financial interests of the Union. Member States, together with the Commission, are responsible for their own protection as enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

In the wake of the offshore leaks financial scandal, what concrete measures does the Council intend to enforce in order to protect the Union's financial interests and eliminate the possibilities of diverting financial flows from the normal financial circuits? Please provide an expected timeframe for the enforcement of these measures.

Reply
(1 July 2013)

Fighting against fraud is a key priority for the Council. At its meeting on 22 May 2013, the European Council underlined the importance of fighting tax evasion and fraud, and called for rapid progress to be made on a range of measures to tackle this issue.

The European Council also recalled the conclusions of the Council of 14 May 2013 supporting further efforts at national, EU, G8, G20, OECD and global level on automatic exchange of information and on improving the implementation and enforcement of standards of beneficial ownership information that is relevant for tax purposes.

The Council also highlighted the pilot multilateral exchange facility on which some Member States are working. The facility is designed to ensure transparency through the automatic exchange of information between administrations, with the aim of contributing to a new global standard.

Further progress in this area has been made possible through the adoption, by the Council on 14 May, of a mandate for negotiations with Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Andorra and San Marino with a view to extending exchange of information to those third Countries in the area of savings interest taxation.

This new development should allow the revised Savings Directive, which would close important loopholes in the existing Savings Directive, to be adopted soon, as requested by the European Council.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003949/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 april 2013)

Angående: Varför anses rättsligt skydd av kretsmönster i halvledarprodukter vara en immateriell rättighet?

I sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-001176/2013 ([1]) besvarar kommissionen inte den ställda frågan. Kommissionen hänvisar till skäl 13 i direktiv 2004/48/EG, men ger ingen förklaring till varför det rättsliga skyddet av kretsmönster i halvledarprodukter bör anses vara en immateriell rättighet. Rådets direktiv 87/54/EEG ([2]) ger inte heller någon förklaring på detta.

Kan kommissionen ange vilka särskilda kriterier den använde för att inkludera rättsligt skydd av kretsmönster i halvledarprodukter på listan i uttalande 2005/95/EG ([3])?

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003950/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 april 2013)

Angående: Anledningen till att bruksmodeller betraktas som immateriella rättigheter på EU-nivå när de inte finns på nationell nivå i samtliga medlemsstater

I sitt svar på skriftlig fråga E-001409/2013 ([4]) uppger kommissionen att bruksmodeller betraktas som immateriella rättigheter i medlemsstaterna och därför har tagits upp på den icke-uttömmande förteckningen i kommissionens uttalande 2005/295/EG om tolkningen av artikel 2 i direktiv 2004/48/EG. Bruksmodellskydd är dock inte fastställt i lagstiftningen i samtliga medlemsstater och kan därför rimligen inte betraktas som immateriella rättigheter i dessa medlemsstater.

Kan kommissionen ingående förklara sitt beslut att fastställa bruksmodeller som en immateriell rättighet på EU-nivå?

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004009/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(10 april 2013)

Angående: Bruksmodeller betraktas som immateriella rättigheter på EU-nivå

I sitt svar på skriftlig fråga E-001653/2013 uppger kommissionen följande: ”Förteckningen tar […] även upp andra rättigheter som i vissa medlemsstater betraktas som immateriella rättigheter och som i sådana fall kan omfattas av direktivet.” (kommissionens uttalande 2005/295/EG)

Kan kommissionen uppge exakt vilka rättigheter på den specifika förteckningen som hör till denna kategori?

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-001176+0+DOC+XML+V0//SV
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31987L0054:SV:HTML
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/sv/oj/2005/l_094/l_09420050413sv00370037.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-001409+0+DOC+XML+V0//SV

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004188/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(12 april 2013)

Angående: Växtförädlarrättigheter och immateriella rättigheter

I sitt svar på skriftlig fråga E-001610/2013 ([5]) skriver kommissionen att förteckningen över immateriella rättigheter, som omfattas av artikel 2 i direktiv 2004/48/EG, har baserats på de harmoniserade immateriella rättigheterna i gemenskapens regelverk. I förordningen om gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt står det uttryckligen att en definition av en växtsort för att säkerställa att ordningen fungerar tillfredsställande inte är ”avsedd att ändra definitioner som redan kan ha fastställts inom området för immateriellt rättsskydd” ([6]). Detta antyder att lagstiftaren inte ansåg att växtförädlarrättigheter betraktades som immateriella rättigheter när förordningen om gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt utarbetades.

Kan kommissionen förklara vilka specifika omständigheter som ledde till dessa skillnader vid tolkningen av gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt?

Samlat svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(7 juni 2013)

Så som kommissionen angett i sitt svar på E-000953/13 innehåller kommissionens uttalande 2005/295/EG ([7]) om direktiv 2004/48/EG ([8]) (*direktivet*) en förteckning över harmoniserade immateriella rättigheter enligt gemenskapens regelverk och/eller rättigheter som betraktas som immateriella rättigheter i vissa medlemsstater och som därför kan omfattas av direktivet.

Bruksmodeller finns med i förteckningen, eftersom sådana skyddas som immateriella rättigheter i flera medlemsstater. Eftersom bruksmodeller inte skyddas av EU-lagstiftning omfattas de dock endast av direktivet i den mån som de skyddas av den berörda medlemsstatens nationella lagstiftning.

Andra exempel rör geografiska angivelser och firmanamn, som betraktas som immateriella rättigheter i vissa medlemsstater och därför kan omfattas av direktivet i dessa medlemsstater.

Växtförädlarrättigheter finns också med i förteckningen. I artikel 1 i förordning 2100/1994 ([9]), som inrättar ett gemenskapssystem för immaterialrättsligt skydd för nya växtsorter, anges tydligt att dessa är en industriell äganderätt i gemenskapen. Växtförädlarrättigheter som skyddas av nationella system omfattas också av direktivet.

Det rättsliga skyddet av kretsmönster i halvledarprodukter finns också med i förteckningen eftersom dess syfte innebär att det ingår i begreppet immateriella rättigheter ([10]). Det betraktas också som en immateriell rättighet i flera medlemsstater, och kretsmönster registreras ibland av de organ som ansvarar för immateriella rättigheter ([11]).

Växtförädlarrättigheter togs även med i förordning 1383/2003. Kretsmönster i halvledarprodukter anses också som immateriella rättigheter enligt den föreslagna förordningen om tullens kontroll av att immateriella rättigheter efterlevs ([12]) som för närvarande håller på att antas av EU.

([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-001610+0+DOC+XML+V0//SV
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31994R2100:SV:HTML
([7]) Uttalande från kommissionen om artikel 2 i Europaparlamentets och rådets direktiv 2004/48/EG om säkerställande av skyddet för immateriella rättigheter (EUT L 94, 13.4.2005, s. 37).
([8]) Direktiv 2004/48/EG om säkerställande av skyddet för immateriella rättigheter (EUT L 157, 30.4.2004, s. 45–86).
([9]) Artikel 1 i rådets förordning (EG) nr 2100/94 av den 27 juli 1994 om gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt (EGT L 227, 1.9.1994, s. 1).
([10]) Ensamrätter som ges för upphovsmannens egen intellektuella insats om produkten inte är allmänt förekommande inom halvledarindustrin. Se artikel 2 i rådets direktiv 87/54/EEG av den 16 december 1986 om rättsligt skydd för kretsmönster i halvledarprodukter (EGT L 24, 27.1.1987, s. 36).
([11]) Se t.ex. artikel L622-1 i Frankrikes lag om immateriella rättigheter. Se även lag 3/11/1988 om skydd av halvledare i Spanien och lag 10/1/1990 i Belgien.
([12]) KOM(2011)285 slutlig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003949/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Why is the legal protection of topographies of semiconductor products an IP right?

In its reply to Written Question E-001176/2013 ([1]), the Commission does not answer the specific question raised. It recalls Recital 13 of Directive 2004/48/EC, but it does not provide an explanation as to why the legal protection of topographies of semiconductor products should be considered an intellectual property (IP) right. Council Directive 87/54/EEC ([2]) provides no further clues.

Could the Commission please indicate the specific criteria it used in including the legal protection of topographies of semiconductor products on its list in statement 2005/95/EC ([3])?

Question for written answer E-003950/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Why are utility models an IP right at EU level if they do not exist at national level in all Member States?

In its reply to Written Question E-001409/2013 ([4]), the Commission states that utility models are considered intellectual property (IP) rights in Member States and are therefore included on the non-exhaustive list provided by the Commission in statement 2005/295/EC on the interpretation of Article 2 of Directive 2004/48/EC. However, utility model rights are not defined in the legislation of all Member States and, therefore, cannot reasonably be considered IP rights in these Member States.

Could the Commission explain in detail its decision to define utility models as an IP right at EU level?

Question for written answer E-004009/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Utility models considered as intellectual property rights at the European level

In its reply to Written Question E-001653/2013, the Commission writes that 'rights which are considered to be intellectual property rights in certain Member States, and which can therefore in this case be covered by the directive, were included in the list [provided in Statement 2005/295/EC]'.

Could the Commission specify exactly which rights in the specified list fall into this category?

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-001176+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31987L0054:EN:HTML.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_094/l_09420050413en00370037.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-001409+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN.

Question for written answer E-004188/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Plant variety rights and intellectual property rights

In its reply to Written Question E-001610/2013 ([5]), the Commission writes that it has based its list of intellectual property rights, covered by Article 2 of Directive 2004/48/EC, on the harmonised intellectual property rights contained in the *acquis communautaire*. However, in the regulation on Community Plant Variety Rights, it is specifically stated that '[the] definition [of a plant variety, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the system] is not intended to alter definitions which may have been established in the field of intellectual property rights' ([6]). This insinuates that when the regulation on Community Plant Variety Rights was written, plant variety rights were not considered intellectual property rights by the legislator.

Could the Commission explain what specific circumstances led to this variation in its interpretation of the regulation on Community Plant Variety Rights?

Joint answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

As indicated in its reply to E-000953/13, the Commission's Statement 2005/295/EC ([7]) relating to Directive 2004/48/EC ([8]) (the directive) draws a list of harmonised intellectual property rights (IPR) contained in the *acquis communautaire* and/or rights which are considered to be IPR in certain Member States and which can therefore be covered by the directive.

Utility models are included in the list because they are protected as IPR in several Member States. However, since they are not provided for by EC law, utility models are included in the scope of the directive only in so far are they are protected by the national law of the Member State concerned.

The other examples relate to geographical indications and trade names, which are considered to be IPR in certain Member States and can therefore be covered by the directive in these States.

Plant variety rights are also included in the list. Article 1 Regulation 2100/1994 ([9]) which creates a Community regime for the intellectual protection of new plant varieties clearly indicates that they are a Community industrial property right. In addition, plant variety rights protected by national systems are also included in the scope of the directive.

The legal protection of topographies of semiconductor products is also included in the list because it results from its purpose ([10]) that it falls within the notion of IPR. It is considered as an IPR in several Member States and topographies are sometimes registered by agencies in charge of intellectual property ([11]).

Plant variety rights were already included in the regulation 1383/2003. Topographies of semiconductor products are also considered as IPR for the purpose of the proposed regulation concerning customs enforcement of IPR ([12]) which is currently being adopted by the EU.

([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-001610+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31994R2100:EN:HTML
([7]) Statement by the Commission concerning Article 2 of Directive 2004/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the enforcement of intellectual property rights, OJ L 94, 13.4.2005, p. 37.
([8]) Directive 2004/48/EC, on the enforcement of intellectual property rights OJ L 157, 30.4.2004, p. 45-86.
([9]) Article 1 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 of 27 July 1994 on Community plant variety rights, OJ L 227 of 1.9.1994, p. 1.
([10]) Conferring exclusive rights to the creator's own intellectual effort if it is not commonplace in the industry — See Article 2 of Council Directive 87/54/EEC of 16 December 1986 on the legal protection of topographies of semiconductor products, OJ L 24, 27.1.1987, p. 36.
([11]) See for example Article L 622-1 of the Intellectual property code of France. See also Law 3/11/1988 on the protection of semi-conductors in Spain, or Law 10/1/1990 in Belgium.
([12]) COM(2011)285 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003951/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Western Sahara and the EU-Morocco Free Trade Agreement

Negotiations between Morocco and the European Union on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) are due to begin in Rabat on 22 April 2013. Previous trade agreements between the EU and Morocco have, controversially, been implemented without reference to the Saharawi people in the occupied zones of Western Sahara, the territory that has been illegally annexed by Morocco since 1975.

If the occupied zones of Western Sahara are not explicitly excluded from the Agreement, the DCFTA risks impacting negatively on the UN-sponsored peace process in Western Sahara. The agreement could allow Morocco to make substantial economic gains from its occupation of Western Sahara, acting as a further disincentive to cooperate with the UN decolonisation process.

31 Saharawi civil society organisations wrote to the Commissioner for Trade, Karel De Gucht, on 26 June 2012 urging that Western Sahara be clearly and explicitly excluded from all future trade deals between the EU and Morocco. The letter stated that none of the signatory organisations (which represent the vast majority of Saharawi civil society organisations in Western Sahara, along with the Saharawi refugee camps in Algeria) had ever been consulted on any of the previous EU-Morocco trade agreements which were, nevertheless, implemented in Western Sahara.

The Polisario Front — the Saharawi people's political representative at the UN peace negotiation table — has referred EU-Morocco trade agreements covering fish and agricultural produce to the European Court of Justice.

1. Will the Commission explicitly exclude the territories of Western Sahara from the DCFTA?

2. If the Commission does not intend to exclude the territories of Western Sahara from the DCFTA, what will be the strategy for ensuring that the Saharawi people are genuinely and transparently consulted on the Agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The future Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) will be an integral part of the existing Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the EU and Morocco. The Association Agreement applies to the territories of the EU and of Morocco.

When implementing international agreements, Morocco has to comply with international law. According to the United Nations position on the subject, followed by the EU, Morocco is considered the de facto administering power of the 'non-self-governing territory' of the Western Sahara. In that context, according to the legal adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (12 February 2002) and on the basis of international law, activities related to natural resources undertaken by an administering power in a non-self-governing territory are not illegal so long as they are not undertaken in disregard of the needs, interests and benefits of the people of that territory.

As is the case for all trade negotiations conducted by the EU, a Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment (TSIA) will be conducted by an external consultant that the Commission has contracted. As part of the TSIA process, consultations with the civil society will take place both in the EU and locally in Morocco, where civil society organisations, including NGOs which are monitoring the situation in the Western Sahara, will have the possibility to express their views and concerns.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003952/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Auken report and property rights in Spain

Since the Auken report, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority of MEPs in 2009, what measures has the Commission taken or proposed in order to address the issue of property rights in countries such as Spain?

Properties built in Murcia, Spain, by a company called 'MASA' were recently embargoed, leaving EU citizens who have paid for these properties but not yet received their title deeds in very difficult circumstances. Will the Commission consider any action to prevent such problems occurring for property buyers in the EU, in order to strengthen consumer rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission is conscious of the difficulties faced by some European citizens as a result of the application of the Spanish Coastal Law and has taken contact with the Spanish authorities in this regard.

Whilst the competences of the European Union regarding real estate property ownership are limited, EU consumers are protected by Community law in situations where property developers engage in unfair practices by virtue of Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices ([1]) and Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in consumer contracts ([2]).

Cross-border unfair practices fall under the competences of the EU-wide enforcement network established by the regulation on Consumer Protection Cooperation ([3]), which empowers national enforcement authorities to detect, investigate and stop such infringements. Any alleged breach of EU legislation should be brought to the attention of national authorities and courts ([4]).

As regards the lack of issuance of title deeds, the Commission has recently sent a letter to the Spanish authorities enquiring as to the actions engaged at national level to address the issue.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([2]) OJ L 095, 21.04.1993, p. 29.
([3]) OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p. 1.
([4]) Contact details can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/empowerment/cons_networks_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003953/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(9 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Νέες σημαντικές φοροεπιβαρύνσεις για τη μικρή και μεσαία ιδιοκτησία στην Ελλάδα

Στο πλαίσιο των Προγραμμάτων Δημοσιονομικής Εξυγίανσης, οι Έλληνες πολίτες έχουν υποστεί τεράστιες οικονομικές απώλειες, σημαντικό μέρος των οποίων απορρέει και από την επιβολή πλήθους νέων φόρων (άμεσων και έμμεσων), η ένταση και η έκταση των οποίων — κατά κοινή ομολογία και παραδοχή — έχουν εξαντλήσει κάθε φοροδοτική ικανότητα των μεσαίων και χαμηλών εισοδηματικών τάξεων. Υπό την πίεση της υστέρησης των δημοσίων εσόδων, η υπερφορολόγηση αυτή συνεχίζεται και κλιμακώνεται στο πεδίο της ακίνητης περιουσίας, καθώς μόνο μέσα στο 2013 οι Έλληνες πολίτες υποχρεούνται να καταβάλουν πολλαπλούς και με αναδρομική ισχύ φόρους [Φόρος Ακίνητης Περιουσίας (ΦΑΠ) για 3 έτη: 2011.12.13, Έκτακτο Τέλος Ηλεκτροδοτούμενων Επιφανειών (χαράτσι), Ενιαίος Φόρος Ακινήτων (αντικατάσταση του προηγουμένου)] για ακίνητα που κατέχουν και έχουν ήδη φορολογηθεί για την απόκτησή τους, την ώρα που η εμπορική τους τιμή-αξία υποχωρεί.

Με δεδομένη τη μεγάλη πτώση του μέσου πραγματικού εισοδήματος στην Ελλάδα (μειώσεις μισθών-συντάξεων, ανεργία κ.λπ.) μια τέτοια εξέλιξη αναμένεται να οδηγήσει μια μεγάλη μερίδα του ελληνικού πληθυσμού σε αδυναμία εκπλήρωσης των επαχθών φορολογικών της υποχρεώσεων, καταδικάζοντάς την ακόμη και σε βίαιη εκποίηση της μικρής ακίνητης περιουσίας που διαθέτει. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση, και ως μέλος της Τρόικας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πώς αποδέχεται αυτό το πλέγμα των φορολογικών μέτρων που οδηγούν σε περαιτέρω δυσβάσταχτες φορολογικές επιβαρύνσεις, υπονομεύοντας την κοινωνική συνοχή και προστασία;

— Πόσο συμβατή είναι μια τέτοια φορολογική πολιτική με τους κοινωνικούς στόχους της Στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020», καθώς και με τη θεμελιώδη αρχή για την Προστασία της Περιουσίας, όπως αυτή περιγράφεται στο άρθρο 1 του 1ου Πρόσθετου Πρωτοκόλλου της ΕΣΔΑ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Τα υγιή και βιώσιμα δημόσια οικονομικά αποτελούν προϋπόθεση για την επιστροφή της μεγέθυνσης και της δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας στην Ελλάδα. Η μεσοπρόθεσμη δημοσιονομική στρατηγική για το 2013-2016, η οποία εγκρίθηκε τον Νοέμβριο του 2012, περιλαμβάνει αυξήσεις των φόρων και μεταρρυθμίσεις όσον αφορά την άμεση φορολογία και τη φορολογική διοίκηση, αλλά τα εν λόγω μέτρα αντιπροσωπεύουν μόνο το ¼, περίπου της συνολικής δέσμης μέτρων. Οι τρέχουσες εκτενείς μεταρρυθμίσεις της άμεσης φορολογίας και της φορολογικής διοίκησης αποτελούν πολύ σημαντικά διαρθρωτικά μέτρα τα οποία, όταν εφαρμοστούν πλήρως, θα συμβάλουν στη βελτίωση της είσπραξης των φόρων, στον πιο δίκαιο επιμερισμό της φορολογικής επιβάρυνσης καθώς και στην καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής και της διαφθοράς.

Σε κάθε περίπτωση, στόχος του προγράμματος δεν είναι η υπονόμευση της κοινωνικής συνοχής και προόδου εν όψει της επίτευξης των κοινωνικών στόχων της στρατηγικής Ευρώπη 2020. Αντιθέτως, η Επιτροπή έχει μεριμνήσει ώστε το πρόγραμμα να περιλαμβάνει συναφή μέτρα για τη στήριξη των ανέργων και τη βελτίωση των ενεργών πολιτικών στον τομέα της αγοράς εργασίας, καθώς και πρωτοβουλιών για τη βελτίωση του δικτύου κοινωνικής προστασίας. Οι προαναφερόμενες φορολογικές αυξήσεις, μεταξύ άλλων στην ακίνητη περιουσία, δεν κρίνονται ασύμβατες με τις συναφείς διατάξεις που αφορούν το δικαίωμα στην ακίνητη περιουσία (άρθρο 17 του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ και άρθρο 1 του πρώτου πρόσθετου πρωτοκόλλου της ΕΣΔΑ).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003953/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Important new tax charges on small and medium-sized properties in Greece

Greek citizens have suffered massive financial losses under the fiscal consolidation programmes, most of which have been caused by a raft of new direct and indirect taxes of such level and scope that, by common admission, average- and low-income families simply cannot afford to pay any more taxes. With government revenues lagging behind, this over-taxation is being pursued and is escalating in the property sector. In 2013 alone, Greek citizens will have to pay numerous retroactive taxes on properties which they own (3 years' property tax for 2011, 2012 and 2013, power supply tax, single property tax to replace the previous tax), at a time when the market value of their properties is falling and despite the fact that tax was paid on them when they were acquired.

In light of the massive drop in average real incomes in Greece (due to cuts to wages and pensions, unemployment etc.), any such development is expected to put a large proportion of the Greek population in a position whereby they are unable to pay such heavy taxes and are at risk of sudden eviction from the small properties which they own. In view of this, as a member of the Troika, will the Commission say:

— Why has it accepted this bundle of tax measures resulting in more unbearable taxes which are undermining social cohesion and protection?

— How compatible is this sort of tax policy with the social objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and with the fundamental principle of protection of property, as described in Article 1 of the First Additional Protocol to the ECHR?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

Sound and sustainable public finances are a precondition for the return of growth and job creation to Greece. The Medium Term Fiscal Strategy 2013-2016 adopted in November 2012 includes increases in taxes and reforms of direct taxation and the tax administration, but these measures represent only about ¼ of the overall package. The ongoing comprehensive reforms of direct taxation and the tax administration are very important structural measures which, when fully implemented, will help improve tax collection, share more equally the tax burden and fight tax evasion and corruption.

In any case, the aim of the programme is not to undermine social cohesion and progress towards Europe2020 social objectives. On the contrary, the Commission has ensured that the programme includes relevant measures to support the unemployed and improve active labour market policies, as well as initiatives to improve the social safety net. It does not appear that the above tax increases, including on property, are inconsistent with relevant provisions concerning the right to property (Article 17 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and Article 1 of the First Additional Protocol to the ECHR).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003954/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(9 april 2013)

Betreft: Toegankelijkheid treinen voor rolstoelgebruikers

De integratie van personen met een handicap en het bevorderen van hun deelname aan het gemeenschapsleven is vastgelegd in artikel 26 van het Handvest van de Grondrechten van de Europese Unie.

De Europese Unie heeft hieromtrent al verschillende maatregelen genomen.

Zo is in Verordening (EG) nr. 1371/2007 over de rechten en verplichtingen van reizigers in het treinverkeer een hoofdstuk opgenomen over personen met een beperkte mobiliteit. Toch ondervinden veel rolstoelgebruikers nog veel problemen wanneer zij gebruik willen maken van de trein.

Vooral gebruikers van een rolstoel van het scootmobieltype — waarvan het aantal jaar na jaar stijgt — stuiten door de omvang van hun „voertuig" op allerlei moeilijkheden wat betreft toegang tot treinen.

Kan de Commissie meedelen wat de minimumafmetingen van rolstoelen zijn waarvoor de spoorwegondernemingen en stationsondernemers voorzieningen moeten treffen wat de toegankelijkheid betreft van stations, perrons en het rollend materieel?

Welke maatregelen zal de Commissie nemen om ook gebruikers van scootmobiels de mogelijkheid te geven zich via het openbaar vervoer te verplaatsen?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(21 mei 2013)

Als partij bij het Verdrag inzake de rechten van personen met een handicap van de Verenigde Naties, neemt de EU haar verplichtingen uit hoofde van het Verdrag ernstig, met inbegrip van het nemen van passende maatregelen om ervoor te zorgen dat personen met een handicap op voet van gelijkheid met anderen toegang hebben tot vervoer.

De EU-wetgeving inzake passagiersrechten legt voor alle vormen van vervoer specifieke verplichtingen op aan vervoerders en infrastructuurbeheerders. Deze omvatten onder meer het verstrekken van informatie over toegankelijkheid en gratis bijstand aan personen met een handicap en/of een beperkte mobiliteit zodat zij op gelijke voet met andere passagiers kunnen reizen. Om deze bijstand ten volle te kunnen benutten en om ervoor te zorgen dat dienstverleners zich kunnen voorbereiden, moeten passagiers hun behoefte aan bijstand van tevoren melden.

Wat de toegankelijkheid van treinen betreft, wil de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid wijzen op Beschikking 2008/164/EG van de Commissie ([1]) (TSI personen met beperkte mobiliteit) die ten doel heeft de toegankelijkheid van het vervoer per spoor te verbeteren. De vereisten van deze beschikking zijn onder meer van toepassing op het ontwerp van voertuigen en in bijlage M bij deze beschikking zijn de fundamentele parameters van een „vervoerbare rolstoel" vastgesteld ([2]).

Het Europees Spoorwegbureau legt momenteel de laatste hand aan een aanbeveling aan de Commissie voor een herziene „TSI personen met beperkte mobiliteit" en zal, naar aanleiding van opmerkingen van gebruikers, aanbevelen om het gewicht van een vervoerbare rolstoel te verhogen.

Ten slotte heeft de Commissie, via haar CIVITAS-initiatief voor een beter en duurzamer stadsverkeer, steden en exploitanten van openbaar vervoer bijgestaan bij het testen van nieuwe maatregelen om openbaar vervoer voor alle gebruikers efficiënter, aantrekkelijker en toegankelijker te maken. Relevante voorbeelden van beste praktijken worden verzameld en uitgewisseld via het waarnemingscentrum stedelijke mobiliteit van de EU, de ELTIS-website ([3]).

([1]) Beschikking 2008/164/EG van de Commissie betreffende de technische specificatie inzake interoperabiliteit „personen met beperkte mobiliteit", PB L 64 van 7.3.2008, die sinds 1 juli 2008 van toepassing is en die van toepassing is op nieuwe, vernieuwde en verbeterde infrastructuur en nieuw, vernieuwd en verbeterd rollend materieel op het trans-Europese spoorwegnet.

([2]) Een breedte van 700 mm en een lengte van 1 200 mm en een maximum totaalgewicht van 200 kg (rolstoel en gebruiker).

([3]) http://www.eltis.org/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003954/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Accessibility of trains for wheelchair users

The integration of persons with disabilities and promotion of their participation in the life of the community are laid down in Article 26 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

The European Union has already taken several measures in this regard.

In particular, Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations contains a chapter on persons with reduced mobility. Yet many wheelchair users still encounter a lot of problems when they want to use the train.

Especially users of the scooter-type wheelchair — whose numbers are growing every year — face all kinds of difficulties with regard to access to trains because of the size of their 'vehicle'.

Can the Commission please indicate the minimum dimensions of wheelchairs which railway companies and station operators must provide for to ensure the accessibility of stations, platforms and rolling stock?

What measures will the Commission take to also make it possible for the users of mobility scooters to travel by public transport?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

As a Party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the EU takes seriously its obligations under the Convention including undertaking appropriate measures to ensure access to transport on an equal basis with others for persons with disabilities.

EU passenger rights legislation for all modes of transport puts specific obligations on carriers and infrastructure managers. These include i. a. the provision of information on accessibility and free of charge assistance to persons with disabilities and/or reduced mobility to enable them to travel under equal conditions with other passengers. In order to fully benefit from such assistance and to allow service providers to prepare, passengers should notify their needs in advance of travel.

As regards accessibility of trains, the Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to Commission Decision 2008/164/EC ([1]) (PRM TSI) which objective is to enhance the accessibility of rail transport. Its requirements apply i.a. to vehicle design and in its Annex M the basic parameters of a 'transportable wheelchair' are set out ([2]).

The European Railway Agency is currently finalising a recommendation to the Commission for a revised PRM TSI and, following concerns raised by users, will recommend that the maximum weight of a transportable wheelchair should be increased.

Finally, through its CIVITAS Initiative for better and more sustainable urban mobility, the Commission has supported cities and public transport operators to test new approaches to rendering public transport services more efficient, more attractive, and more accessible for all users. Relevant best-practice examples are collected and shared via the EU urban mobility observatory, the ELTIS website ([3]).

([1]) Commission Decision 2008/164/EC concerning technical specifications of interoperability for persons with reduced mobility, OJ L 64, 7.3.2008, which has been applicable from 1 July 2008 and applies to new, renewed and upgraded infrastructure and rolling stock on the trans-European rail network.

([2]) A width of 700mm and a length of 1 200mm and a maximum fully laden weight of 200kg (wheelchair and occupant).

([3]) http://www.eltis.org/.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003955/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Expropiación de tierras al pueblo Masai en Tanzania

A finales del pasado mes de marzo, el Gobierno de la República Unida de Tanzania hizo pública su intención de crear una nueva zona de «conservación» natural en la región de Loliondo, en la zona norte del país. La creación de dicha zona supone una serie de graves consecuencia para la población de las tribus Masais que habitan en la región.

El proyecto del Gobierno de Tanzania sostiene que dicha reserva es necesaria para la composición de un corredor ecológico entre el Parque Nacional del Serengeti, en Tanzania, y el Parque Nacional Masai Mara, en Kenia. Sin embargo, los terrenos que comprendería dicho corredor para animales salvajes fueron arrendados a la empresa de safaris Otterlo Business Corporation en 1992. De esta manera se emplea el pretexto de la conservación y protección de animales como vía para justificar la expulsión de las comunidades de la tribu Masai.

Este grupo étnico es el único ejemplo de población humana que ha sabido mantener un equilibrio sostenible con la biodiversidad de la región, encontrándose perfectamente capacitados para la conservación de las especies que viven en ella. Mantener el estilo de vida de este pueblo es una de las pocas garantías de que el ecosistema del Serengeti y el Masai Mara puedan continuar existiendo. Con la introducción de la «conservación» gestionada por empresas de safaris, solo se conseguirá la expulsión de sus tierras de las tribus Masais, que no podrán usar las praderas para el alimento de su ganado, y llegarán turistas a emplear la región para su disfrute con la «caza mayor», actividad que el Gobierno sí permitirá en la citada reserva.

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que debe promover la ratificación de la convención 169 de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo en sus negociaciones de acuerdos entre UE-África? ¿En qué forma la Unión Europea promueve la defensa de los derechos de los pueblos indígenas y tribales en África? ¿Y en el citado caso de las comunidades Masai? ¿Está siendo financiada la creación de este área de conservación con los fondos de la cooperación regional reforzada para la gestión sostenible de la biodiversidad en la región Este y Sur de África-Océano Índico firmada el pasado 17 de enero? ¿Está evaluando el impacto que este tipo de proyectos puede tener sobre pueblos indígenas o tribales, como los Masai, que tradicionalmente han mantenido los ecosistemas y no están protegidos en países que no han firmado el convenio 169? ¿Considera «gestión sostenible de la biodiversidad» este tipo de reservas para la caza mayor?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de junio de 2013)

La Delegación de la UE y las misiones diplomáticas de los Estados miembros en Tanzania siguen de cerca el debate sobre Loliondo a través, entre otras vías, de sus contactos con la comunidad masai, las autoridades gubernamentales y las organizaciones de defensa de los derechos humanos. La UE alienta a todas las partes a encontrar una solución pacífica por medio de un auténtico proceso de consulta que respete el Estado de Derecho y los derechos humanos.

La UE apoya los derechos de los pueblos indígenas a través de medidas políticas, económicas y técnicas, con el objetivo de que se lleve a la práctica la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de los pueblos indígenas. Por ejemplo, la UE es un socio fundamental del programa para promover el Convenio n° 169 de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) sobre pueblos indígenas y tribales (PRO 169) a través de los proyectos financiados por el Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos (IEDDH).

Tanzania no ha ratificado el Convenio n° 169 de la OIT por considerar que toda su población es indígena. A pesar de ello, la UE confiere prioridad a los derechos humanos de los indígenas, entendiendo fundamentalmente por tales a los pastores semi-nómadas y los cazadores-recolectores, manteniendo debates periódicos con las autoridades tanzanas sobre cuestiones relacionadas con las tierras en las que habitan esos pueblos. Varios proyectos de Estados miembros en favor de los pastores masai abordan cuestiones fundiarias y la UE dedicó una campaña de sensibilización a su causa en 2012.

El proyecto de la UE en la región de África oriental y meridional y el océano Índico (ESA-IO) al que se hace referencia en la pregunta de Su Señoría promueve la gestión de la biodiversidad específica de costas, océanos e islas. De acuerdo con las políticas pertinentes de la UE, los derechos de los pueblos indígenas se abordan como un aspecto transversal en todos los sectores y niveles de la cooperación al desarrollo. El mantenimiento de la biodiversidad y la actividad cinegética no son conceptos excluyentes si se abordan y gestionan desde la perspectiva de la sostenibilidad a largo plazo de la biodiversidad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003955/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Expropriation of land from the Masai people in Tanzania

In late March, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania announced its intention to create a new nature 'conservation' area in the Loliondo region, in the north of the country. The creation of this area entails a number of serious consequences for the Masai tribes that live in the region.

According to the Tanzanian Government's plan, this reserve is necessary in order to establish a green corridor between the Serengeti National Park, in Tanzania, and the Masai Mara National Reserve, in Kenya. However, the land that would be included in this wildlife corridor was leased to a safari company, the Otterlo Business Corporation, in 1992. Animal conservation and protection is thus being used as a pretext to justify the expulsion of Masai tribal communities.

This ethnic group is the only example of a human population that has learned how to live in a sustainable equilibrium with the biodiversity of the region. They are perfectly capable of conserving the species that live there. Preserving this people's way of life is one of the few ways of ensuring the continued existence of the ecosystem of the Serengeti and the Masai Mara. Introducing 'conservation' managed by safari companies will result only in the expulsion of the Masai tribes from their lands. The tribes will not be able to use the grasslands to feed their livestock, and tourists will come to use the region for their own enjoyment with 'big game hunting', an activity that the government will allow on this reserve.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative take the view that she should encourage the ratification of International Labour Organisation Convention 169 when negotiating agreements between the EU and Africa? How does the European Union promote the defence of the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples in Africa, and in this case, of the Masai communities? Is the creation of this conservation area being financed with the funds for enhanced regional cooperation for sustainable biodiversity management in the Eastern and Southern Africa/Indian Ocean region, which were the subject of an agreement signed on 17 January 2013? Is the Vice-President/High Representative assessing the impact that projects of this kind can have on indigenous or tribal peoples, like the Masai, who have traditionally maintained the ecosystems and who are not protected in countries that have not signed Convention 169? Does she take the view that 'sustainable biodiversity management' of reserves of this kind includes big game hunting?

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

The EU Delegation and Member States missions in Tanzania monitor closely the Loliondo land debate also through contacts with the Maasai community, government authorities and human rights organisations. The EU encourages all parties to seek a peaceful solution through a proper consultation process with respect to the rule of law and human rights.

The EU supports the rights of indigenous peoples through political, financial and technical measures, with the aim to put the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into practice. For instance, the EU is a key partner in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) programme on indigenous and tribal peoples (PRO 169) through European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)-funded projects.

Tanzania has not ratified ILO Convention 169 as they consider the entire population indigenous. This notwithstanding, the EU prioritizes the human rights of indigenous peoples, meaning mainly pastoralists and hunters-gatherers, and has regularly engaged with Tanzanian authorities on related land matters. Several Member State projects address land issues in support of the Maasai pastoralists, and an EU public advocacy campaign was dedicated to their cause in 2012.

The Eastern and Southern Africa — Indian Ocean (ESA-IO) regional EU project that is referred to in the Honourable Member's question promotes coastal, marine and island specific biodiversity management. In accordance with relevant EU policies, the rights of indigenous peoples are addressed as a cross-cutting aspect in all sectors and levels of development cooperation. Biodiversity management and game hunting are not exclusive concepts if managed and steered with regard to the long-term sustainability of biodiversity.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003956/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Human rights abuses in Equatorial Guinea

According to Amnesty International, the justice system in Equatorial Guinea remains deeply flawed. Those who dare to speak out against human rights abuses or criticise the government often face legal proceedings. Such was the case in 2011 for six men who were arrested and imprisoned without warrant on alleged politically motivated charges.

At the time, there was no cooperation between the EU and Equatorial Guinea, due to the latter's exit from the Cotonou Agreement.

— Firstly, what is the current state of EU cooperation with Equatorial Guinea?

— Secondly, how is the EU using its influence in order to improve the justice system in Equatorial Guinea, including the establishment of an independent judiciary?

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

Equatorial Guinea did not ratify the Revised Cotonou Agreement and subsequently does not benefit from the European Development Fund (EDF). The EU moreover, does not have a delegation in Malabo but covers the country from Libreville, Gabon.

Cooperation programmes, targeting good governance and judicial police capacity building under the 9th EDF have now come to an end. If the situation remains unchanged, Equatorial Guinea will not benefit from the 11th EDF. If it does ratify the Revised Cotonou Agreement, the EU would consider whether an allocation under the 11th EDF would be justified in the light of the country's middle income status and the EU's policy of differentiation.

The EU remains concerned about the overall situation of protection of human rights and fundamental values in Equatorial Guinea. Much remains to be done with regard to the separation of powers. The EU will therefore monitor the reforms introduced by the new Constitution very closely. The reforms, including the creation of an Ombudsman position, are due to be introduced after the next legislative elections which are scheduled for 26 May 2013.

Equatorial Guinee is not part of the regional EPA negotiations since in 2008 it announced that it does not want to negotiate again and that it should be treated as observer only.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003957/13
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(9 avril 2013)

Objet: Extension des noms de domaine sur l'internet et secteur viticole

Depuis 2012, les entreprises et organismes spécialisés peuvent demander à l'ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) l'attribution d'une nouvelle extension de nom de domaine sur l'internet (gTLD). Cette innovation vise à améliorer la visibilité et l'identification d'un produit, d'un secteur ou d'une ville (exemple: «.auto», «.hotel», «.paris», etc.).

Alors que la protection des indications géographiques du secteur viticole n'est pas prévue par les règles de l'ICANN et qu'aucune des demandes d'attribution d'extension de nom de domaine «.wine» ou «.vin» ne s'y engage, les inquiétudes des organisations professionnelles du secteur européen du vin sont réelles.

La société qui obtiendra la gestion du domaine générique de premier niveau «.wine» ou «.vin» pourra ainsi vendre l'utilisation, permettant à tout futur acquéreur de ces gTLD de les combiner à un nom de domaine de second niveau pour créer une adresse web personnalisée comme «sancerre.vin» ou encore «champagne.wine».

Les vins d'origine bénéficient pourtant d'une protection juridique en tant qu'indications géographiques, en particulier dans le cadre de l'accord sur les aspects des droits de la propriété intellectuelle qui touchent au commerce (ADPIC) de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce et au sein de l'Organisation internationale de la vigne et du vin (OIV).

L'utilisation des indications géographiques «sancerre» et «champagne», par exemple, en tant que noms de domaine de second niveau exigerait donc de respecter strictement les droits de propriété intellectuelle afférents et devrait bénéficier strictement au territoire et aux acteurs concernés.

Au regard de ces éléments et sachant que la 46e réunion de l'ICANN s'est tenue à Pékin du 7 au 11 avril 2013:

Dans quelle mesure la Commission entend-elle faire respecter les droits de propriété intellectuelle relatifs aux indications géographiques dans le cadre de l'attribution de nouvelles extensions de nom de domaine sur l'internet (gTLD)?

Réponse donnée par Mme Kroes au nom de la Commission
(22 mai 2013)

La Commission européenne est déterminée à faire respecter le droit aussi bien en ligne qu'hors ligne, notamment par le contrôle de l'application, sur l'internet, du corpus législatif de l'UE et des accords internationaux auxquels celle-ci est partie en matière de droits de propriété intellectuelle. Conscients de ce que l'introduction des deux nouveaux domaines génériques de premier niveau (gTLD) «.vin» et «.wine» peut se traduire par de nouveaux défis concernant l'application en ligne du cadre réglementaire de l'UE sur les indications géographiques pour les vins, les membres du comité consultatif des gouvernements (GAC) de l'ICANN ont réussi à aborder la question lors de leur 46e réunion à Pékin.

En conséquence, le GAC a fait savoir au comité directeur de l'ICANN qu'un examen plus approfondi des gTLD «.vin» et «.wine» peut se justifier, notamment lors de la prochaine réunion à Durban (mi-juillet 2013), et que le comité directeur de l'ICANN devait s'en tenir pour l'instant à l'évaluation initiale de ces deux nouveaux gTLD. Le comité directeur de l'ICANN ne devrait donc pas attribuer les deux nouveaux gTLD tant que le GAC n'aura pas élaboré et adopté des dispositions adéquates permettant de garantir le respect de la législation de l'UE sur les indications géographiques. En vue de trouver une telle solution, la Commission européenne coopère étroitement avec les États membres de l'UE producteurs de vin et d'autres membres du GAC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003957/13
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Internet domain name extensions and the wine industry

Since 2012, specialised companies and organisations have been able to ask the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to assign them a new Internet domain name extension (generic top-level domain (gTLD)). This innovation is aimed at improving the visibility and identification of a product, a sector or a town (e.g. '.auto', '.hotel', '.paris', etc.).

While geographical indications in the wine sector are not protected by ICANN rules and while none of the applications for assigning the domain name extension '.wine' or '.vin' makes commitments to protect them, professional organisations in the European wine sector have very real concerns.

The company which will be allowed to manage the generic top-level domain '.wine' or '.vin' will therefore be able to sell its use, enabling any future purchaser of these gTLDs to combine them with a second-level domain name in order to create a personalised web address, such as 'sancerre.vin' or 'champagne.wine'.

However, origin wines enjoy legal protection in the form of geographical indications, in particular in the context of the World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and within the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV).

The use of the geographical indications 'sancerre' and 'champagne', for example, as second-level domain names would require strict respect for the related intellectual property rights and should strictly benefit the region and stakeholders concerned.

In view of the above, and given that the 46th ICANN meeting was held in Beijing from 7 to 11 April 2013, to what extent does the Commission intend to enforce the intellectual property rights relating to geographical indications in the context of assignment of new Internet domain name extensions (gTLD)?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The European Commission is committed to uphold rule of law on and off line. This includes the enforcement on the Internet of the body of the EU legislation and international agreements to which the EU is a member in the area of intellectual property rights. Mindful that the two new gTLDs .vin and .wine may imply new challenges to the online application of EU's regulatory framework on the Geographical Indications on wines, the issue was discussed and successfully defended at the 46th ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) in Beijing.

Consequently, the GAC advised the ICANN board that further considerations may be warranted on '.vin' and '.wine', including at the next meeting in Durban (mid-July 2013) and that the ICANN board should not proceed beyond initial evaluation of these two new gTLDs. It is therefore expected that the ICANN board will not delegate the two new gTLDs as long as suitable safeguards ensuring that the European legislation on geographical indications is uphold are elaborated and agreed by GAC. In order to find such a solution, the European Commission is closely cooperating with the wine producing EU member states and other members of the GAC.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003958/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(9 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ενίσχυση της Ελλάδας ώστε να καλύψει τις ζημιές απο τις πυρκαγιές στα δάση της

Η Ελλάδα πλήττεται τα τελευταία 30 χρόνια από τεράστιες πυρκαγιές. Ιδίως από το 2007, οι πυρκαγιές έχουν καταστρέψει οικολογικά και οικονομικά ολόκληρες περιοχές, όπως έγινε π.χ. στην Πελοπόννησο το 2007, στην Βορειανατολική Αττική το 2009 (με την καταστροφή του μεγαλύτερου μέρους του Εθνικού Δρυμού της Πάρνηθας), στην Χίο το 2012 κοκ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι τα ποσά που έλαβε από το 2007 ως τώρα η Ελλάδα από όλες τις κοινοτικές πρωτοβουλίες για την αποκατάσταση των ζημιών από πυρκαγιές;

2. Ποια είναι τα ποσά που δεν εισεπράχθησαν ακόμη και εκκρεμούν και ποιοι είναι οι λόγοι αυτής της εκκρεμότητας;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

1. Η Ελλάδα έλαβε οικονομική ενίσχυση ύψους 89 769 000 ευρώ από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ για τις πυρκαγιές του 2007. Όμως, η επιλεξιμότητα 9 240 000 ευρώ της ενίσχυσης αυτής αμφισβητείται από τις ελληνικές αρχές ελέγχου και μπορεί να χρειαστεί να επιστραφούν στην Επιτροπή. Δεν ζητήθηκαν επιπλέον ποσά από την Ελλάδα για τις πρωτοβουλίες αποκατάστασης ζημιών από δασικές πυρκαγιές ή για δράσεις πρόληψης μέσω του Ελληνικού Προγράμματος Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης 2007-2013, για την πρόληψη των κινδύνων και της περιβαλλοντικής υποδομής στις πυρόπληκτες περιοχές μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης και του Ταμείου Συνοχής ή για βοήθεια αντιμετώπισης καταστροφών μέσω του Μηχανισμού Πολιτικής Προστασίας της ΕΕ.

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει γνώση της ύπαρξης διεκδικητέων εκκρεμούντων ποσών από τις ελληνικές αρχές σχετικά με τα μέτρα αποκατάστασης από τις δασικές πυρκαγιές.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003958/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Support for Greece in paying for damage caused by forest fires

Greece has suffered massive fires over the last 30 years. Since 2007 in particular, fires have been the cause of the ecological and economic destruction of entire areas, as in the Peloponnese in 2007, in northeast Attica in 2009 (when most of the Parthina National Forest was destroyed), in Chios in 2012 and so on.

1. How much money has Greece received since 2007 under all the Community initiatives to restore forest fire damage?

2. How much money has not yet been collected and is pending and why?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

1. Greece received financial aid amounting to EUR 89.769 million from the EU Solidarity Fund for the 2007 fires. The eligibility of EUR 9.24 million of this aid is however questioned by the Greek audit authorities and may have to be returned to the Commission. No further amounts were claimed by Greece for initiatives to restore forest fire damage or for prevention actions via the Greek Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, for risk prevention and environmental infrastructure in the fire-damaged areas via the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund or for disaster response assistance via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

2. The Commission has no knowledge of pending amounts to be claimed by the Greek authorities concerning restoration measures from forest fires.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-003959/13
do Komisji
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(9 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Budowa obwodnic miast Kamień Krajeński i Sępólno Krajeńskie w ciągu drogi krajowej nr 25 w Polsce

Unia Europejska przeznacza znaczne środki na poprawę płynności i podniesienie poziomu bezpieczeństwa ruchu drogowego. Cele te będą także realizowane w następnej perspektywie finansowej sięgającej lat 2014-2020. Oznacza to, że obecnie poszczególne państwa przygotowują szczegółowe propozycje zamierzeń inwestycyjnych, współfinansowanych przez Unię Europejską.

Prosiłbym w związku z tym o udzielenie konkretnej informacji, czy w zamierzeniach przekazywanych przez rząd RP do Komisji Europejskiej znajduje się budowa obwodnic miast Kamień Krajeński i Sępólno Krajeńskie w ciągu drogi krajowej nr 25 w Polsce?

Budowę obu tych obwodnic uważam za szczególnie istotną nie tylko dla poprawy płynności ruchu, lecz także dla ochrony substancji mieszkaniowej i środowiska w obu tych miastach. Obecnie, rosnący z roku na rok ruch tranzytowy przebiega przez centrum obu tych miast niszcząc zabudowania i stwarzając codziennie zagrożenia dla mieszkańców. Chcę podkreślić, że władze obu tych jednostek z własnych środków sfinansowały już dokumentację projektową, w tym raporty oddziaływania na środowisko naturalne, co miało przyspieszyć prace nad modernizacją tej sieci drogowej.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(26 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Komisja nie jest w stanie przekazać konkretnych informacji na temat projektów, które władze polskie zamierzają uwzględnić w programowaniu polityki spójności na lata 2014-2020, ponieważ dyskusje prowadzone z Polską znajdują się na wstępnym etapie, tj. na poziomie polityki strategicznej. Komisja na tym etapie nie otrzymała i też nie wymaga szczegółowych informacji dotyczących konkretnych projektów, które mają być ujęte w tych programach.

W miarę postępów w negocjacjach, pod koniec bieżącego roku oraz w 2014 r., a także w trakcie przyjmowania umów o partnerstwie i programów, Komisji zostaną udostępnione bardziej szczegółowe informacje.

Z uwagi na zasadę zarządzania dzielonego stosowaną przy realizacji polityki spójności władze krajowe odpowiadają za wykonanie programów na najbardziej odpowiednim szczeblu terytorialnym oraz zgodnie z systemem instytucjonalnym obowiązującym w każdym państwie członkowskim.

Komisja nie ingeruje zatem w wybór projektów (z wyjątkiem tych ważniejszych), gdyż leży to w kompetencjach krajowych organów zarządzania, pod warunkiem że dokonują one takich wyborów zgodnie z dokumentacją programowania przyjętą po konsultacji z Komisją oraz przestrzegają obowiązujących przepisów prawa unijnego i krajowego.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003959/13
to the Commission
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Construction of bypasses around Kamień Krajeński and Sępólno Krajeńskie on national road 25 in Poland

The European Union provides a great deal of funding to improve traffic flows and enhance road safety. Efforts to meet these objectives will continue under the forthcoming multiannual financial framework for the period between 2014 and 2020. This means that countries are currently preparing detailed proposals setting out their plans as regards investment projects for co-financing by the European Union.

Could the Commission please provide specific information as to whether the plans that the Polish Government has submitted to the Commission include the construction of bypasses around the towns of Kamień Krajeński and Sępólno Krajeńskie on Poland's national road 25?

In my view, these bypasses are absolutely crucial, not only in order to improve the flow of traffic, but also to protect housing stock and the environment in both towns. The level of traffic passing through the centre of both towns is rising every year, ruining buildings and posing a daily threat to residents. I should like to emphasise the fact that the local authorities in both towns have, at their own expense, had planning documentation drawn up, including reports on the environmental impact that speeding up efforts to modernise this road network would have.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission is not in position to provide specific information on the projects which the Polish authorities intend to include in cohesion policy programming for 2014-2020 because the discussions with Poland are at an initial stage, i.e. at strategic policy level. The Commission has not received and does not require at this stage detailed information on specific projects to be included in the programmes.

As the negotiations advance, later this year and in 2014, and in the course of adopting the partnership agreements and programmes, more detailed information will become available to the Commission.

Due to the shared management principle of implementing cohesion policy, national authorities are responsible for the implementation of the programmes, at the most appropriate territorial level and according to the institutional system of each Member State.

The Commission therefore does not intervene in the selection of the projects (except for major projects), as this comes under the competence of the national management authorities, provided that their choices are in line with the programming documents adopted in consultation with the Commission, and that they comply with the applicable EU and national legislation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003960/13
alla Commissione
Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE)
(9 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Regolamento per il servizio delle navi del porto di Brindisi e normativa comunitaria in materia di libera concorrenza e rilascio di concessioni

Il vigente regolamento per il servizio delle navi del porto di Brindisi, entrato in vigore il 1.1.2002, prevede che le domande di concessione possono essere prese in considerazione solo quando l'elenco dei rimorchiatori di cui dispone il richiedente comprenda almeno un numero minimo di quattro rimorchiatori (Art. 1). Lo stesso articolo 1 stabilisce, inoltre, i rispettivi presupposti minimi di potenza dei rimorchiatori, ovvero: 2 rimorchiatori da 4500 BHP cadauno, un rimorchiatore da 3500 BHP e un rimorchiatore da 3000 BHP.

L'articolo 8 del regolamento limita invece il numero di concessioni ad un singolo atto per l'intero servizio, stabilendo al contempo che, qualora venga presentata una domanda di concessione durante il periodo di validità di un precedente atto, la domanda non possa essere esaminata se non previo accertamento dell'inadempienza del concessionario in carica e dopo l'avvio della procedura di decadenza.

La specificità e la natura restrittiva dei criteri sovraesposti hanno determinato negli anni una situazione che favorisce sproporzionatamente la posizione del concessionario in carica, limitando l'accesso da parte di richiedenti esterni al servizio di rimorchio delle navi all'interno del porto di Brindisi. Di fatto, un potenziale richiedente dovrebbe, non solo soddisfare i presupposti tecnici per presentare una domanda di concessione (art. 1), ma attendere l'eventuale accertamento dell'inadempienza della concessione in atto e l'avvio della procedura di decadenza.

In considerazione di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti qui esposti;

2. se considera che i precetti contenuti nel succitato regolamento per il servizio delle navi del porto di Brindisi siano compatibili con i principi dei trattati Ue in materia di concorrenza;

3. se le norme menzionate sono compatibili con la legislazione comunitaria in materia di concessioni e con gli obiettivi di trasparenza e accesso ai mercati della proposta di direttiva in esame sull'aggiudicazione dei contratti di concessione?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2013)

1. La Commissione non era a conoscenza dei fatti esposti. Nell'ambito dei preparativi per la revisione della politica europea sui porti, la Commissione ha individuato numerosi casi di restrizioni all'accesso al mercato dei servizi portuali, comprese le operazioni di rimorchio. La Commissione sta valutando l'ipotesi di proporre entro l'estate una serie di misure relative ai porti, comprese delle misure per facilitare l'accesso al mercato ed evitare tariffe abusive nei servizi portuali.

2. In base agli articoli 101 e 102 del TFUE, le regole di concorrenza si applicano ai comportamenti delle imprese, e in principio non alle misure come il regolamento in questione.

3. In base alle informazioni disponibili, è impossibile determinare se la concessione in questione sia una concessione di servizi ai sensi della comunicazione 2000/C 121/02 della Commissione. In caso affermativo, va osservato quanto segue.

Attualmente le concessioni di servizi non sono regolamentate dalla legislazione dell'UE sugli appalti pubblici. Essendo soggetti ai principi sanciti dal Trattato, tali contratti devono essere aggiudicati mediante procedure trasparenti e non discriminatorie. La proposta relativa all'aggiudicazione dei contratti di concessione costituisce una concretizzazione dei principi del Trattato e punta ad accrescere la certezza giuridica a vantaggio delle autorità pubbliche e delle imprese.

Non è, di per sé, contraria al principio del Trattato di subordinare l'aggiudicazione di un contratto di concessione di servizi a requisiti tecnici, a condizione che questi ultimi siano non discriminatori e proporzionati. Per quanto riguarda la durata, la giurisprudenza prevede alcune limitazioni. In particolare, le concessioni di durata illimitata andrebbero escluse. In base alle informazioni disponibili, è impossibile valutare se tali limitazioni siano state rispettate nel caso in questione.

La Commissione è disposta ad esaminare eventuali ulteriori informazioni che l'onorevole desidera fornire.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003960/13
to the Commission
Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Rules governing services for ships in the port of Brindisi and EC law on free competition and the award of concessions

The current regulation governing services for ships in the port of Brindisi, which entered into force on 1 January 2002, provides that applications for a concession may be taken into consideration only when at least four tugs are available to the applicant (Article 1). The same article also lays down minimum requirements for the respective power of the tugs, namely: two 4 500 BHP tugs, one 3 500 BHP tug and one 3 000 BHP tug.

Article 8 of the regulation, however, limits the number of concessions to a single act for the entire service, whilst establishing that, where an application for a concession is submitted during the period of validity of a previous act, the application cannot be examined unless the non-performance of the current concession-holder has been ascertained and a revocation procedure launched.

The specific and restrictive nature of the above criteria has resulted, over the years, in a situation that disproportionately favours the position of the current concession-holder, limiting the access of external applicants to ship towing services within the port of Brindisi. Indeed, potential applicants not only have to meet the technical requirements for submitting a concession application (Article 1), but also have to wait for the non-performance of the existing concession-holder to be ascertained and the revocation procedure to be initiated.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. whether it is aware of these facts;

2. whether it believes that the rules laid down in the regulation governing services for ships in the port of Brindisi are compatible with the principles relating to competition enshrined in the EU treaties;

3. whether these rules are compatible with EC law on concessions and with the objectives relating to transparency and market access set out in the proposal for a directive, currently under consideration, on the award of concession contracts?

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

1. The Commission was not aware of this situation. As part of the preparation of the European Port Policy review, the Commission identified many instances of restrictions to the access of the market of port services including towage. The Commission is considering to propose by summer a set of measures on ports, including to facilitate market access and avoid price abuses of port services.

2. Under Articles 101 and 102 TFEU, competition rules apply to undertakings' behaviors, in principle not to measures such as the regulation in question.

3. On the basis of available information, it is impossible to determine whether the concession at issue is a service concession in the sense of the Commission Communication (2000/C 121/02). In the positive, the following remarks should be made.

Service concessions are not currently regulated by EU public procurement legislation. Being subject to Treaty principles, such contracts have to be awarded through non-discriminatory and transparent procedures. The proposal on the award of concession contracts constitutes a concretization of Treaty principles and is aimed at increasing legal certainty to the benefit of public authorities and companies.

It is not, in itself, contrary to the Treaty principles to make the award of a service concession contract subject to technical requirements, provided that these are non-discriminatory and proportionate. As regards duration, the case law provides for some limitations. In particular, concessions of unlimited duration should be ruled out. On the basis of the information available, it is impossible to assess whether these limitations were respected in this case.

Should the Honourable Member wish to provide further information, the Commission is ready to examine it.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003961/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Violación de los derechos humanos en Arabia Saudí

El pasado 13 de marzo de 2013, Arabia Saudí ejecutó a siete jóvenes acusados de haber cometido un atraco. Algunos de los siete ejecutados eran menores de edad. El 2 de abril, un tribunal saudí condenó a quedarse paralítico a un joven de 24 años por haber apuñalado a un amigo a los 14 años. El joven permanece en prisión desde entonces.

No se trata de casos nuevos, pero el primero provocó una avalancha de críticas y una campaña internacional de apoyo y solidaridad para evitar los fusilamientos de los siete jóvenes. Todas las críticas no sirvieron para nada, puesto que Arabia Saudí es un país donde tradicionalmente se violan los derechos humanos haciendo caso omiso a cualquier denuncia. A su vez, Arabia Saudí es uno de los principales aliados de la Unión Europea en la región, y su carácter autoritario parece invisible a los ojos de la diplomacia de la Unión Europea.

El papel de la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de la Unión Europea ha sido condenado en repetidas ocasiones por ONG como Human Rights Watch por mantener un completo mutismo ante las sistemáticas violaciones de los derechos humanos cometidas por el régimen saudí. En esta ocasión, la Delegación de la Unión Europea en Arabia Saudí publicó un comunicado tras los fusilamientos, de apenas tres frases, en el que hacía un llamamiento para una moratoria global, pero sin exigir responsabilidad ni acciones al Gobierno Saudí. Mientras que la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante lanza firmes condenas exigiendo el respeto de los derechos humanos en otros países, como, por ejemplo, Siria, llegando a financiar a sus opositores aduciendo el nulo respeto de los derechos humanos por el Gobierno de Al Asad, la jefa de la diplomacia europea mantiene un tímido rol respecto a Arabia Saudí, haciendo llamamientos para moratorias globales de la pena de muerte en lugar de exigir responsabilidades y condenar las ejecuciones.

¿Qué acciones plantea la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante ante esta nueva violación de los derechos humanos en Arabia Saudí? ¿Qué acciones diplomáticas plantea ante el caso omiso prestado a los anteriores comunicados de la UE? ¿Cuáles son las razones que justifican que no se condene la violación de los derechos humanos con la misma intensidad que en otros países? ¿Exigirá que no se lleve a cabo la condena destinada a dejar paralítico al citado joven saudí?

¿Considera que debería reconsiderar las negociaciones con el Consejo de Cooperación para los Estados Árabes del Golfo hasta que Arabia Saudí respete los derechos humanos y colabore con la diplomacia europea en esta materia?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de mayo de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta tiene conocimiento de cuanto refiere Su Señoría.

De hecho, el comunicado de 13 de marzo de 2013 al que alude en su pregunta y en el que se condena la ejecución de siete jóvenes ciudadanos saudíes por asalto a mano armada fue emitido por la propia Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta. Dicho comunicado constituía el colofón de los intensos esfuerzo desplegados y de los diversos llamamientos urgentes realizados a través de los canales diplomáticos abogando por el indulto de los condenados. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta no ha cejado en su denuncia de las ejecuciones en Arabia Saudí antes las autoridades de ese país, como la efectuada el 10 de enero de 2013 tras la ejecución de Rizana Nafeek, un ciudadano de Sri Lanka. Este último caso ha dado lugar a permanentes contactos con las autoridades desde la sentencia dictada en 2007.

La UE aprovecha todas las oportunidades a su alcance para reiterar su firme oposición a la pena de muerte, no solo en Arabia Saudí, sino en todo el mundo, como ha hecho recientemente con motivo de la reanudación de las ejecuciones en Kuwait tras siete años de moratoria de facto.

Como sin duda sabe Su Señoría, la emisión de comunicados, aun siendo necesaria en algunos casos, es solo una forma más de acción diplomática. Las representaciones diplomáticas de la UE, así como los Estados miembros presentes en la región, debaten de forma permanente sobre las violaciones de los derechos humanos en terceros países que tanta preocupación suscitan en la EU.

Por lo que respecta al caso del joven condenado a la parálisis, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta entiende que, por decisión de un juez saudí, la sentencia no se ejecutará.

Desde los años noventa, la UE venía negociando un acuerdo de libre comercio con el Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo que debía incluir una cláusula estándar relativa al respeto de los derechos humanos, pero dichas negociaciones llevan suspendidas desde 2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003961/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights violations in Saudi Arabia

On 13 March 2013, seven young men accused of committing a robbery were executed in Saudi Arabia. Some of the seven put to death were minors. On 2 April, a Saudi court ordered that a 24-year-old man be paralyzed because he had stabbed a friend at the age of 14. He has been in prison ever since.

These cases are not new, but the first unleashed a flood of criticism and an international campaign of support and solidarity to prevent the seven young men being executed by firing squad. All of the criticism was in vain, since Saudi Arabia is a country where human rights are routinely violated and any condemnation goes unheeded. At the same time, Saudi Arabia is one of the European Union's main allies in the region and EU diplomats turn a blind eye to its authoritarian nature.

Non-governmental organisations like Human Rights Watch have repeatedly criticised the Vice-President/High Representative of the European Union for remaining totally silent in the face of systematic human rights violations committed by the Saudi regime. On this occasion, following the executions, the Delegation of the European Union to Saudi Arabia issued a statement, just three sentences long, which called for a global moratorium but stopped short of holding the Saudi Government to account or calling on it to take action. The Vice-President/High Representative is very vocal in condemning other countries, like Syria, and demanding that they respect human rights, and even goes as far as funding the opposition, citing the al-Assad government's total lack of respect for human rights as justification. Nevertheless, the head of the EU diplomatic service is shy when it comes to Saudi Arabia, calling for global moratoriums on the death penalty instead of calling it to account and condemning executions.

What action does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to take in response to this new human rights violation in Saudi Arabia? What diplomatic action does she plan to take, given that the EU's previous statements have been ignored? What is her justification for failing to condemn human rights violations as forcefully as those in other countries? Will she call for the punishment that will leave the aforementioned young Saudi man paralyzed to be abandoned?

Does she take the view that she should reconsider negotiations with the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf until Saudi Arabia respects human rights and cooperates with the EU diplomatic service on this issue?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the events referred to by the Honourable Member.

The statement of 13 March 2013 referred to in the question condemning the execution of seven young Saudi citizens convicted for armed robbery was in fact issued by the HR/VP herself. It complemented intensive efforts and several urgent appeals made through diplomatic channels to advocate for the pardonning of the convicted men. The HR/VP has consistently voiced her concern at executions in Saudi Arabia towards the Kingdom's authorities, as was done on 10 January 2013 following the execution of Sri Lankan national Ms Rizana Nafeek. This latter case had been the subject of continuous contacts with the authorities since the judgment issued in 2007.

The EU seizes all opportunities to reaffirm its principled opposition to the death penalty, not only in Saudi Arabia, but worldwide, as was done recently on the occasion of the resumption of executions in Kuwait following a seven years de facto moratorium.

As the Honourable Member will know, the issuance of public statements, while necessary in some instances, is only one form of diplomatic action. EU diplomatic representations, as well as Member States in the region, discuss the EU's concern on Human Rights violations in third countries on a continuous basis.

As for the case of the young man sentenced to paralysis, the HR/VP understands that his sentence will not be carried out, as per a Saudi judge's decision.

The EU has been engaged in negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council since the 1990's, which would include a standard Human Rights clause, but negotiations have been suspended since 2008.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-003962/13
komissiolle
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE)
(9. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Liito-oravan suojelu Suomessa

Liito-oravien (Pteromys volans) lisääntymis- ja levähdyspaikkojen hävittäminen ja heikentäminen on EU:ssa kielletty luontodirektiivillä (artikla 12, liite IV(a)). Valtaosa EU:n liito-oravista esiintyy Suomessa, jossa lajin suurin uhka on metsätalous. Laji on vähentynyt ja se on todettu Suomen lajien uhanalaisuus 2010 -kirjassa vaarantuneeksi (VU).

Suomi on tehnyt vuonna 2004 kansalliset ohjeet liito-oravien huomioon ottamisesta metsätaloudessa. Nyt on kuitenkin uusissa tutkimuksissa huomattu, että ohjeet jättävät liian vähän metsää liito-oraville, eivätkä lisääntymis- ja levähdyspaikat säily. Ohjeiden mukaan käsitellyistä metsistä levähdyspaikka on jäänyt toimimaan vain 21–61 prosentissa. Tulos vaihtelee alueittain ja riippuu myös tulkintatavasta. Lisääntymis- ja levähdyspaikan säilymisen arviointiperusteena tulisi olla lajin jatkuva lisääntyminen eli liito-oravanaaraan reviirin säilyminen alueella. Suomen liito-oravaohjeiden ja luontodirektiivin väliset ristiriitaisuudet ovat aiheuttaneet Suomessa pitkiä suojelukiistoja muun muassa Forssan Konikalliolla.

Pitääkö komissio Suomen käytäntöä ja ohjeita liito-oravien huomioon ottamisesta metsänkäytössä EU:n luontodirektiivin mukaisena? Ellei, mihin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä?

Janez Potočnikin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(17. toukokuuta 2013)

Arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen kannattaa tutustua vastaukseen, jonka komissio on antanut liito-oravan (Pteromys volans) suojelua koskevaan kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-000916/98 ([1]), jossa selostetaan elinympäristödirektiivissä (1992/43/ETY ([2])) säädetyt, kyseisen lajin suojeluun Suomessa sovellettavat yleiset velvoitteet ja tarkastellaan Konikallion senhetkistä tilannetta.

Suomessa pantiin tuolloin vireille liito-oravaa koskeva rikkomusmenettely. Suomen viranomaiset mukauttivat kansallista lainsäädäntöä elinympäristödirektiivin säännösten mukaiseksi, minkä jälkeen menettely päätettiin vuonna 2004.

Komissio tarkastelee saatavilla olevia tietoja, jotka koskevat voimassa olevien toimenpiteiden toimivuutta, ja ottaa tarkastelussa huomioon myös arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen toimittamat tiedot. Tarvittaessa komissio ottaa yhteyttä Suomen viranomaisiin tarkistaakseen, että mainitut toimenpiteet ovat elinympäristödirektiivin mukaisia.

([1]) EYVL C 31, 5.2.1999. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:1999:031:0007:0008:FI:PDF
([2]) EYVL L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003962/13
to the Commission
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Protection of the Siberian flying squirrel in Finland

The deterioration and destruction of breeding sites and resting places of the Siberian flying squirrel (Pteromys volans) is prohibited in the European Union under the Habitats Directive (Article 12, Annex IV (a)). The majority of Siberian flying squirrels are to be found in Finland, where the biggest threat to the species is forestry. The species is in decline and was declared an endangered species on the 2010 Red List of Finnish Species.

In 2004, Finland issued national instructions on protecting the Siberian flying squirrel from the effects of forestry. Now, however, new studies have shown that the instructions leave too little forest space for the squirrels, and that their breeding sites and resting places are not preserved. In only 21-61% of the forests managed according to the instructions have the squirrels' resting places been left undisturbed. The results vary from region to region and also depend on how they are interpreted. The basis for assessing the preservation of a breeding site or resting place should be the species' continuous reproduction, which means ensuring that the territory of the female of the species remains in the area. The contradictions that exist between the instructions issued for the Siberian flying squirrel and the Habitats Directive have led to lengthy debates on conservation in Finland; for example, with regard to the forest area of Konikallio near Forssa.

Will the Commission ensure that Finnish practice and the instructions that Finland has issued with regard to the protection of Siberian flying squirrels from the effects of forestry remain in line with the EU's Habitats Directive? If not, what steps does it intend to take?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-000916/98 ([1]) on the protection of the Siberian Flying Squirrel (Pteromys Volans), which explains the general obligations laid down by the Habitats Directive (1992/43/EEC ([2])) for the protection of the species in Finland and addresses the situation of Konikallio at the time.

Infringement procedures had been opened in the past on the subject of the Siberian Flying Squirrel in Finland. The Finnish authorities adapted their legislation to comply with the provisions of the Habitats Directive leading to the closure of the procedures in 2004.

The Commission will examine the information available on the effectiveness of the current measures, also in the light of the information provided by the Honourable Member, and if necessary will contact the Finnish authorities to verify the compliance of said measures with the Habitats Directive.

([1]) OJ C 031 , 5.2.1999, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:1999:031:0007:0008:EN:PDF
([2]) OJ L 206 , 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003963/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Monitoring of organ trafficking

On 24 April 2013, the Scottish Parliament will host an event on the subject of organ trafficking. China is a leading organ transplant country which encourages 'transplant tourism' as a lucrative state-run business. Unlike the situation in any other country, virtually all Chinese organs for transplants come from prisoners. Many of these are prisoners of conscience who have not given prior free and voluntary consent as a donor, and a huge number are being killed to provide organs, according to objective findings.

Is the Commission aware of the issue of organ trafficking, and what is being done at the European level to monitor this issue?

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

The HR/VP is indeed aware of China's practice of organ 'harvesting' and trafficking and shares the Honourable Member's concern. This issue is regularly raised in contacts with the Chinese authorities including in the framework of past rounds of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue and will continue to do so. The EU believes that the practice is closely linked to the Re-Education through Labour system and the death penalty, as most cases have been linked to prisoners in Re-Education through Labour camps, especially Falun Gong practitioners.

The HR/VP has taken note of a statement by the Chinese Vice-Minister of Health in March 2012 that China intends to abolish organ donation from prisoners condemned to death within the next five years. Indeed, China has adopted a regulation on human organ transplants which came into effect on 1 July 2006 and now requires the written agreement of the donor. However, the regulation does not adequately address the issue of donor consent, especially for those who have died in custody or have been executed.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003964/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(9 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Economie rurală — stabilitate financiară

În actualul context economic al crizei financiare care s-a transformat într-o criză a datoriilor suverane în unele părți ale zonei euro, sectorul bancar și stabilitatea fiscală a multor guverne europene sunt grav amenințate. Au fost afectate în mod grav și fluxurile de creditare a economiei rurale europene. Ca atare, concurența loială continuă să rămână o condiție esențială a realizării integrale a pieței agricole interne și o componentă-cheie a unei strategii comune care să contribuie la redresarea acestei economii rurale la nivel european.

Criza a creat dezechilibre majore în majoritatea statelor membre și unele dintre acestea nu au avut altă opțiune decât să solicite asistență externă din partea Comisiei Europene. Stabilitatea financiară are, fără îndoială, o importanță majoră pentru Uniunea Europeană.

În acest cadru economic dificil, cum încurajează Comisia statele membre să aplice regulile de disciplina financiară impuse de criză și care să permită agricultorilor să rămână competitivi pe piața europeană?

Răspuns dat de dl Rehn în numele Comisiei
(31 mai 2013)

Reforma guvernanței economice, în special consolidarea Pactului de stabilitate și creștere în contextul pachetului de șase acte legislative care a intrat în vigoare în decembrie 2011 și al pachetului de două acte legislative care a fost adoptat recent de Parlamentul European au sporit în mod semnificativ stimulentele pentru ca statele membre să respecte normele fiscale convenite la nivelul UE. O discuție detaliată cu privire la Pactul de stabilitate și creștere consolidat și trimiteri la informații suplimentare sunt disponibile pe site-ul internet al Comisiei ([1]).

În același timp, este esențial să se restabilească activitățile normale de creditare a economiei, pentru a sprijini investițiile în sectorul agricol și în zonele rurale. În acest scop, PAC joacă un rol important în ceea ce privește susținerea unui sector agricol mai durabil și mai competitiv, precum și finanțarea investițiilor în ferme și a oportunităților de afaceri în zonele rurale.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003964/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Rural economy — financial stability

Against the current economic background of the financial crisis, which has turned into a sovereign debt crisis in some parts of the euro area, many European governments are facing a serious threat in terms of their banking sector and fiscal stability. Credit flows in Europe's rural economy have also been hit hard. Therefore, fair competition continues to be an essential condition for fully achieving the internal agricultural market and a key component of a common strategy contributing to the recovery of this rural economy at European level.

The crisis has led to major imbalances in most Member States and some have had no option but to request external assistance from the Commission. Financial stability is undoubtedly of paramount importance to the European Union.

In this tough economic climate, how does the Commission encourage Member States to apply the financial discipline rules imposed by the crisis, which will enable farmers to remain competitive on the European market?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The reform of economic governance, in particular the strengthening of the Stability and Growth Pact in the context of the six-pack legislation that entered into force in December 2011 and the two-pack legislation which was recently adopted by the European Parliament have significantly sharpened the incentives for Member States to comply with the fiscal rules agreed at EU level. A detailed discussion of the strengthened Stability and Growth Pact and references to further material are available on the Commission's website ([1]).

At the same time, it is essential to restore normal lending to the economy to support investment in the agricultural sector and in rural areas. To this end, the CAP plays an important role in supporting a more sustainable and competitive agricultural sector as well as funding farm investments and business opportunities in rural areas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003966/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 avril 2013)

Objet: Soutien du Myanmar

Ce jeudi, la commission du commerce international a voté en faveur du soutien du Myanmar dans ses efforts de réforme, en particulier en vue d'éradiquer le travail forcé. Ce vote fait suite à un excellent rapport produit par la Commission européenne en la matière.

1. Comment la Commission propose-t-elle de réinstaurer l'accès en franchise et hors quota du Myanmar au marché de l'Union?

2. Comment la Commission entend-elle inciter les entreprises européennes à appliquer des mesures de responsabilité sociale dans les entreprises pour les opérations en Birmanie, à garantir un haut niveau de transparence et de notification et à encourager les meilleures pratiques entre investisseurs?

3. Les exigences juridiques étant remplies pour que les préférences du système de préférences généralisées soient réinstaurées, que compte faire la Commission en ce qui concerne le point sensible du travail forcé, qui reste une préoccupation dans certains domaines du pays, en particulier dans le secteur militaire?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(30 mai 2013)

La proposition présentée par la Commission le 17 septembre 2012 visant à réintégrer le Myanmar/la Birmanie dans le Système des préférences tarifaires généralisées (SPG), et donc à réinstaurer en sa faveur des réductions des droits de douane, s'inscrit dans le prolongement de la décision prise en juin 2012 par la Conférence internationale du travail de lever ou de suspendre les mesures adoptées par l'Organisation internationale du travail à l'encontre de ce pays. Cela supposait, conformément au règlement SPG de l'UE, que les conditions juridiques motivant le retrait du bénéfice des préférences tarifaires du SPG n'étaient plus remplies.

L'encouragement de pratiques commerciales responsables est un objectif louable que la Commission poursuit par des pistes parallèles, telles que la réforme en cours de la directive sur la transparence et de la directive comptable, ou la promotion de normes internationalement reconnues en matière de responsabilité sociale des entreprises. Ces initiatives constituent une contribution complémentaire à la réalisation de l'important objectif du SPG qui est de produire les ressources nécessaires pour un développement inclusif et durable.

Quant au travail forcé, comme pour toute autre question en rapport avec les principales conventions internationales dans le contexte du SPG, la Commission reste vigilante et sera prête à prendre des mesures si les conditions légales sont remplies, qu'il s'agisse du Myanmar/de la Birmanie ou de tout autre pays bénéficiaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003966/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Support for Myanmar

On Thursday, the Committee on International Trade voted to support Myanmar in its reforms, in particular its efforts to eradicate forced labour. This vote followed an excellent report produced by the European Commission on this matter.

1. How does the Commission propose to reinstate Myanmar's duty- and quota-free access to the EU market?

2. How does the Commission intend to urge European businesses to apply corporate social responsibility measures to their operations in Myanmar, to ensure a high level of transparency and reporting and to encourage best practice amongst investors?

3. Given that the legal requirements have been met for the Generalised Scheme of Preferences to be reinstated, what does the Commission intend to do with regard to the sensitive issue of forced labour, which is still a concern in some sectors of the country, particularly in the military sector?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission proposal to reinstate Generalised Scheme of Preferences' (GSP) tariff reductions for Myanmar/Burma, presented on 17 September 2012, follows the decision of the International Labour Conference (June 2012) to lift and/or suspend measures which the International Labour Organisation had taken against that country. According to the EU GSP Regulation, this implied that the legal conditions for withdrawal of GSP preferences no longer existed.

Promoting responsible business practices is a worthy objective, which the Commission pursues via parallel avenues like the current reform of the Transparency Directive and of the Accounting Directive, or the promotion of internationally recognised standards of Corporate Social Responsibility. Those initiatives complement GSP's important goal to generate the resources which are necessary to achieve inclusive, sustainable development.

On forced labour, as for any other issue which is related to the core international conventions in the context of GSP, the Commission remains vigilant and will be ready to take actions if the legal requirements are met, in the case of Myanmar/Burma or any other beneficiary country.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003967/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 avril 2013)

Objet: Conséquences du téléchargement illégal

Une étude commandée par la Commission européenne montre, une fois de plus, que le téléchargement illégal de musique n'est pas forcément une mauvaise affaire pour les plateformes de musique légales en ligne.

L'Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, en charge de l'étude, a débuté ses recherches en composant un panel de 16 290 individus représentatif de la population européenne. Pour ce faire, les analystes se sont basés sur les statistiques de 2 759 sites de contenus musicaux. Il ressort de l'examen du comportement de ce panel que, même si 72,6 % des internautes étudiés téléchargent illégalement et que 20 % de ces pirates ne visitent jamais les sites légaux, 56,6 % des personnes du panel achètent légalement de la musique en ligne. Un pourcentage équivalent (57,2 %) utilise un service de *streaming* légal. Mieux: sans le piratage, des plateformes enregistreraient une perte de visiteurs évaluée à 7 % et 2 % de clics en moins.

L'étude montre enfin que 26 % des internautes étudiés téléchargent, à la fois légalement et illégalement, de la musique, tandis que seulement, 11 % achètent leur musique en ligne uniquement de façon légale. De même, 9 % des personnes étudiées utilisent exclusivement le *streaming* légal. En conclusion, le piratage ne serait pas uniquement une question de malhonnêteté mais bien une question d'offre. Télécharger illégalement ne serait, en définitive, qu'une réaction négative à des attentes non remplies et serait moins néfaste à l'industrie de la musique que ce que cette même industrie prétend.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission à cette étude?

2. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis selon lequel «le piratage ne serait pas uniquement une question de malhonnêteté mais bien une question d'offre»?

3. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis selon lequel «Télécharger illégalement ne serait, en définitive, qu'une réaction négative à des attentes non remplies et serait moins néfaste à l'industrie de la musique que ce que cette même industrie prétend»?

4. Quelles sont les prochaines étapes envisagées par la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(9 juillet 2013)

L'analyse figurant dans l'étude réalisée par le Centre commun de recherche de la Commission à laquelle l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence porte sur le nombre de connexions à des services légaux et à des services ne respectant pas les droits de propriété intellectuelle, et non sur les chiffres des ventes ou des téléchargements effectifs à partir de sites internet. L'analyse part du principe qu'il existe une corrélation objective entre connexions aux sites concernés et ventes/téléchargements. Il convient donc d'interpréter avec circonspection les conclusions relatives à l'incidence sur les ventes ou téléchargements réalisés à partir de sites respectant les droits de propriété intellectuelle.

En réponse à la question posée par l'Honorable Parlementaire, cette étude ne saurait permettre de conclure que «télécharger illégalement ne serait, en définitive, qu'une réaction négative à des attentes non remplies et serait moins néfaste à l'industrie de la musique que ce que cette même industrie prétend». On ne saurait pas davantage inférer de l'étude que «le piratage ne serait pas uniquement une question de malhonnêteté mais bien une question d'offre». Il va de soi qu'on doit s'attaquer à la question du piratage comme à toute autre forme de violation des droits intellectuels reconnus. La Commission reconnaît cependant qu'il est également nécessaire d'améliorer l'accès aux offres légales. Tel est l'objectif des travaux lancés sous l'intitulé «Des licences pour l'Europe».

En conclusion, la Commission envisagera d'approfondir l'analyse de manière à déterminer si les résultats de l'étude mentionnée ci-dessus demeurent valables lorsque la base de recherche n'est plus le nombre de connexions mais bien le nombre des ventes/téléchargements effectifs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003967/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Consequences of illegal downloading

A study commissioned by the European Commission shows, once again, that illegal downloading of music is not necessarily a bad thing for legal online music platforms.

The Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, which carried out the study, began its research by putting together a panel of 16 290 individuals, representative of the EU population. To do so, the analysts looked at statistics from 2 759 music-hosting sites. The evaluation of this panel's behaviour shows that, even though 72.6% of the Internet users in the study illegally download music, and 20% of these illegal users never visit legal sites, 56.6% of the panel buy music online legally. An equivalent percentage (57.2%) uses a legal streaming service. Moreover, without piracy, certain platforms would lose visitors, estimated at between 7% and 2% fewer clicks.

Lastly, the study shows that 26% of the Internet users studied download music, both legally and illegally, whereas only 11% buy their music online solely in a legal manner. Similarly, 9% of the people in the study only use legal streaming. In conclusion, it would appear that piracy is not simply a question of dishonesty but also a question of supply. Ultimately, downloading illegally is merely a negative reaction to unfulfilled expectations and is less harmful to the music industry than the industry itself claims.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to this study?

2. Does the Commission agree that 'piracy is not simply a question of dishonesty but also a question of supply'?

3. Does the Commission agree that 'ultimately, downloading illegally is merely a negative reaction to unfulfilled expectations and is less harmful to the music industry than the industry itself claims'?

4. What steps does the Commission intend to take next?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

The analysis in the study by the Commission's Joint Research Centre the Honourable Member refers to relates to data of clicks on legal and IP infringing services and not to actual sales or downloads from websites. The study assumes that clicks and sales/downloads are positively correlated. The conclusions regarding the impact on sales or downloads from non-IP infringing services should, therefore, be interpreted with caution.

In answer to the Honourable Member's question this study cannot be used to conclude that 'ultimately downloading illegally is merely a negative reaction to unfulfilled expectations and is less harmful to the music industry than the industry itself claims'. Neither does the study suggest that 'piracy is not simply a question of dishonesty but also a question of supply'. The issue of piracy must certainly be addressed, as any form of violation of established property rights. Nevertheless, the Commission acknowledges that there is also a need to enhance access to legal offer. The work-streams that have been set up under 'Licenses for Europe' are aimed at this.

In conclusion, the Commission will consider deepening the analysis to see whether the results of the aforementioned study still hold when based on actual sales/downloads rather than clicks.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003968/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 avril 2013)

Objet: Création du «Leaders Club»

Initiative très attendue par les entrepreneurs du web, la Commission européenne crée le «Leaders Club», l'occasion pour des milliers de jeunes entrepreneurs européens de recevoir les conseils avisés d'experts dans le développement des jeunes pousses.

On ne peut que se féliciter d'une initiative qui permettra que les meilleures idées commencent en Europe et, si possible, restent sur le sol européen.

1. Le panel qui constitue le «Leaders club» est-il composé d'esprits créatifs qui donneront à l'Europe des conseils avisés sur l'entrepreneuriat? Comment a-t-il été élaboré? Une logique géographique ou une ligne conductrice particulière ont-elles été suivies en l'occurrence?

2. Quel est le calendrier des rencontres avec le panel?

3. Comment les jeunes pousses vont-elles postuler? Vont-elles toutes recevoir un support ou y aura-t-il une sélection? Si tel est le cas, sur quels critères cette sélection sera-t-elle basée?

4. Quels sont en l'espèce les objectifs de la Commission (nombre de demandes, création potentielle d'emplois des dites jeunes pousses, chiffres d'affaires à moyen terme, etc.)?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2013)

Le «Leaders Club», ou club des entrepreneurs, créé dans le cadre du plan StartUp Europe, est une initiative de la Commission qui souligne l'importance de l'innovation sur internet pour l'emploi et la croissance en Europe. Des entrepreneurs européens qui ont forgé leur succès sur internet se sont unis pour initier un débat européen sur la spécificité de l'innovation sur internet et sur les questions et les problèmes auxquels sont confrontés les entrepreneurs internet pour développer leurs activités. Cette initiative a été présentée, dans la communication de la Commission intitulée «Plan d'action Entrepreneuriat 2020» ([1]), comme l'une des actions devant permettre d'ouvrir de nouvelles perspectives commerciales à l'ère du numérique. D'autres informations générales sur l'entrepreneuriat du web sont également disponibles dans le document de travail publié récemment sur ce thème ([2]).

Il s'agit d'un espace de dialogue dont les membres doivent émettre des avis sur ce que l'Europe devrait faire pour promouvoir et améliorer l'environnement d'affaires des jeunes pousses technologiques au niveau européen. Ce club vise également à promouvoir l'esprit d'entreprise en valorisant le succès des fondateurs de jeunes pousses et en renforçant leur visibilité et leur statut d'exemple dans toute l'Europe.

Il est composé d'un petit nombre d'entrepreneurs internet européens de haut niveau. Les membres du club ont été choisis parmi les entrepreneurs technologiques qui avaient la plus grande notoriété et le plus grand nombre d'usagers. Actuellement, le groupe se compose de Niklas Zennstrom — Atomico, Skype, Kaj Hed — Rovio, Daniel Ek / Martin Lorentzon — Spotify, Joanna Shields — TechCity, Reshma Sohoni — SeedCamp, Boris Veldbuijzen van Zanten — The Next Web, et Zaryn Dentzel — Tuenti. Il est ouvert aux nouveaux membres.

En principe, le Leaders Club se réunira deux fois par an, sur convocation de la Commission.

Son objectif n'est pas de donner des conseils ou d'apporter un soutien aux entreprises ou aux chefs d'entreprise, mais de contribuer à l'émergence d'un environnement européen qui soit plus favorable à l'économie du web.

([1]) COM(2012)795 final.
([2]) SWD(2013)142 — Renforcer l'environnement des entrepreneurs du web dans l'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003968/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Creation of the 'Leaders Club'

The creation, by the Commission, of the 'Leaders Club', an initiative keenly awaited by Internet entrepreneurs, offers thousands of young European entrepreneurs the opportunity to receive advice from experts on the development of start-up companies.

We can only applaud an initiative which will allow the best ideas to start in Europe and, where possible, remain on European soil.

1. Is the Leaders Club panel composed of creative minds who will give expert advice on entrepreneurship to Europe? How has it been set up? Has a geographical rationale or specific guiding principle been followed in this case?

2. What is the schedule of meetings with the panel?

3. How can start-up companies apply? Will they all receive support or will there be a selection process? In the latter case, what criteria will the selection be based on?

4. What are the Commission's objectives for this initiative (number of applications, potential creation of jobs in the above start-up companies, turnover in the medium term, etc.)?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Startup Europe Leaders Club is a Commission initiative highlighting the importance Internet innovation plays to jobs and growth in Europe. Successful European Internet entrepreneurs have come together to lead a European debate on the specificity of innovating on the Internet and on the issues and problems faced by Internet entrepreneurs when growing their business. It was announced in the Commission Communication Entrepreneurship 2020 action plan ([1]) as one of the action to unleash business opportunities in the digital age. Further background information on web-entrepreneurship is also available in the recently published staff working document ([2]).

It is a forum to advice on what Europe should do to promote and improve the tech startup environment at European level. It also aims at promoting an entrepreneurial culture by celebrating successful startup founders and increasing their visibility as role models throughout Europe.

It consists of a few high-profile European Internet entrepreneurs. The members of the Club were selected based on the criteria of the most recognised tech entrepreneurs and in terms of user reach. The Club presently includes Niklas Zennstrom — Atomico, Skype, Kaj Hed — Rovio, Daniel Ek / Martin Lorentzon — Spotify, Joanna Shields — TechCity, Reshma Sohoni — SeedCamp, Boris Veldbuijzen van Zanten — The Next Web, Zaryn Dentzel — Tuenti. The group is open to new members.

In principle, the Startup Europe Leaders Club will meet twice a year, upon invitation by the Commission.

The purpose of the Startup Europe Leaders Club is not to provide advice or support to individual companies or entrepreneurs, but contribute to a European environment which is more web-business friendly.

([1]) COM(2012)795.
([2]) SWD(2013)142 — Strengthening the environment for Web entrepreneurs in the EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003969/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 avril 2013)

Objet: «Piratage»: distinction entre gentils hackers et méchants hackers

Une décision a fait grand bruit, lundi, aux États-Unis: un homme a été condamné à 41 mois de prison pour avoir exploité une faille du site Internet d'un opérateur téléphonique en 2010, dévoilant plus de 100 000 adresses électroniques d'utilisateurs d'iPad. Selon le verdict d'un jury populaire, cet homme s'est rendu coupable d'«usurpation d'identité» et d'«accès à un ordinateur sans autorisation». La justice s'est appuyée sur la loi de 1986 relative à la fraude informatique (Computer Fraud Act), déjà très critiquée par plusieurs élus pour son caractère trop vague.

Le problème dans cette affaire, c'est que l'individu n'a pas piraté de base de données. Il a simplement exploité une faille du site. Il suffisait en effet de rentrer un numéro d'identifiant d'iPad (généré automatiquement) pour obtenir l'adresse électronique d'un utilisateur. Son cas divise l'interweb. Car l'homme n'a pas signalé la faille à l'entreprise comme l'aurait fait un gentil hacker, baptisé «white hat». Il n'a pas non plus vendu son carnet d'adresses, qui comprenait notamment celles de Michael Bloomberg et de plusieurs membres du Pentagone, pour plusieurs centaines de milliers de dollars, comme l'aurait fait un «black hat». À la place, il a fourni la liste aux médias, davantage, selon ses détracteurs, pour attirer l'attention sur son exploit que sur la faille.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission dans des cas similaires de divulgation de données?

2. La Commission pourrait-elle se montrer conciliante avec de «gentils hackers» dans la mesure où, en matière de sécurité informatique, il faut par nature exploiter un bug pour prouver son existence?

3. La Commission fait-elle la distinction entre «white hat» et «black hat», entre «gentil hacker» et «méchant hacker»? Si oui, comment?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(12 juin 2013)

La Commission européenne n'a eu connaissance d'aucun cas similaire dans l'Union européenne et elle n'intervient pas dans les cas particuliers. La législation de l'UE en vigueur ne fait pas de distinction entre «gentils» et «méchants» pirates informatiques («white hat» et «black hat» hackers); comme le montre l'exemple cité par l'Honorable Parlementaire, une telle distinction n'est pas toujours facile à établir. La Commission a présenté une proposition de directive relative aux attaques visant les systèmes d'information et abrogeant la décision-cadre 2005/222/JAI du Conseil [COM(2010) 517], qui est actuellement négociée par le Parlement européen et le Conseil. Cette proposition de directive tient pleinement compte de la charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne, qui prévoit des garanties importantes pour les personnes ainsi que la défense et la sauvegarde des libertés fondamentales. Dans le cadre des discussions relatives à cette directive, des propositions visant à inclure des références au piratage informatique «bienveillant» ont été étudiées; la décision d'inclure ou non de telles références dans la directive telle qu'adoptée n'a pas encore été prise. La Commission observe que certains fournisseurs privés de logiciels et de services encouragent déjà le piratage informatique «bienveillant», notamment la notification de failles dans la sécurité, en choisissant de récompenser de telles notifications.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003969/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Computer hacking: distinguishing between good hackers and bad hackers

On Monday, a decision caused a considerable stir in the United States: a man was sentenced to 41 months' imprisonment for exploiting a flaw in the Internet site of a telephone operator in 2010, revealing over 100 000 email addresses of iPad users. According to the civilian jury, this man was guilty of 'identity fraud' and of 'accessing a computer without authorisation'. The court relied on the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986, which several elected representatives have already severely criticised for being too vague.

The problem here is that the individual concerned did not hack into a database. He simply exploited a flaw in the site. In fact, all that was required was to enter an iPad serial number (generated automatically) to obtain the email address of its user. His case has divided the Internet community: he did not report the flaw to the company as a good hacker, or 'white hat', would have done, but neither did he sell his address book, which included in particular the addresses of Michael Bloomberg and several members of the Pentagon, for several hundred thousand dollars as a 'black hat' would have done. Instead, he gave the list to the media in order, according to his detractors, to draw attention to his achievement rather than to the flaw.

1. What is the Commission's position in similar cases where data are disclosed?

2. Could the Commission be accommodating towards 'good hackers' insofar as, when it comes to IT security, by its very nature a bug must be exploited to prove its existence?

3. Does the Commission differentiate between 'white hats' and 'black hats', that is, between 'good hackers' and 'bad hackers'? If so, how?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The European Commission is not aware of a similar case in the EU and does not intervene in individual cases. Current EU legislation does not differentiate between 'white hat' and 'black hat' hackers; as the case cited by the Honourable Member demonstrates, such a distinction may not always be easy to draw. The Commission has put forward a proposal for a directive on attacks against information systems and repealing Council Framework Decision 2005/222/JHA (COM(2010) 517), which is currently being negotiated by the European Parliament and the Council. This proposed directive takes fully into account the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union which provides important safeguards for individuals as well as the promotion and protection of fundamental freedoms. During the discussions on this directive, proposals to include language on 'white hat' hacking were considered; it remains to be seen whether or not such language will be included in the directive as adopted. The Commission notes that some private providers of software and services already encourage 'white hat' hacking, in particular the notification of security breaches, by choosing to reward such notifications.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003970/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Explotación de los recursos hídricos de los Territorios Ocupados del Sahara Occidental

La ONG Western Sahara Resource Watch ha denunciado la explotación de los recursos hídricos subterráneos que la industria agrícola marroquí está llevando a cabo en las zonas ocupadas del Sahara Occidental.

Estas reservas de aguas subterráneas son recursos no renovables, considerablemente escasos y de una importancia crucial para el pueblo saharaui. En las proximidades de la ciudad de Dajla se están desarrollando numerosas plantaciones que explotan los recursos hídricos de una manera irracional, insostenible y, por supuesto, perforando pozos sin ningún tipo de licencia.

El saqueo de los recursos naturales que Marruecos está llevando a cabo en los territorios de Sahara Occidental es una estrategia deliberada que supone un obstáculo para la paz. Marruecos pretende esquilmar al máximo los recursos naturales en los Territorios Ocupados, donde actúa en claro incumplimiento del Derecho Internacional, dejando al pueblo saharaui privado del derecho a la explotación sostenible de los recursos que les pertenecen.

¿Está la Comisión realizando algún seguimiento de las empresas de origen europeo que importan bienes agrícolas producidos en los Territorios Ocupados del Sahara Occidental para comprobar la correcta trazabilidad de su producción?

¿Considera que la explotación insostenible de los recursos naturales de los Territorios Ocupados del Sahara Occidental, especialmente sus aguas, supone un nuevo obstáculo que Marruecos pone a una resolución justa del conflicto? ¿Exigirá el fin de tales explotaciones?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

El pasado 28 de febrero de 2013, durante la última reunión del Subcomité UE-Marruecos sobre agricultura y pesca, organismo común en el marco del actual Acuerdo de Asociación, la Comisión reunió información sobre la producción agrícola del Sáhara Occidental y de las cinco provincias del sur de Marruecos.

La mayor parte de la producción de frutas y hortalizas de Marruecos procede de Sous-Massa (región próxima a Agadir que aporta casi el 90 % de la producción nacional) y cuenta con las tecnologías de riego más avanzadas, entre ellas el riego por goteo o los circuitos cerrados de cultivo hidropónico y la recuperación del agua sobrante, que permiten ahorrar grandes cantidades de agua. Estas tecnologías modernas se emplean también en la producción en invernaderos de Dajla, cuya área no supera las 600 hectáreas según la información disponible hasta la fecha. Las superficies cultivadas del Sáhara Occidental y de las cinco provincias del sur de Marruecos representan en su conjunto tan solo el 1,2 % del total de la superficie de tierra de cultivo de Marruecos. Las cuestiones relacionadas con la gestión del agua preocupan a las autoridades locales y forman parte de los correspondientes programas de desarrollo agrícola.

En lo referente al etiquetado de origen, este, según el principio general de la UE, tiene un carácter voluntario, salvo que su omisión induzca a engaño al consumidor. No obstante, en virtud de las normas de carácter vertical de la política agrícola común, dicho etiquetado es obligatorio para determinados alimentos, como frutas y hortalizas, aceite de oliva, pescado, etc., pero la Comisión no tiene constancia de que las importaciones agrícolas a las que se refiere Su Señoría incumplan estas normas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003970/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Exploitation of water resources in the occupied territories of the Western Sahara

According to the non-governmental organisation Western Sahara Resource Watch, underground water resources in the occupied areas of the Western Sahara are being exploited by the Moroccan agricultural industry.

These underground water reserves are very scarce, non-renewable resources that are vitally important to the Sahrawi people. Around the city of Dakhla, a large number of plantations are being set up which exploit water resources in a senseless, unsustainable manner, which, of course, includes drilling wells without any kind of licence.

Morocco's plundering of the natural resources in the territories of the Western Sahara is a deliberate strategy that presents an obstacle to peace. Morocco is attempting to harvest as much as it can of the natural resources in the occupied territories. Its actions are in clear breach of international law and they deprive the Sahrawi people of the right to sustainably exploit the resources that belong to them.

Is the Commission monitoring European companies that import agricultural goods produced in the occupied territories of the Western Sahara, in order to ensure proper traceability in terms of their production?

Does it take the view that the unsustainable exploitation of the natural resources of the occupied territories of the Western Sahara, especially the water there, is a new obstacle that Morocco is putting in the way of a fair resolution to the conflict? Will it demand an end to such exploitation?

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

At the occasion of the last meeting of the EU-Morocco Subcommittee on agriculture and fisheries on 28 February 2013, a joint body under the existing Association Agreement, the Commission gathered information on agricultural production in the Western Sahara and five provinces of south Morocco.

The majority of the fruit and vegetable production in Morocco comes from Sous-Massa (region close to Agadir producing nearly 90% of the national production) and incorporates the latest technology in irrigation. This includes drip or hydroponics closed circuits and recovery of excess water which can save large amounts of water. This modern technology is equally used in the greenhouse production area of Dakhla which do not exceed 600 ha according to information made available so far. The arable land of the Western Sahara and the five provinces of south Morocco combined represents only 1,2% of the total arable land of Morocco. Water management issues are a general concern of local authorities and are included in relevant agriculture development programmes.

Regarding origin labelling, the general EU principle is the voluntary character unless its omission would mislead consumers. However origin labelling is mandatory for certain foods such as fruits and vegetables, olive oil, fish, etc. under the vertical rules within the common agricultural policy. The Commission has not received any indication that these agricultural imports would not comply with these rules.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003971/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Exportación de productos de Sáhara Occidental como marroquíes

Cuatro cadenas de distribución suecas han dejado de comercializar productos procedentes de los Territorios Ocupados de Sáhara Occidental, y han denunciado la comercialización de los productos procedentes de la zona con la etiqueta de Marruecos.

Las cadenas de distribución Axfood, Coop, ICA y Bergendahls han expresado su preocupación por los riesgos de la violación del derecho internacional que conlleva la compra de los productos *Made in* Marruecos. Dicho país incumple deliberadamente el Derecho Internacional y las normas internacionales de etiquetado al considerar unilateralmente lo producido en los Territorios Ocupados como producido en Marruecos. Estos incumplimientos de las normativas de etiquetado y de comercio internacional deberían desembocar en una sanción al *Made in* Marruecos.

El saqueo de los recursos naturales que Marruecos está llevando a cabo en los territorios de Sáhara Occidental no puede ser tolerado por los ciudadanos europeos. Permitiendo el acceso a los mercados europeos de todos los productos de Marruecos se permite la importación de bienes producidos en Sáhara Occidental.

¿Puede la Comisión garantizar que, de todos los productos *Made in* Marruecos que circulan en el mercado europeo, no hay ninguno producido en los Territorios Ocupados de Sáhara Occidental y falsamente etiquetado como marroquí?

¿Está la Comisión realizando seguimiento de las empresas de origen europeo que introducen bienes agrícolas producidos en los Territorios Ocupados de Sáhara Occidental para comprobar la correcta trazabilidad de su producción?

¿Piensa la Comisión exigir sanciones por el falso etiquetado marroquí de estos productos o prohibir su importación hasta que cumpla con las normas internacionales de etiquetado?

¿Considera la Comisión que pueden producirse casos de competencia desleal si existen cadenas de comercialización que introducen productos producidos en los Territorios Ocupados en el mercado europeo? ¿Cómo piensa intervenir para garantizar que no se produzcan estas importaciones?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta escrita E-6205/2012.

Ni el Acuerdo de asociación ([1]) ni el Acuerdo en materia de agricultura ([2]) prevén normas específicas sobre los requisitos que ha de cumplir el etiquetado de los productos. Así pues, los productos originarios de Marruecos importados en la Unión no pueden diferenciarse por territorios.

Por lo general, en el marco de la normativa de la UE vigente, el etiquetado de origen es voluntario, a menos que su omisión pueda inducir a error al consumidor. Es obligatorio, sin embargo, en el caso de determinados productos alimenticios regulados por una normativa específica, como la miel, las frutas y hortalizas, los productos de la pesca, la carne de vacuno y los productos a base de carne de vacuno, el aceite de oliva, el vino, los huevos, la carne de aves de corral importada y las bebidas espirituosas.

El Acuerdo de asociación crea organismos oficiales para que efectúen el seguimiento de la aplicación del Acuerdo. El 28 de febrero de 2013, en el marco del subcomité de agricultura y pesca establecido por el Acuerdo de asociación, la Comisión solicitó información sobre todos los ámbitos pertinentes de la aplicación del Acuerdo.

Siempre que se respete la normativa de la UE, no existe motivo alguno para que la Comisión imponga sanciones a las empresas de la UE que importan productos agrícolas de Marruecos. La Comisión no ha recibido información alguna que indique que estas importaciones agrícolas no cumplen la normativa de la UE.

([1]) DO L 70 de 18.3.2000.
([2]) DO L 241 de 7.6.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003971/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Export of Moroccan-labelled products from the Western Sahara

Four Swedish retail chains have stopped selling products from the occupied territories of the Western Sahara, and have condemned the marketing of Moroccan-labelled products from the area.

The Axfood, Coop, ICA and Bergendahls retail chains have expressed concern that purchasing 'Made in Morocco' products might breach international law. Morocco deliberately flouts international law and international labelling rules by unilaterally regarding products from the occupied territories as having been produced in Morocco. These violations of labelling and international trade regulations warrant sanctions against 'Made in Morocco' products.

The plundering of natural resources by Morocco in the territories of the Western Sahara cannot be tolerated by the European public. Allowing all Moroccan products access to European markets also allows goods produced in the Western Sahara to be imported.

Can the Commission ensure that, of all the 'Made in Morocco' products available on the European market, none is produced in the occupied territories of the Western Sahara and falsely labelled as Moroccan?

Is the Commission monitoring European companies that import agricultural goods produced in the occupied territories of the Western Sahara, in order to ensure proper traceability in terms of their production?

Does the Commission plan to demand sanctions against products falsely labelled as Moroccan, or to ban them from being imported until Morocco complies with international labelling rules?

Does the Commission take the view that there may be instances of unfair competition if some retail chains place products from the occupied territories on to the European market? What action does it plan to take to ensure that such products are not imported?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-6205/2012.

Neither the Association Agreement ([1]), nor the Agriculture Agreement ([2]) foresees any specific rules regarding requirements as to the labelling of products. Products originating in Morocco and imported into the Union can thus not be differentiated on a territorial basis.

In general, under current EU legislation origin labelling is voluntary unless its omission would mislead consumers. It is, however, mandatory for certain foods such as honey, fruit and vegetables, fish, beef and beef products, olive oil, wine, eggs, imported poultry and spirits drinks under product-specific legislation.

The Association Agreement establishes formal bodies that aim to ensure follow-up on the implementation of the Agreement. On 28 February 2013, in the framework of the agricultural and fisheries subcommittee established by the Association Agreement, the Commission requested information on all relevant areas of the implementation of the Agreement.

Provided EU legislation is respected, there are no grounds for the Commission to sanction EU companies that import agricultural products from Morocco. The Commission has not received any indication that these agricultural imports do not comply with the EU rules.

([1]) OJ L 70, 18.3.2000.
([2]) OJ L 241, 7.6.2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003972/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Comunicación del Consejo de Europa relativa a Salud Ambiental

Debido a la proliferación y nueva detección de numerosas enfermedades relacionadas con las condiciones ambientales y la presencia de determinadas sustancias químicas en el ambiente urge adoptar medidas a nivel europeo para la protección de este tipo de enfermos.

Las cantidades permitidas de sustancias químicas tóxicas, ondas electromagnéticas, etc. no son suficientemente estrictas para la protección de todos los enfermos europeos. Las personas afectadas por la Sensibilidad Química Múltiple, Hipersensibilidad Electromagnética y otros trastornos parecidos sufren una completa indefensión por parte de las autoridades de los Estados miembros que no reconocen su enfermedad. En la reciente comunicación del Consejo de Europa titulada *Environment health: better prevention of environment-related health hazards* del pasado 20 de enero, se establece en el punto 14.13 de las conclusiones que: *improve provision, by better reimbursement of diagnostic and therapeutic expenses, for persons suffering from illnesses associated with the environment, who often face major protracted suffering involving high personal costs*.

¿De qué forma plantea la Comisión llevar a cabo estas recomendaciones para mejorar la calidad de vida de los afectados por enfermedades relacionadas con el medio ambiente? Teniendo en cuenta la existencia de tratamientos experimentales para enfermedades como la Sensibilidad Química Múltiple o la Hipersensibilidad Electromagnética ¿considera necesario legislar para implementar las citadas recomendaciones y garantizar el tratamiento y la protección de las personas que sufren estas enfermedades?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2013)

El establecimiento de una normativa reguladora del reembolso de los gastos que tienen que soportar por las pruebas de diagnóstico y por las terapias las personas afectadas por enfermedades relacionadas con el medio ambiente es responsabilidad exclusiva de los Estados miembros. La Comisión no tiene competencias para proponer ninguna legislación europea que permita conseguir un mayor reembolso de los gastos que tienen que soportar por las pruebas de diagnóstico y por las terapias las personas afectadas de enfermedades relacionadas con el medio ambiente tal como recomienda el Consejo Europeo.

Ahora bien, la UE sí cuenta con una legislación muy completa, que protege a los ciudadanos de cualquier riesgo que entrañe el medio ambiente. Concretamente, el Reglamento (CE) n° 1907/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 18 de diciembre de 2006, relativo al registro, la evaluación, la autorización y la restricción de las sustancias y preparados químicos (REACH) ([1]), tiene por objeto garantizar un alto nivel de protección de la salud humana y del medio ambiente mediante la obtención de información sobre las propiedades y los usos de las sustancias químicas que se introducen en el mercado de la UE y mediante la posibilidad de que las autoridades públicas nacionales y europeas adopten medidas para garantizar un adecuado control de los riesgos que presentan dichas sustancias.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1907/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 18 de diciembre de 2006, relativo al registro, la evaluación, la autorización y la restricción de las sustancias y preparados químicos (DO L 396 de 30.12.2006, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003972/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Council of Europe report on environmental health

In view of the proliferation and recent discovery of a large number of illnesses related to environmental conditions and the presence of certain chemicals in the environment, steps need to be taken urgently at EU level to protect people suffering from these illnesses.

The permitted levels of toxic chemicals, electromagnetic waves, etc. are not strict enough to protect all European citizens living with these illnesses. People suffering from multiple chemical sensitivity, electromagnetic hypersensitivity and other similar disorders are left completely helpless by the authorities of the Member States, which do not recognise their illness. The recent Council of Europe report entitled *Environment and health: better prevention of environment-related health hazards*, published on 20 January 2009, establishes, in point 14.13 of the conclusions, the need to 'improve provision, by better reimbursement of diagnostic and therapeutic expenses, for persons suffering from illnesses associated with the environment, who often face major protracted suffering involving high personal costs.'

How does the Commission intend to implement these recommendations to improve the quality of life of people suffering from environment-related illnesses? Given the existence of experimental treatments for illnesses such as multiple chemical sensitivity and electromagnetic hypersensitivity, does it think it should legislate to implement these recommendations and ensure the protection and treatment of people suffering from these illnesses?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Responsibility for determining the rules governing reimbursement of diagnostic and therapeutic expenses, including for persons suffering from illnesses associated with the environment, is the exclusive responsibility of the Member States. In this context, the Commission cannot propose EU legislation to secure better reimbursement of diagnostic and therapeutic expenses for persons suffering from illnesses associated with the environment, as recommended by the Council or Europe.

The EU does however have comprehensive legislation to protect people from environmental hazards. In particular, the regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) ([1]) aims at ensuring a high level of protection of human health and the environment, via the generation of information on the properties and uses of the chemical substances which are placed on the EU market, and the possibility for national and European public authorities to adopt measures to ensure a proper control of the risks of these substances.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals; OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003973/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Expulsión de una ciudadana panameña transexual

La Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR) y la Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales (FELGTB) han denunciado la deportación por parte del Ministerio del Interior de una ciudadana panameña de 29 años que desde los 13 es víctima de agresiones sexuales y maltrato policial en su país por ser transexual. Llegó a Madrid el día 7 de marzo, intentando huir de una persecución, y solicitó protección internacional.

Pese a que la Ley de Asilo 12/2009 recoge específicamente el supuesto de persecución por identidad sexual, a pesar de contar con un informe favorable del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR), a pesar de encontrarnos en la fase de admisión a trámite, donde no es exigible indicio probatorio alguno, el Ministerio del Interior español denegó su petición. El pasado día 14 de marzo la ciudadana panameña fue expulsada del Estado español.

CEAR y FELGTB denuncian que la denegación de este caso no es un hecho aislado, sino una práctica seguida por el Ministerio del Interior. La persecución por naturaleza sexual y por motivos de género no está siendo tenida en cuenta en la práctica en la mayoría de las solicitudes que se presentan a España, pese a estar incorporada en la Ley de Asilo.

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión respecto a la denegación sistemática del derecho de asilo en España a personas perseguidas en sus países de origen por su orientación sexual?

¿Piensa llevar a cabo alguna acción ante el Gobierno español respecto al caso de la expulsión de esta ciudadana panameña?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de junio de 2013)

Los Estados miembros tienen obligación de evaluar todas las solicitudes de protección internacional de acuerdo con las normas estipuladas por la UE y, en particular, en virtud de la Directiva relativa a los requisitos de asilo. Dicha Directiva contempla la posibilidad de conceder protección a personas que tengan fundados temores de ser perseguidas por motivo de pertenencia a un determinado grupo social. De acuerdo con la misma, en función de las circunstancias imperantes en el país de origen, podría incluirse en el concepto de grupo social un determinado grupo basado en una característica común de orientación sexual.

La Comisión no dispone de datos que indiquen que las autoridades españolas hayan aplicado incorrectamente el acervo de la UE en materia de asilo en ningún caso particular. Sin embargo, la Comisión se pondrá en contacto con las organizaciones a las que se refiere Su Señoría y, si resulta necesario, planteará el asunto ante las autoridades españolas. La Comisión hace un continuo seguimiento de la correcta aplicación del acervo de la UE en materia de asilo, también en este ámbito concreto, y adoptará las medidas oportunas en caso de que existan pruebas de una aplicación incorrecta de la legislación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003973/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Deportation of a transsexual Panamanian national

The Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid (CEAR) and the Spanish Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Transsexuals and Bisexuals (FELGTB) have condemned the deportation by the Ministry of the Interior of a 29-year-old Panamanian national who, since the age of 13, has suffered sexual assaults and police brutality in her home country for being transsexual. She arrived in Madrid on 7 March 2013, seeking to escape persecution, and applied for international protection.

Although Asylum Law No 12/2009 specifically includes the case of persecution due to sexual identity, and despite the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) having made a favourable report and the Panamanian's case being at the admissibility stage — at which point no evidence is required — the Spanish Ministry of the Interior rejected her application. On 14 March 2013, this Panamanian national was deported from Spain.

CEAR and FELGTB claim that this rejection is not an isolated incident, but standard practice of the Ministry of the Interior. Persecution due to sexual orientation and for reasons of gender is, in practice, not taken into account in most applications submitted to the Spanish authorities, despite being covered by the Asylum Law.

What view does the Commission take of individuals persecuted in their home countries because of their sexual orientation being systematically denied the right of asylum in Spain?

Will it take any action against the Spanish Government over the deportation of this Panamanian national?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Member States are required to assess all applications for international protection in line with the standards set out in EC law, and in particular with the Asylum Qualification Directive. The directive foresees the possibility of protection being granted to persons with a well-founded fear of persecution on the ground of their membership of a particular social group. According to the directive, depending on the circumstances in the country of origin, a particular social group might include a group based on a common characteristic of sexual orientation.

The Commission is not in possession of information indicating that the Spanish authorities have failed to properly apply the EU *acquis* on asylum in any particular case. However, the Commission will take contact with the organisations referred to by the Honourable Member and, if appropriate, will take the matter up with the Spanish authorities. The Commission continuously monitors the correct implementation of the EU *acquis* on asylum, including in this area, and will take the appropriate steps in case of evidence of an incorrect implementation of the law.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003974/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Local authority-owned power generation

I have been contacted by one of my constituents in Aberdeen, Scotland, who would like to see local authority-owned companies expand and supply their services to a wider range of public bodies within Aberdeen. Under current EU legislation and the 'Teckal Test', a local business is unable to expand beyond Aberdeen City Council properties.

The creation of a local authority-owned power generation scheme has brought down the cost of energy for Aberdeen City Council tenants and for the local authority. The cost of further infrastructure work would be greatly reduced if it was able to supply heat and power to a greater range of public bodies.

1. Has the Commission looked recently at the use of local authority-owned power generation?

2. Will the Commission consider changing public procurement regulations to allow public bodies to supply heat and power to other public bodies?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2013)

1. The decision whether electricity is generated at local level and whether generation capacity is owned by public or by private bodies falls within the competence of Member States. The Commission has not undertaken any assessment on the use of local authority-owned power generation.

2. In 2011 the Commission adopted three proposals for directives in relation to public procurement and concessions ([1]). These proposals contain provisions which allow for the cooperation between public authorities under certain conditions pursuant to which the contracts will not be subject to the competitive tendering and transparency requirements of those directives.

In the utilities sector, contracting entities are often organised as an economic group where members have a specialized role in the context of the group and mainly operate with each other. This justifies the exclusion of certain public contracts and concessions awarded to the members of the group from the scope of those Directives.

In liberalised markets such as for gas and electricity services are provided by an entity such as a local authorities-owned power generation undertaking to end users on the basis of individual contracts and not on public contracts or concessions. Hence, those services shall not be considered as services provided to the public authorities themselves for the purpose of determining whether the essential part of the undertaking's activity is directed to the cooperating authorities.

The three proposals are currently under negotiation between the European Parliament and the Council, and aim overall at giving more legal certainty to different types of cooperation between local authorities as described above.

([1]) Proposal for a directive on the procurement of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sector (COM(2011) 895 final). In addition, the Commission proposed a directive on public procurement (COM(2011) 896 final) as well as a directive on the award of concession contracts (COM(2011) 897 final).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003975/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(9 avril 2013)

Objet: Paiements pour services écosystémiques au sein de l'Union

L'évaluation économique des services écosystémiques permet de quantifier les bénéfices économiques retirés de la nature et de la biodiversité.

Les systèmes de «paiements pour services écosystémiques» (PSE) permettent, dans une logique d'incitation, le maintien de ces services. Aux États-Unis par exemple, de plus en plus d'arboriculteurs rémunèrent des apiculteurs jusqu'à l'équivalent de 100 euros par ruche en période de floraison pour les services qu'elles rendent en termes de pollinisation.

Autre exemple, un bon entretien de la forêt contribue au maintien d'une bonne qualité de l'eau et des sols. Or, ce service rendu, tout comme d'autres, n'est pas pris en compte de manière traditionnelle sur le marché. Cela n'incite pas à entretenir nos forêts et, partant, les services qu'elles rendent, vu les coûts engendrés. Les PSE pourraient contribuer à concilier enjeux de développement économique et de conservation.

La proposition de 7e programme d'action pour l'environnement de l'Union prévoit de favoriser la conception et la mise en place de systèmes de paiement pour les services environnementaux.

Cependant, il n'existe pas à ce jour de système harmonisé de calcul et de rémunération des services écosystémiques au sein de l'Union.

Dans le cadre européen et international, la Commission pourrait-elle faire état de ses réflexions et de ses éventuels projets en la matière?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(27 mai 2013)

Les paiements pour les services écosystémiques sont présentés dans plusieurs documents d'orientation de l'UE ([1]) comme un instrument en faveur de la conservation de la biodiversité.

Les paiements pour les services écosystémiques ont été intégrés dans la politique agricole commune (PAC) il y a plus de vingt ans, sous la forme de mesures agroenvironnementales. Ils continueront de faire partie intégrante de la PAC, qui prévoit des mesures agroenvironnementales et climatiques mais aussi un nouveau paiement en faveur de l'écologisation ([2]) dans le cadre du premier pilier. Dans ce contexte, la Commission lance actuellement, pour le compte du Parlement européen, un projet pilote sur la protection de la biodiversité, dans le cadre de régimes de paiements agroenvironnementaux fondés sur les résultats.

Dans une étude récente ([3]), les paiements pour les services écosystémiques sont considérés comme une source potentiellement importante de financement du secteur privé pour la protection de la biodiversité. La Commission a lancé deux études supplémentaires, qui s'achèveront d'ici à la fin 2013. Celles-ci portent sur les besoins de financement et les instruments nécessaires pour atteindre l'objectif 2 de la stratégie en faveur de la diversité biologique, et sur la mise au point d'un cadre de hiérarchisation pour une restauration de la biodiversité, qui permettra d'obtenir des informations supplémentaires sur le rôle potentiel des paiements pour les services écosystémiques au niveau de l'UE et au niveau national.

En outre, la Commission européenne étudie actuellement, avec la Banque européenne d'investissement, la possibilité d'établir un mécanisme de soutien à l'investissement dans les régimes de paiements pour les services écosystémiques, parmi d'autres projets liés au patrimoine naturel.

([1]) COM(2012)710 final; COM(2011)244 final; COM(2011)571 final.
([2]) Paiement en faveur des pratiques agricoles bénéfiques pour le climat et l'environnement, comme indiqué dans la proposition de la Commission pour les paiements directs COM(2011)625final/3.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

Enfin, la Commission européenne soutient les mécanismes de financement innovants, dont les paiements pour les services écosystémiques, dans le cadre de la convention sur la diversité biologique. La Commission a également encouragé, ces trois dernières années, un dialogue international avec le gouvernement brésilien sur les paiements pour les services écosystémiques. La Commission étudiera la possibilité d'entamer des dialogues de ce type avec d'autres pays partenaires.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003975/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Payments for ecosystem services in the EU

The economic valuation of ecosystem services enables the economic benefits derived from nature and biodiversity to be quantified.

'Payment for ecosystem services' (PES) schemes enable these services to be maintained, based on an incentive rationale. In the United States, for example, increasing numbers of fruit farmers pay beekeepers up to the equivalent of EUR 100 per hive during the flowering period for the services the hives provide in terms of pollination.

Another example is that good forest upkeep helps maintain good water and soil quality. Like other services rendered, however, this service is not taken into account on the market in the traditional way. This does not encourage the upkeep of our forests and, consequently, the services they provide, given the costs involved. PESs could help reconcile the challenges of economic development with those of conservation.

The proposed seventh EU Environment Action Programme aims to promote the design and implementation of payment systems for environmental services.

However, there is currently no harmonised system to calculate and pay for ecosystem services in the EU.

In a European and international context, could the Commission share its ideas and report on any projects in this area?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) are highlighted as a tool for biodiversity conservation in a number of EU policy papers ([1]).

PES have been integrated into the common agricultural policy (CAP) in the form of agri-environmental measures for over 20 years. PES will continue to be part of the CAP via agri-environment-climate measures but also the new greening payment ([2]) under the first pillar. In that context, the Commission is launching a pilot project on behalf of the European Parliament on the protection of biodiversity through result-based agri-environmental payment schemes.

In a recent study ([3]), PES were identified as a potentially important source of private sector financing for biodiversity protection. The Commission is undertaking two additional studies to be completed by end 2013, on financing needs and instruments to meet Target 2 of the Biodiversity Strategy and on the development of a restoration prioritisation framework, which will provide further information on the potential role of PES at EU and national level.

In addition, the European Commission is currently exploring with the European Investment Bank the possibility of establishing a Facility to support investments in PES schemes, amongst other natural capital-related projects.

Finally, the European Commission is promoting innovative financing mechanisms, including PES, in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Commission has also been supporting for the past three years an international dialogue on PES with the Brazilian government. The Commission will be exploring the potential for such dialogues with other partner countries.

([1]) COM(2012) 710 final; COM(2011) 244 final; COM(2011) 571 final.
([2]) Payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, as proposed in the Commission proposal for direct payments COM(2011) 625final/3.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003976/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(9 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Programma Operativo Regionale 2007-2013 per la Romania

Conformemente a quanto dichiarato nel bando del Programma Operativo Regionale 2007-2013 per la Romania, riguardante l'asse prioritario di crescita, sviluppo e modernizzazione di infrastrutture di turismo per la valorizzazione delle risorse naturali e la crescita della qualità dei servizi turistici all'interno dell'Unione;

considerato che obiettivo del suddetto bando è la promozione di partenariati tra enti pubblici e privati, all'interno di direttive operative promosse dall'Unione, attraverso la messa a disposizione di fondi specifici per il raggiungimento di tali obiettivi da parte della Romania;

considerato che in questi ultimi mesi la Commissione europea è intervenuta relativamente ai fondi con sospensioni di pagamento per verifiche, intervenendo più approfonditamente per controllare come i fondi siano stati distribuiti e come in futuro s'intenda procedere per l'assegnazione del bando del Programma Operativo Regionale 2007-2013 per la Romania;

alla luce del fatto che è stata più volte posta alla mia attenzione, nella mia qualità di eurodeputato, la disparità riscontrata all'interno dei diversi Stati membri, per le aziende con capitale sociale italiano insediate in Romania, per quanto riguarda l'accesso alle informazioni relative e la presentazione delle domande per il suddetto bando;

considerato che le politiche europee mirano all'armonizzazione del settore in ambito comunitario e che il bando in oggetto è a deposizione continua, ma che dopo soli due mesi dall'apertura il deposito è stato sospeso per esaurimento fondi; considerato inoltre che non si spiega come abbiano fatto società rumene a presentare progetti a tempo di record in concomitanza dell'apertura del bando e i depositi siano stati tutti ampiamente autorizzati;

considerato inoltre che i principi fondativi dell'Unione riguardo alla libera circolazione di persone e capitali e all'armonizzazione del diritto comunitario tra gli Stati membri sulla gestione d'impresa non sono stati assolutamente recepiti dalla legislazione rumena, e che tale ritardo è di grande ostacolo al progresso economico e sociale;

tutto ciò premesso, voglia la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. reputa la Commissione che sia necessaria la nascita di una commissione d'inchiesta per valutare la regolare assegnazione dei fondi messi a disposizione dall'UE attraverso i suoi bandi?

2. reputa che sia auspicabile un maggior controllo nella stipula dei bandi stessi?

3. reputa che sia auspicabile una revisione dei criteri di scelta per l'assegnazione dei fondi europei attraverso i bandi?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

1. Alla Commissione non è stata segnalata nessuna irregolarità che richieda un'indagine. Le regole per lo stanziamento di finanziamenti sono fissate dagli Stati membri. Stando alle informazioni ottenute dalla Commissione, le autorità rumene hanno pubblicato i bandi in linea con gli stanziamenti previsti per gli interventi e per le regioni interessati. In alcune regioni erano ancora disponibili fondi; pertanto sono stati rilanciati gli inviti e la procedura è ancora in corso.

2. Spetta al comitato di sorveglianza considerare e approvare i criteri per la selezione dei progetti cofinanziati dai Fondi strutturali. L'autorità di gestione assicura che i progetti siano selezionati conformemente a tali criteri e che rispettino le regole stabilite. Né dalle relazioni annuali di controllo né dal parere annuale dell'autorità di audit emergono prove che indichino gravi carenze in proposito o una mancata ottemperanza ai regolamenti applicabili.

3. Il comitato di sorveglianza può approvare eventuali revisioni dei criteri di selezione conformemente ai bisogni di programmazione. Finora, non si è registrata nessuna esigenza di modificare i criteri di selezione. La Commissione ritiene che per determinare l'ammissibilità dei candidati non siano stati applicati fattori di discriminazione che impedissero la partecipazione di imprese a capitale straniero.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003976/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 for Romania

The priority of the call for proposals for the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 for Romania is the growth, development and modernisation of the tourism infrastructure in order to enhance natural resources and raise the quality of tourism services within the Union.

The objective of the above call is to promote partnerships between public and private institutions, within the operational guidelines promoted by the EU, by providing specific funds to help Romania achieve these objectives.

In recent months, the Commission has suspended payment of those funds pending investigations, looking in greater detail at how these funds were distributed and how to proceed in future when awarding tenders under the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 for Romania.

It has been repeatedly been brought to my attention, in my capacity as an MEP, that there is disparity within several Member States for Italian-owned companies based in Romania, with regard to access to information on and submission of applications for this call for proposals.

EU policies aim to harmonise the sector within the EU and the call for proposals in question is always open, but only two months after opening it was suspended due to funds being exhausted. There is no good explanation as to how Romanian companies managed to present projects in record time as soon as the call was published and as to how all submissions were fully authorised.

The founding principles of the Union relating to the free movement of people and capital, and the harmonisation of EC law among Member States on business management have not been integrated at all into the Romanian legal system, and the delay in doing this is a major obstacle to economic and social progress.

1. Does the Commission think a commission of inquiry needs to be set up to assess the regular allocation of funds provided by the EU through its calls?

2. Does it consider it desirable to exercise greater control when drawing up the calls themselves?

3. Does it consider it desirable to review the selection criteria for allocating European funds through calls?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

1. The Commission has no indication of any irregularity which would need an inquiry. The rules for allocating funding are set by the Member States. According to the information obtained by the Commission, the Romanian authorities launched the calls in line with the earmarked allocations for the interventions and the regions concerned. Funding was still available in some regions, and therefore calls have been re-launched and are still ongoing.

2. It is the task of the Monitoring Committee to consider and approve the criteria for selecting projects co-financed by the Structural Funds. The managing authority ensures that projects are selected in accordance with the criteria and that they comply with the rules. Neither the annual control reports nor the annual opinion of the audit authority indicated evidence of a serious deficiency in this regard or of a non-compliance with the applicable regulations.

3. The Monitoring Committee may approve any revision of selection criteria in accordance with programming needs. So far, there has been no specific need to amend the selection criteria. The Commission considers that no discriminatory factors preventing the participation of foreign-capital owned companies were applied in assessing the eligibility of applicants.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003977/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Intimidación a una delegación política española en la Franja de Gaza

Durante la primera semana del mes de abril se desplazó a la Franja de Gaza una delegación con diferentes cargos públicos y militantes de Izquierda Unida, entre ellos el diputado al PE Willy Meyer, para conocer de primera mano la situación en la que se encuentra la población de Gaza tras la última ofensiva del ejército de Israel.

La delegación mantuvo contactos con diferentes organizaciones políticas palestinas y con ONG que operan en la zona. El objetivo de la delegación era dar voz y visibilidad a la situación de la población de Gaza y denunciar el bloqueo criminal al que se está sometiendo a la Franja. En la Franja habitan más de un millón de personas que se encuentran bajo un aislamiento político internacional que Israel impone unilateralmente, violando el Derecho Internacional pero con el beneplácito de importantes bloques políticos, entre ellos la propia Unión Europea.

La delegación española ejerció durante su visita como escudo humano para proteger la actividad de campesinos palestinos que son hostigados a diario por el ejército israelí. Disparar a los civiles mientras cultivan o salen a pescar es una actividad habitual en los puestos fronterizos israelíes, y la comunidad internacional no se da por enterada. Esta delegación ha confirmado la beligerante actitud del ejército israelí contra la población civil de la Franja, compartiendo testimonios y siendo testigos de los riesgos que la población civil debe soportar a diario para ejercer su actividad normal. La delegación se acercó a menos de 300 metros de las vallas fronterizas para permitir a los campesinos recoger su cosecha y los soldados israelíes dispararon a cinco metros de la delegación claramente desarmada para intimidarla.

El Gobierno de Israel está masacrando a la población palestina a su antojo y no atiende a ningún tipo de mediación pacífica. Esta delegación política nos ha brindado el ejemplo de la actitud violenta y beligerante de Israel, que no se detiene ante nadie.

¿Exigirá responsabilidades la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante a la diplomacia israelí por los actos de intimidación y hostigamiento a la citada delegación pacífica? ¿Considera que una delegación de representantes políticos de un Estado miembro de la UE puede ser recibida a balazos en un lugar donde Israel debería carecer de competencias? ¿Exigirá la inmediata congelación del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel como medida de presión para que se respete a las delegaciones internacionales pacíficas y para el cumplimiento de los derechos humanos y del Derecho Internacional?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de junio de 2013)

La AR/VP está de acuerdo con la afirmación de que «el Gobierno israelí esté masacrando a la población palestina a su antojo». Además, la AR/VP está firmemente comprometida con las dos partes del conflicto israelo-palestino para garantizar el retorno a unas negociaciones de fondo. La AR/VP ha pedido al Jefe de Delegación de la UE ante el Estado de Israel que solicite aclaraciones sobre el incidente específico planteado en esta pregunta en lo que respecta a la delegación española que visitó la Franja de Gaza. La posición de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta respecto a la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel fue expuesta en la respuesta a la anterior pregunta escrita E-010294/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2011-010294+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003977/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Intimidation of a Spanish political delegation in the Gaza Strip

During the first week of April, a delegation of several officials and activists from the United Left, including MEP Willy Meyer, travelled to the Gaza Strip to learn first-hand about the situation of the population in Gaza following the Israeli armed forces' latest offensive.

The delegation met with several Palestinian political organisations and non-governmental organisations that operate in the area. The delegation's aim was to raise awareness and the profile of the situation of the people in Gaza, and to condemn the illegal blockade of Gaza. Over one million people live in the Gaza Strip in a state of international political isolation that is unilaterally imposed by Israel, in breach of international law but with the endorsement of major political blocs, including the European Union itself.

During its visit, the Spanish delegation served as a human shield to protect Palestinian farmers, who are harassed on a daily basis by the Israeli armed forces, as they worked. At Israeli border posts, civilians are routinely fired upon as they are farming or fishing, but the international community fails to acknowledge this. This delegation has confirmed the belligerent attitude of the Israeli armed forces towards the civilian population of the Gaza Strip. The delegation heard about and witnessed the risks that civilians must endure every day in order to go about their normal business. The delegation came within less than 300 metres of the border fence in order to allow farmers to gather their harvest, and Israeli soldiers fired shots just five metres away from the clearly unarmed delegation in order to intimidate its members.

The Israeli Government is massacring the Palestinian population at will and is not interested in any kind of peace mediation. This political delegation has provided us with an example of Israel's violent, belligerent attitude: Israel stops for no one.

Will the Vice-President/High Representative call Israeli diplomats to account for the acts of intimidation and harassment committed against this peaceful delegation? Does she think that a delegation of political representatives from an EU Member State should be welcomed with gunfire in a place where Israel has no jurisdiction? Will she demand the immediate suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, as a way of exerting pressure to encourage respect for peaceful international delegations, as well as respect for human rights and international law?

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

The HR/VP does not accept the suggestion that 'the Israeli Government is massacring the Palestinian population at will'. The HR/VP is also closely engaged with both parties to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to ensure a return to substantive negotiations. The HR/VP has asked the EU Head of Delegation to the State of Israel to seek clarifications concerning the specific incident raised in the question in relation to the Spanish delegation that visited the Gaza Strip. The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement was set out in the reply to previous Written Question E-010294/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003978/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Filtración de lista de paraísos fiscales ICIJ

Según ha publicado el Consorcio Internacional de Periodistas de Investigación (ICIJ por sus siglas en inglés), se ha producido una filtración que destapa la identidad de miles de cuentas en paraísos fiscales de todo el mundo. En dicha lista, habría multitud de ciudadanos y ciudadanas europeos afectados. En el caso de otras filtraciones recientes, como el de la famosa «Lista de Liechtenstein» o la «Lista de Falciani», países como Alemania y Francia tuvieron reacciones contundentes al investigar los casos de evasión fiscal. Dichas actuaciones contrastaron con la respuesta de otros Estados, como es el caso del Estado español que se caracterizó en ambos casos por una respuesta débil y permisiva, a pesar de tener también a ciudadanos afectados en ambas listas. Teniendo en cuenta que el pasado 6 de diciembre la Comisión presentó un plan de lucha contra la evasión y la elusión fiscales que «prevé la adopción en la EU —más allá de las medidas internacionales actuales— de una posición de fuerza contra los paraísos fiscales». En el Consejo Europeo de marzo de 2012, los Estados miembros pidieron a la Comisión que estableciera con rapidez medios concretos para mejorar la lucha contra el fraude y la evasión fiscales, en relación también con terceros países.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de una nueva lista de «usuarios» de paraísos fiscales?

¿Piensa realizar alguna acción ante las personas que utilicen paraísos fiscales para eludir sus obligaciones fiscales y legales?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de las recientes filtraciones sobre depósitos en paraísos fiscales (*offshore leaks*), pero no tiene acceso a los datos correspondientes. En sus Conclusiones de 14 de mayo de 2013, el Consejo Ecofin tomó nota de la intención de la Presidencia irlandesa de dirigirse por escrito al Consorcio Internacional de Periodistas de Investigación para solicitarle que facilite a los Estados miembros a través de las autoridades competentes los nombres y los datos de todos los ciudadanos de la UE que figuren en la lista de depositantes en paraísos fiscales. Ese Consorcio se ha negado a hacerlo hasta ahora. La Comisión reconoce desde hace mucho tiempo la importancia de los mecanismos transfronterizos y de los paraísos fiscales para ocultar la renta y los activos imponibles y ha actuado en consecuencia. La adopción de la Directiva sobre el ahorro en 2003, incluidos los acuerdos relacionados con jurisdicciones de fuera de la UE, y la Directiva de 2011 sobre la cooperación administrativa son los dos ejemplos significativos.

El 14 de mayo de 2013, el Consejo Ecofin aprobó un mandato para que la Comisión negociara modificaciones de los acuerdos de la Unión Europea con Suiza, Liechtenstein, Mónaco, Andorra y San Marino sobre la fiscalidad del rendimiento del ahorro. Además, el 22 de mayo de 2013, el Consejo Europeo reclamó que se adoptara la Directiva del ahorro revisada antes de acabar el año. Por último, la Comisión propuso el 12 de junio de 2013 enmiendas a la Directiva sobre la cooperación administrativa para que el intercambio automático de información en la EU abarcara una gama más amplia de rentas. Todo esto representa una importante contribución al debate internacional más amplio sobre la lucha contra el fraude y la evasión fiscales en que participan la OCDE, el G-20 y el G-8, foros en los que la Comisión seguirá fomentando decididamente el intercambio automático de información como la futura norma mundial en cuestiones fiscales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003978/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: International Consortium of Investigative Journalists list of tax havens leaked

According to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), a leak has identified the holders of thousands of accounts in tax havens around the world. Many European nationals are named on the list. In response to other recent leaks, such as the well-known 'Liechtenstein list' or the 'Falciani list', countries like Germany and France took decisive action by investigating cases of tax evasion. Such action stood in contrast to the response taken by other Member States, such as Spain. There, the response in both cases was feeble and lenient, even though Spanish nationals also appeared on both lists. On 6 December 2012, the Commission presented a plan to clamp down on tax evasion and avoidance, which 'foresees a strong EU stance against tax havens, going beyond the current international measures.' At the European Council of March 2012, the Member States called on the Commission to rapidly develop concrete measures to step up the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion, including in relation to third countries.

Is the Commission aware of a new list of tax haven 'users'?

Does it plan to take any action against those who use tax havens to avoid their tax and legal obligations?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the recent 'offshore leaks' affair, but it does not have access to the related data. The Ecofin Council in its Conclusions of 14 May 2013 noted the Irish Presidency's intention to write to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) asking them to supply Member States through the relevant competent authorities with the names and details regarding all EU citizens on the 'offshore leaks' list. So far the ICIJ has refused this. The Commission has long recognised the significance of cross-border and offshore arrangements in concealing taxable income and assets and acted accordingly. The adoption of the Savings Directive in 2003 — including related agreements with non-EU jurisdictions — and the Administrative Cooperation Directive of 2011 are two main examples.

On 14 May 2013 the Ecofin Council approved a mandate for the Commission to negotiate amendments to the EU's agreements with Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Andorra and San Marino on the taxation of savings income. In addition, on 22 May 2013 the European Council called for the adoption of the revised Savings Directive before the end of the year. Finally on 12 June 2013, the Commission proposed amendments to the directive on administrative cooperation in order for the automatic exchange of information in the EU to cover a wider range of income. These represent important contributions to the wider international debate on tackling tax fraud and evasion involving the OECD, the G20 and the G8, where the Commission will continue to strongly promote the automatic exchange of information as the future global standard in tax matters.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003979/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Variaciones en las cifras de la devolución del IVA

En una nota de prensa con fecha del pasado 12 de marzo, el ministro de Hacienda y Administraciones Públicas español explicó que se había cumplido el objetivo de ingresos tributarios para 2012 y afirmaba que «la recaudación tributaria alcanzó los 168 567 millones de euros. Ello supone un incremento del 4,2 % (6 807 millones de euros) sobre el ejercicio anterior». En la misma nota se afirma que «los ingresos por IVA crecieron en 2012 un 2,4 % (1 162 millones) hasta 50 464 millones de euros. Los dos factores que explican este crecimiento son el impacto de la subida de tipos en septiembre (valorada en 2 441 millones) y la disminución de las devoluciones». Según los números que muestran los informes mensuales de recaudación de la Agencia Estatal de Administración Tributaria (AEAT), la recaudación bruta por IVA ha bajado de 75 759,05 millones euros en 2011 a 74 174,43 millones de euros en 2012, es decir un descenso en la recaudación bruta durante 2012 de 1 584,62 millones de euros. Por el contrario, las devoluciones de IVA han bajado en 2012 a 23 710,93 millones de euros, mientras que en 2011 fueron de 26 457,06 millones de euros. Es decir, durante 2012 las devoluciones fueron 2 746,13 millones de euros menores en 2011. Se observa un comportamiento similar en las devoluciones del Impuesto sobre Sociedades. Estas cifras podrían deberse a una manipulación de las cifras del déficit de 2012 que tendría como consecuencia una importante pérdida de recaudación en 2013.

¿Tiene la Comisión alguna información sobre el motivo de estas elevadas diferencias en las bajas cifras de las devoluciones del Impuesto de Sociedades y del IVA de finales de 2012 respecto a las elevadas cifras del primer mes de 2013?

¿Comparte la Comisión la opinión generalizada de que estas diferencias se deben a un maquillaje en las cifras del déficit?

¿Qué explicación tiene la Comisión para el descenso de la recaudación bruta acumulada por IVA durante el 2012 respecto a la recaudación total de 2011 a pesar del incremento de tipos del año pasado?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de mayo de 2013)

Los datos publicados por la Agencia Tributaria española se registran de acuerdo con la contabilidad de caja, mientras que los datos que deben transmitirse a Eurostat a efectos de las cuentas nacionales y del procedimiento de déficit excesivo deben generarse según el principio de devengo. Los datos sobre 2012 que se facilitaron a Eurostat el 1 de abril de 2013 se han corregido y la parte de los reembolsos abonados en 2013, pero relativos al año anterior, se han trasferido de nuevo al ejercicio 2012 (con un impacto de −3 400 millones de euros).

1. El cambio destacado en el patrón de las devoluciones de impuestos en 2012-2013 se debió al registro de las devoluciones tributarias según la contabilidad de caja (véase *supra*). La Comisión, sin embargo, ha acordado con las autoridades estadísticas españolas un nuevo método de cálculo de las devoluciones de impuestos.

2. Debido a la contabilidad de caja de las devoluciones de impuestos, los retrasos en los pagos de dichas devoluciones pudieron desplazar el gasto público destinado a estos efectos de finales de 2012 a los primeros meses de 2013.

3. El aumento extremadamente reducido de la recaudación por impuestos indirectos en 2012, incluido el IVA, a pesar del incremento de los tipos impositivos, parece deberse principalmente al comportamiento de las bases impositivas. El valor del consumo privado permaneció prácticamente invariable en 2012, mientras que las importaciones disminuyeron casi un 1 %. Los cambios en la composición del consumo, por ejemplo hacia bienes gravados a tipos reducidos, también pueden explicar esta evolución.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003979/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Changes in VAT refund figures

In a press release dated 12 March 2013, the Spanish Minister for Finance and Public Administration explained that the tax revenue target for 2012 had been met, stating that tax revenue totalled EUR 168.567 billion, up by 4.2% (EUR 6.807 billion) from the previous fiscal year. According to the same press release, VAT revenue grew by 2.4% (EUR 1.162 billion) in 2012 to EUR 50.464 billion. The two factors behind this growth were the effect of the rate increase in September (put at EUR 2.441 billion) and the decrease in refunds. According to the figures in the National Tax Office's monthly revenue reports, gross VAT revenue fell from EUR 75.75905 billion in 2011 to EUR 74.17443 billion in 2012, representing a fall of EUR 1.58462 billion in gross revenue during 2012. However, VAT refunds fell to EUR 23.71093 billion in 2012, down from the 2011 figure of EUR 26.45706 billion. In other words, during 2012, refunds amounted to EUR 2.74613 billion less than in 2011. There was a similar trend in corporation tax refunds. These figures could be due to a manipulation of the 2012 deficit figures, which would lead to a significant loss of revenue in 2013.

Does the Commission have any information to explain these significant differences in the low figures for corporation tax and VAT refunds in late 2012, compared with the high figures for the first month of 2013?

Does the Commission share the general view that these differences are the result of an attempt to disguise the deficit figures?

How does the Commission explain the decline in cumulative gross VAT revenue during 2012, compared with the total revenue in 2011, in spite of the rate increase last year?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Data published by the Spanish Tax Agency are recorded on a cash basis while data for the purposes of the national accounts and EDP reporting to Eurostat should be based on accrual data. The 2012 data reported to Eurostat on 1 April 2013 has been corrected and the part of the reimbursements paid in 2013, relating to 2012, have been moved back to the year 2012 (impact of -3.4 billion).

1. The notable change in the pattern of tax reimbursement in 2012/2013 was due to the recording of tax refunds on a cash basis (see above). The Commission has however agreed with the Spanish statistical authorities on a revised method of calculation of tax refunds.

2. Due to the cash recording of tax refunds, delays in the payments of tax refunds could shift the related government expenditure from end 2012 to the first months of 2013.

3. The very weak growth of indirect taxes, including VAT, in 2012 — despite the increase in tax rates — seems to be mainly due to the behaviour of underlying tax bases. The value of private consumption remained almost unchanged in 2012, while imports decreased by almost 1%. Changes in the composition of consumption, for example towards goods taxed at reduced rates may also explain this development.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003980/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: „Germany in control of the antifraud service of Europe"

Presseberichten (Maltastar, 17. März 2013) und NewEurope (15. März 2013 und 7. April 2013) zufolge war das Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung OLAF unter dem früheren deutschen Generaldirektor „vollständig von Deutschland kontrolliert".

1. Wie sah diese Kontrolle Deutschlands aus?

2. Welche Untersuchungen hat Deutschland angeblich beeinflusst? Wie?

3. Was hat der Generaldirektor und der auch für die Unabhängigkeit des OLAF zuständige Kommissar unternommen, um die Unabhängigkeit der Untersuchungen zu sichern?

4. Welche Informationen hatte der damalige Überwachungsausschuss?

5. Wie kam der Überwachungsausschuss seiner Aufgabe nach, die Unabhängigkeit des Amtes zu sichern?

6. Wie stellt die Kommission sicher, dass weder der Mitgliedstaat noch nationale Industrieinteressen die Untersuchungstätigkeit des OLAF-Generaldirektors beeinflussen?

7. Wie viele deutsche AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2013 im OLAF?

8. Wie viele deutsche AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2012 im OLAF?

9. Wie viele deutsche AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2011 im OLAF?

10. Wie viele deutsche AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2010 im OLAF?

11. Wie viele italienische AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2013 im OLAF?

12. Wie viele italienische AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2012 im OLAF?

13. Wie viele italienische AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2011 im OLAF?

14. Wie viele italienische AD-Mitarbeiter gab es zum 1. März 2010 im OLAF?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(7. Juni 2013)

1.-6. Das Europäische Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung (OLAF) übt die Untersuchungsbefugnisse in voller Unabhängigkeit aus ([1]). Bei der Wahrnehmung dieser Befugnisse fordert der Direktor des Amtes keine Anweisungen von der Kommission, einer Regierung oder einer anderen Institution oder einem Organ und nimmt auch keine Anweisungen von diesen entgegen ([2]). Die Kommission ist überzeugt, dass das OLAF nie der Kontrolle oder dem Einfluss eines Mitgliedstaates ausgesetzt gewesen ist. Um die Unabhängigkeit des Amtes sicherzustellen, führt der Überwachungsausschuss des OLAF regelmäßige Kontrollen der Untersuchungstätigkeit des OLAF durch ([3]).

Der Überwachungsausschuss wurde gemäß der Verordnung (EG) 1073/1999 stets unterrichtet. In seinen Stellungnahmen und Tätigkeitsberichten befasst er sich unter anderem mit dem Themenkomplex des Schutzes der Unabhängigkeit des OLAF.

([1]) Artikel 3 des Beschlusses der Kommission vom 28. April 1999 zur Errichtung des Europäischen Amtes für Betrugsbekämpfung (ABl. L 136/21 vom 31.3.1999).
([2]) Artikel 12 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1073/1999.
([3]) Artikel 11 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1073/1999.

7.-14. Von der Frau Abgeordneten erbetene Angaben:

Datum	Deutsche AD-Mitarbeiter	Italienische AD-Mitarbeiter	Doppelte Staatsangehörigkeit: Deutsch-italienische AD-Mitarbeiter
1.3.2010	17	21	
1.3.2011	21	23	
1.3.2012	18	25	
1.3.2013	17	26	1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003980/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: 'Germany in control of the antifraud service of Europe'

According to press reports (Maltastar, 17 March 2013 and NewEurope (15 March 2013 and 7 April 2013), the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), was 'completely controlled by Germany' under the former German General Director.

1. What was the nature of this German control?

2. What investigations is Germany supposed to have influenced? How?

3. What steps did the General Director and the Commissioner with responsibility for the independence of OLAF take to ensure the impartiality of investigations?

4. What information was available to the Supervisory Committee at the time?

5. How did the Supervisory Committee fulfil its duties in ensuring the independence of the office?

6. How does the Commission ensure that neither the Member State nor national industrial interests influence the investigations by the General Director of OLAF?

7. How many German AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2013?

8. How many German AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2012?

9. How many German AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2011?

10. How many German AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2010?

11. How many Italian AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2013?

12. How many Italian AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2012?

13. How many Italian AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2011?

14. How many Italian AD staff did OLAF have on 1 March 2010?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

1-6. The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) acts, while exercising its powers of investigation, in complete independence ([1]). In exercising these powers, the Director of the Office neither seeks nor takes instructions from the Commission, any government or any other institution or body ([2]). The Commission is confident that OLAF has never been under the control or influence of any Member State. In order to enforce the independence of the Office, OLAF is regularly monitored in its investigative function by the Supervisory Committee of OLAF (SC) ([3]).

The SC has always been provided with information as required by the regulation (EC) 1073/1999. The SC delivers opinions and activity reports which address *inter alia* the issue of safeguarding OLAF's independence.

([1]) Article 3 of the Commission decision of 28 April 1999 establishing the European Anti-Fraud Office (OJ L 136/21, 31.3.1999).
([2]) Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999.
([3]) Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999.

7-14. The exact numbers the Honourable Member was requesting are the following:

Date	German AD category staff	Italian AD category staff	Dual nationality German/ Italian AD category staff
1.3.2010	17	21	
1.3.2011	21	23	
1.3.2012	18	25	
1.3.2013	17	26	1

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003981/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Stupro di gruppo ai danni di una minorenne: violazione dei diritti fondamentali e doppia vittimizzazione

Nell'aprile 2007, a Montalto di Castro (Viterbo), una ragazza allora minorenne (quindici anni) è stata stuprata per ore a turno da otto ragazzi, che all'epoca dei fatti avevano tra i 14 e i 17 anni.

Ad oggi, dopo oltre sei anni, il processo non è ancora concluso. Pochi giorni fa il Tribunale dei minori di Roma ha accolto la richiesta di una nuova messa in prova per gli otto ragazzi accusati di violenza, interrompendo così per l'ennesima volta la conclusione del lunghissimo iter processuale e relativa sentenza.

Già nel 2009 c'era stata una sospensione del processo in seguito alla decisione del Tribunale dei minori di concedere la prima messa in prova per due anni agli imputati, che avevano dichiarato di essere pentiti del reato compiuto. Nel 2010 la Corte di Cassazione aveva bloccato la messa in prova, facendo riprendere il processo. Lo stesso Ministro della Giustizia italiano è intervenuto sulla vicenda, che necessita quanto mai di chiarezza, anche perché dopo oltre 6 anni strazianti di offese e umiliazioni, a fronte dell'ennesima interruzione a favore del percorso di reinserimento sociale degli autori del reato, la ragazza ha espresso l'intenzione di non fare ricorso per evitare di affrontare ulteriori lungaggini burocratiche e processuali: non ha più la forza di combattere, vorrebbe solo dimenticare e rifarsi una vita. In base all'articolo 47 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'UE, ogni individuo, i cui diritti e le cui libertà garantiti dal diritto dell'Unione siano stati violati, ha diritto a un ricorso effettivo dinanzi a un giudice e ha diritto che la sua causa sia esaminata entro un termine ragionevole.

Considerando che è inaccettabile un iter così lungo per un processo di stupro di gruppo ai danni di una vittima minorenne e che queste lungaggini rappresentano una palese violazione dei diritti e della dignità umana,

può la Commissione chiarire:

— cosa intende fare per sollecitare l'Italia ad una urgente trasposizione della direttiva 2012/29/UE che istituisce norme minime in materia di diritti, assistenza e protezione delle vittime di reato, anche al fine di ridurre al minimo le conseguenze negative di un reato, i rischi di vittimizzazione secondaria e ripetuta nonché la stigmatizzazione e l'onere che costituisce, per le vittime, l'interazione reiterata con gli organi di giustizia penale?

— qual è lo stato del recepimento della direttiva nella legislazione degli Stati membri UE?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2013)

La Commissione garantisce il principio dell'equo processo nei procedimenti penali sia per gli imputati che per le vittime di reato.

La direttiva 2012/29/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2012, che istituisce norme minime in materia di diritti, assistenza e protezione delle vittime di reato è uno strumento giuridico importante per ridurre al minimo gli effetti negativi del reato e i rischi di vittimizzazione secondaria e ripetuta. Il termine per il recepimento è il 16 novembre 2015.

La Commissione assisterà attivamente tutti gli Stati membri, compresa l'Italia, affinché recepiscano questa direttiva nell'ordinamento nazionale entro i termini e nel modo più efficace. In tale contesto, nel 2013 si tengono i primi incontri tra esperti con gli Stati membri e con specialisti esterni per l'attuazione della direttiva.

Gli Stati membri hanno attuato, in varia misura, alcune disposizioni della direttiva basate sugli obblighi imposti dalla decisione quadro del 2001 relativa alla posizione della vittima nel procedimento penale (cfr. la relazione della Commissione del 2009 sullo stato di attuazione ([1])). Tuttavia, la nuova direttiva contiene obblighi più specifici e più ampi che devono essere recepiti in tutti gli Stati membri. La Commissione è consapevole dei vantaggi di azioni coordinate tra gli Stati membri e pertanto, durante il periodo di recepimento, collaborerà a stretto contatto con una molteplicità di soggetti interessati, tra cui le autorità nazionali, gli operatori del settore, la società civile e il settore privato.

([1]) Relazione COM(2009)166 definitivo, del 20 aprile 2009: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0166:FIN:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003981/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Gang rape of an underage girl: infringement of fundamental rights and double victimisation

In April 2007 in Montalto di Castro (Viterbo), a girl, who was underage at the time (15 years old), was raped for hours by eight boys in turn who at the time were aged between 14 and 17.

Today, after more than six years, the trial has not yet ended. A few days ago the Rome Juvenile Court accepted the request for the eight boys accused of violence to be placed once again on probation, thereby postponing, for the umpteenth time, the conclusion of the lengthy legal procedure and relevant judgment.

There had already been a stay of proceedings in 2009 following the decision by the Juvenile Court to grant the defendants an initial two-year probation period, given that they claimed that they regretted committing the crime. In 2010, the Court of Cassation suspended the probation and the proceedings resumed. Even the Italian Minister of Justice has intervened in this affair, which, at the very least, calls for clarity. Not least because, after over six years of harrowing insults and humiliation, after the umpteenth stay of proceedings for the benefit of the social reintegration of the offenders, the girl has expressed her intention not to appeal, in order to avoid having to deal with yet more red tape and never-ending proceedings — she no longer has the strength to fight and simply wants to forget and move on.

Under Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, everyone whose rights and freedoms guaranteed by the law of the Union are violated has the right to an effective remedy before a tribunal and is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

— What will it do to urge Italy to transpose, as a matter of urgency, Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, also in order to minimise the negative impact of a crime, the risks of secondary and repeated victimisation and stigmatisation, in addition to the burden placed on victims by repeated interaction with the criminal courts?

— What is the current state of transposition of the directive into the national laws of the EU Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The Commission is committed to ensuring the fair trial principle in criminal proceedings for both the accused and the victims of crime.

The directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime is an important legal tool in order to minimise the negative impact of a crime and the risks of secondary and repeated victimisation. The transposition deadline is 16 November 2015.

The Commission will actively assist all Member States, including Italy, to implement this directive into national legislation as effectively as possible by the deadline. In this context, the first experts meetings with Member States and external specialists on the implementation of the directive are taking place in 2013.

Member States have, to a varying degree, implemented some of the provisions in the directive based on the obligations in the 2001 Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings (see the Commission's implementation report from 2009 ([1])). However, the new Directive contains more specific and far-reaching obligations, which will require transposition by all Member States. The Commission is aware of the advantages of coordinated actions across the Member States and will therefore cooperate closely with a wide range of stakeholders, including national authorities, practitioners, civil society and the private sector during the transposition period.

([1]) Report COM/2009/0166 final of 20 April 200. : http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0166:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-003982/13
a la Comisión
Carmen Fraga Estévez (PPE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Control de la seguridad alimentaria en las conservas procedentes de Tailandia

En 2012, la UE rechazó 19 partidas de importaciones de conservas de atún procedentes de Tailandia al detectar en sus controles de entrada de productos de terceros países que no cumplían la normativa higiénico-sanitaria por presentar un tratamiento térmico inadecuado, lo cual suponía en riesgo para la seguridad alimentaria del consumidor.

En relación con este problema, la solución tomada fue la de borrar únicamente a uno de los establecimientos que habían generado estas alertas del listado de establecimientos tailandeses autorizados a exportar a la Unión Europea, lo cual tuvo efectos a partir del 6 de noviembre de 2012.

Sin embargo, la página web de DG Sanco refleja que este establecimiento volverá a estar autorizado a partir del 27 de marzo de 2013. Es sorprendente la agilidad que este establecimiento ha tenido para identificar, analizar, corregir y solucionar el problema, así como la rapidez de la autoridad competente de Tailandia para verificar y auditar la solución, y volver a solicitar a las autoridades de la UE la reincorporación de esta empresa, con la consiguiente aceptación por parte de estas. Toda esta agilidad y rapidez contrasta con la lentitud de las autoridades tailandesas y de la UE en tomar alguna medida de prevención de la entrada de estas conservas al mercado comunitario, ya que, aunque el sistema de control de la Unión detectó este grave problema de salud pública en el mes de febrero, las autoridades de Tailandia autorizaron la salida de estos productos hasta el mes de octubre de 2012 al menos hasta en 19 ocasiones.

Por todo ello:

— ¿Puede la Comisión exponer qué controles y auditorías ha realizado en Tailandia para verificar que este grave problema ha sido solventado en un periodo de tiempo tan breve?

— ¿Puede garantizar por tanto la Comisión que no existe el riesgo de que dichos episodios se reproduzcan dado que está en juego algo tan importante como la seguridad alimentaria del consumidor comunitario?

— A la vista de este grave precedente ¿puede la Comisión explicar cómo no ha sido considerado el sector pesquero de Tailandia como prioritario para la realización de una auditoría por parte de la FVO (DG Sanco) en 2013, dado que dicha inspección no está contemplada en el Plan de Auditorías para 2013, publicado en la página web de este organismo?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión evaluó las condiciones de salud pública para la producción de productos de la pesca destinados a la exportación a la Unión en el transcurso de una auditoría en Tailandia efectuada entre el 5 y el 15 de septiembre de 2011. Además, en octubre de 2012 se realizó una investigación in situ y se valoró el problema del atún en conserva. Se llegó a la conclusión de que el problema de la industria conservera no consistía en un tratamiento térmico insuficiente, sino en una recontaminación limitada con bacterias mesófilas durante la refrigeración de las latas de conserva. Las autoridades competentes de Tailandia facilitaron a la Comisión las garantías requeridas, y esta las consideró adecuadas.

A la vista de las garantías proporcionadas por las autoridades competentes de Tailandia, la Comisión decidió volver a incluir este establecimiento de elaboración de conservas en el listado de establecimientos autorizados a exportar. Corresponde al propio establecimiento y a la autoridad competente de Tailandia garantizar que este problema no se repita en el futuro. Las importaciones seguirán siendo objeto del mismo seguimiento en los puestos de inspección fronterizos en los puntos de entrada en la EU. Si en dichos controles se detectaran otros problemas, se adoptarían las medidas adecuadas para proteger la salud de los consumidores de la UE. Las autoridades tailandesas son plenamente conscientes de la gravedad de la situación y de las consecuencias de cualquier nueva deficiencia.

Tras la reincorporación en la lista del establecimiento, a la vista de garantías presentadas, a priori no hay ninguna razón para suponer que el problema se repita en el futuro. Cualquier reaparición del problema supondría una nueva auditoría y/o la adopción de las medidas necesarias para proteger a los consumidores de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003982/13
to the Commission
Carmen Fraga Estévez (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Food safety monitoring of tinned food from Thailand

In 2012, the EU refused entry to 19 consignments of imported tinned tuna from Thailand, on grounds of their failing to comply with public health and hygiene regulations. Entry checks for goods from third countries had detected that the heat treatment for goods in these consignments was inadequate which posed a risk to consumer food safety.

The solution found to this problem consisted in removing just one of the plants behind these food safety alerts from the list of Thai plants authorised to export to the European Union. This took effect on 6 November 2012.

However, according to DG Sanco's webpage, this plant will become an authorised importer once again on 27 March 2013. The plant has managed to identify, analyse, correct and resolve the problem with surprising alacrity. The competent Thai authority has also been surprisingly swift to check and audit the solution found, and to apply to the EU for this firm to be placed back on the list, a request that the EU authorities have subsequently agreed to. Such swiftness and alacrity is notably different from the sluggishness shown by the Thai and EU authorities in taking measures to stop these tinned goods entering the EU market. Although the EU's inspection system detected this serious public health problem in February 2012, the Thai authorities authorised the export of these goods on at least 19 occasions until October 2012.

— Could the Commission explain what checks and audits it has carried out in Thailand to verify that this serious problem has indeed been resolved in such a short period of time?

— Can the Commission guarantee therefore that there is no danger of a repetition of these incidents, given the importance of what is at stake, namely food safety for EU consumers?

— Given this serious precedent, can the Commission explain why an FVO (DG SANCO) audit of the Thai fisheries sector has not been made a priority for 2013? There is no mention of this sector in the 2013 Audit Programme published on the FVO's webpage.

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

The Commission evaluated the public health conditions for the production of fishery products intended for export to the Union during an audit in Thailand carried out from 5 to 15 September 2011. In addition, in October 2012, an on-the-spot investigation took place and evaluated the problem in canned tuna. It was concluded that the problem in the cannery did not consist in an inadequate heat treatment but in a limited recontamination with mesophilic bacteria during the cooling of the cans. Guarantees requested to the Competent Authority of Thailand have been provided to the Commission and have been judged as adequate.

The Commission has decided on the basis of the guarantees provided by the Competent Authority of Thailand to relist the canning establishment in question. It is up to the establishment itself and to the Competent Authority of Thailand to ensure that this problem does not occur anymore in future. Imports will continue to be monitored at the border inspection posts at the points of entry into the EU. If further problems are detected arising from such checks, appropriate measures will be taken to protect the health of EU consumers. The Thai authorities are well aware of the seriousness of the situation and of the consequence of any repeated failings.

Following the relisting of the establishment on the basis of the guarantees provided there is a priori no reason to assume that the problem will reoccur. Any re-emergence of the problem would lead to a further audit and/or any necessary measures to protect the EU consumers.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-003983/13
an die Kommission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Anwendung der Extremismusklausel im Freistaat Sachsen bei der Vergabe von Fördermitteln für die Euroregion Elbe/Labe

Die Euroregion Elbe/Labe wurde am 24. Juni 1992 gegründet. Sie bemüht sich, ein Netzwerk grenzüberschreitender Zusammenarbeit aufzubauen und zu entwickeln. Die Zusammenarbeit zwischen deutschen und tschechischen Regionen basiert auf den Prinzipien der Gleichberechtigung unter Beachtung des „Europäischen Rahmenübereinkommens über die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Gebietskörperschaften" von 1980 des Europarats. Für die Förderung der Zusammenarbeit werden Mittel aus dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) bereitgestellt.

Seit dem Jahr 2013 verlangt der Freistaat Sachsen bei der Beantragung von Fördermitteln für die Euroregion Elbe/Labe die Unterschreibung der „Extremismusklausel". Die Extremismusklausel ist eine schriftliche Einverständniserklärung, die ein Bekenntnis zur freiheitlich demokratischen Grundordnung enthält und die Verpflichtung, „dafür Sorge zu tragen, dass die als Partner ausgewählten Organisationen, Referenten etc. sich ebenfalls zu den Zielen des Grundgesetzes verpflichten".

— Wie verträgt sich die Anforderung, diese Klausel zu unterschreiben, mit Artikel 16 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006, der vorschreibt, dass die Mitgliedstaaten und die Kommission die erforderlichen Maßnahmen gegen jede Form der Diskriminierung aufgrund des Geschlechts, der Rasse oder ethnischen Herkunft, der Religion oder Weltanschauung bei der Durchführung der Fondstätigkeit treffen?

— Wie ist es mit den Zielen der Kohäsionspolitik und insbesondere der territorialen Zusammenarbeit zu vereinbaren, wenn im Rahmen der Extremismusklausel von tschechischen Projektpartnern ein Bekenntnis zum Grundgesetz verlangt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(14. Mai 2013)

Die Verwaltungsbehörde eines ETZ ([1])-Programms ist dafür zuständig sicherzustellen, dass Projekte in Übereinstimmung mit den Auswahlkriterien des Programms ausgewählt werden und dass sie den Vorschriften auf EU- und nationaler Ebene entsprechen.

Gemäß den Vorschriften für die Kohäsionspolitik ([2]) treffen die Mitgliedstaaten und die Kommission während der Programmdurchführung und insbesondere in Bezug auf den Zugang zu den Fonds die erforderlichen Maßnahmen gegen jede Form der Diskriminierung aufgrund des Geschlechts, der Rasse oder ethnischen Herkunft, der Religion oder Weltanschauung, einer Behinderung, des Alters oder der sexuellen Ausrichtung. Darüber hinaus sind kohäsionspolitische Verordnungen unter vollständiger Einhaltung des Artikels 18 AEUV ([3]) durchzuführen.

Im vorliegenden Fall ist die Projektauswahl an die Unterzeichnung einer Klausel gebunden, der zufolge ein „Bekenntnis zur freiheitlich demokratischen Grundordnung" sowie die Verpflichtung „zu den Zielen des Grundgesetzes" erforderlich sind. ([4]) Diese Anforderung fällt jedoch nicht in den Anwendungsbereich von Artikel 16, da keine Diskriminierung aufgrund der in diesem Artikel festgelegten Elemente vorzuliegen scheint. Im Rahmen eines ETZ-Programms sollten sich die teilnehmenden Länder auf die einschlägigen nationalen Vorschriften einigen, auf deren Grundlage die Förderfähigkeit von Ausgaben festgelegt wird, es sei denn, es gelten EU-Rechtsvorschriften. Zur Festlegung der Förderfähigkeit im Rahmen von ETZ-Programmen sollten Anforderungen an die Projektauswahl, die mehr als einen Mitgliedstaat betreffen, und an die erforderliche Zustimmung aller teilnehmenden Mitgliedstaaten berücksichtigt werden. Die Kommission prüft gemeinsam mit der Verwaltungsbehörde, ob in dieser Hinsicht eine Einigung erzielt wurde.

Personen, die der Ansicht sind, die Anforderung bezüglich der Einhaltung dieser Klausel stelle für sie einen Nachteil gegenüber anderen Personen dar, haben die Möglichkeit, bei der Kommission eine Beschwerde einzureichen.

([1]) Europäische territoriale Zusammenarbeit.
([2]) Artikel 16 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006.
([3]) Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union.
([4]) Grundgesetz.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003983/13
to the Commission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the extremism clause in the Free State of Saxony in respect of the allocation of funds for the Elbe/Labe Euroregion

The Elbe/Labe Euroregion was established on 24 June 1992 with the aim of building and developing a network of cross-border cooperation. Cooperation between German and Czech regions is based on the principles of equality in accordance with the Council of Europe's 1980 'European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities'. In order to promote cooperation, funds are made available under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Since 2013, the Free State of Saxony has made the signing of the 'extremism clause' a condition for applying for funding for the Elbe/Labe Euroregion . This is a written agreement that includes a commitment to the free democratic order and the obligation to ensure that organisations, experts, etc., selected as partners are also committed to the objectives of the Basic Law.

— How is the requirement to sign this clause compatible with Article 16 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, which stipulates that the Member States and the Commission shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief in the implementation of funding?

— Is the fact that Czech project partners are required to declare their adherence to the Basic Law under the terms of the extremism clause compatible with the objectives of Cohesion Policy and in particular territorial cooperation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The managing authority of an ETC ([1]) programme is responsible for ensuring that projects are selected in accordance with the programme's selection criteria and that they comply with EU and national rules.

Under cohesion policy rules ([2]), Member States and the Commission must take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during programme implementation and, in particular, in the access to funds. Moreover, cohesion policy regulations shall be implemented in full compliance with Article 18 of the TFEU ([3]).

In the present case, project selection is conditional on the signing of a clause requiring a 'commitment to the free democratic order' as well 'to the objectives of the Basic Law' ([4]). This requirement does not appear to fall within Article 16, as there does not appear to be discrimination on any of the bases set out in this Article. For an ETC programme, the participating countries should agree on the relevant national rules which shall apply to determine the eligibility of expenditure, except where EU rules are laid down. The notion of eligibility for ETC programmes should include any such requirements for project selection, which affect more than one Member State, and that the agreement of all participating Member States should be necessary. The Commission will verify with the managing authority if they agreed to this requirement.

Persons who consider the requirement to adhere to the clause puts them at a particular disadvantage compared to other persons, have the possibility to file a complaint with the Commission.

([1]) European Territorial Cooperation.
([2]) Article 16 of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006.
([3]) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
([4]) The German Constitution.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003984/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Respingerea solicitării României privind prelungirea termenului de aplicare a taxării inverse la cereale

Comisia Europeană a respins cererea Guvernului României de a prelungi termenul de aplicare a taxării inverse la cereale, ceea ce, potrivit autorităților române și asociațiilor de producători, va determina transferarea unui număr important de „firme-fantomă" din Ungaria în România, precum și scumpirea produselor de panificație.

Totodată, conform Jurnalului Oficial al UE, Comisia Europeană a aprobat taxarea inversă la unele cereale și plante oleaginoase în Ungaria pentru perioada 1 iulie 2012-30 iunie 2014. Bulgaria a solicitat, de asemenea, prelungirea perioadei pentru care are dreptul de a aplica aceeași măsură fiscală.

Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

1. Autoritățile române afirmă că posibilitatea taxării inverse la cereale și plante tehnice a fost acordată României „în circumstanțe excepționale, pentru a da timp țării noastre să implementeze anumite reforme în vederea combaterii fraudei". Care ar fi trebuit să fie reformele menționate și care este stadiul implementării acestora?

2. Dacă această solicitare a fost respinsă doar pentru România și aprobată pentru Ungaria și Bulgaria, Comisia nu consideră că este o discriminare?

3. Asociațiile de producători din România au adus în discuție o propunere de directivă, aflată în analiza Comisiei Europene, vizând combaterea fraudei în materie de TVA și introducerea unui mecanism de reacție rapidă, bazat pe acordarea de competențe Comisei Europene pentru a acorda derogări temporare; de asemenea, producătorii menționează o altă propunere, de extindere a domeniului de aplicare a taxării inverse prin includerea sectoarelor care fac deja obiectul unor cereri de derogare, printre care produsele agricole. Care este calendarul privind aceste două propuneri?

Răspuns dat de dl Šemeta în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2013)

În primul rând, ar trebui reamintite circumstanțele juridice și politice în care a fost acordată derogarea. Consiliul a fost încă de la început reticent în a acorda României derogarea și a afirmat, printre altele, că o derogare ar trebui acordată doar în ultimă instanță și ar trebui să constituie o măsură de urgență în cazuri dovedite de fraudă; că procedura de taxare inversă implică întotdeauna un risc ca frauda să fie transferată altor state; și că nu poate accepta ca procedura de taxare inversă să fie utilizată în mod sistematic pentru a compensa supravegherea inadecvată. România, în schimb, și-a luat angajamentul de a nu solicita reînnoirea acestei derogări după data expirării.

1. În ceea ce privește anumite măsuri de control al TVA instituite în acest context, România a informat Comisia cu privire la măsurile referitoare la înscrierea în registrul TVA a operatorilor intracomunitari, sancțiuni, utilizarea unor instrumente de control electronic, monitorizarea sporită a comerțului intracomunitar și utilizarea datelor din declarațiile recapitulative, precum și anumite obligații de declarare a TVA.

2. Ungaria a obținut (și a convenit cu privire la) o derogare similară în exact aceleași condiții; și anume, o perioadă de doi ani, care nu poate fi reînnoită. Comisia nu consideră că aceasta ar constitui o discriminare.

3. Cele două propuneri sunt în prezent discutate în cadrul Consiliului, însă, din păcate, statele membre nu au reușit încă să ajungă la un acord cu privire la acestea. Având în vedere cerința unanimității în materie fiscală, este aproape imposibilă prezentarea unui calendar de adoptare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003984/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Rejection of Romania's application to extend the deadline for applying reverse taxation to cereals

The Commission has rejected the Romanian Government's request to extend the deadline for applying reverse taxation to cereals. According to the Romanian authorities and producer associations, the upshot of this will be that a large number of 'phantom traders' will move from Hungary to Romania and the price of bakery products will rise.

At the same time, according to the *Official Journal of the European Union*, the Commission approved the reverse taxation for some cereals and oleaginous plants in Hungary for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2014. Bulgaria also requested an extension to the period entitling it to apply the same fiscal measure.

1. The Romanian authorities state that Romania was granted the option to apply reverse taxation to cereals and industrial crops 'in exceptional circumstances in order to give time to Romania to implement certain reforms to combat fraud'. What were the reforms in question supposed to be, and at what stage of implementation are they?

2. If this application was rejected only in the case of Romania and approved in the case of Hungary and Bulgaria, does the Commission not regard this as discrimination?

3. Producer associations in Romania have raised for discussion a proposal for a directive being analysed by the Commission, aimed at combating VAT fraud and introducing a rapid reaction mechanism, based on giving the Commission powers to grant temporary derogations. The producers are also mentioning another proposal for extending the scope of application of reverse taxation to include sectors which are already subject to requests for derogation, including agricultural products. What is the timetable for both these proposals?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The legal and political circumstances under which the derogation was granted should first be recalled. The Council was from the start reluctant to grant Romania the derogation and stated, *inter alia*, that a derogation could not be more than a last resort and an emergency measure in proven cases of fraud; that the reverse charge procedure always entails a risk of the fraud being transferred to other States; and that they could not accept that the reverse charge procedure would systematically be used to make up for inadequate surveillance. Romania, in return, committed itself not to seek renewal of this derogation beyond the expiration date.

1. As to specific VAT control measures put into place in this context, Romania informed the Commission of measures regarding the VAT registration of intra-community operators, penalties, use of electronic control tools, enhanced monitoring of intra-community trade and use of data from recapitulative statements, and specific VAT declaration obligations.

2. Hungary obtained (and agreed to) a similar derogation under exactly the same conditions; i.e. a non-renewable period of two years. The Commission does not regard this as discrimination.

3. The two proposals are currently discussed at the Council but Member States have, unfortunately, not been able yet to reach an agreement on these proposals. Given the unanimity requirement in tax matters, it is close to impossible to come forward with a timetable for adoption.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003985/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Vacuna Infanrix

Tras la filtración del documento confidencial de la sección belga de la farmacéutica Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK) sobre la seguridad de su vacuna Infanrix hexa (contra la difteria, tétanos, tos ferina, hepatitis B, poliomielitis y *Haemophilus* tipo b), se ha sabido que reconocen 36 posibles muertes de bebés que recibieron la vacuna, en sólo dos años. Desde el lanzamiento del preparado en 2000, la suma de fallecimientos podría alcanzar al menos 73 muertes. Además de los fallecimientos, el estudio de GSK revela 1 742 reacciones adversas constatadas durante los trabajos. Al parecer no ha habido ningún tipo de alerta sanitaria sobre la vacuna Infanrix.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de estas posibles reacciones a la vacuna Infanrix Hexa?

¿Cuáles son los criterios de las alertas sanitarias? ¿Qué número de notificaciones de reacciones adversas a los medicamentos (RAM), incluidas muertes, son necesarias? ¿Cuántos bebés han de morir para que las autoridades nos adviertan de la peligrosidad de un fármaco?

¿Cree la Comisión que se deberían realizar pruebas de alergias y metales pesados antes de las vacunaciones para evitar reacciones adversas en las personas sensibles a los mismos?

¿No coincide la Comisión con la petición de transparencia de la información científica de los ensayos de medicamentos formulada por investigadores y editores científicos? ¿No cree la Comisión que los investigadores deberían tener acceso a los datos de los ensayos sobre medicamentos que las empresas farmacéuticas no hacen públicos?

¿Va a tomar alguna medida al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de mayo de 2013)

Infanrix Hexa está autorizada desde el año 2000, pues la relación entre beneficios y riesgos se consideró positiva. En el expediente de solicitud de autorización de comercialización, el solicitante tenía que demostrar que los pacientes desarrollaban inmunidad y tenía que comunicar todas las reacciones adversas. Los resultados de ensayos clínicos permitieron establecer el riesgo de alergia y de reacciones a los metales pesados.

Desde su autorización, se viene controlando la seguridad de Infanrix Hexa para que, en caso de que aparezcan reacciones adversas con un nivel de riesgo inaceptable, se tomen las medidas oportunas. Hasta octubre de 2011 se habían distribuido casi setenta y tres millones de dosis de Infanrix Hexa. En el marco de la supervisión periódica, GSK comunicó en 2011 información sobre las reacciones adversas. En el período de referencia 2009 a 2011 se comunicaron veintiocho fallecimientos, frente a veintitrés y a diecinueve en los dos períodos de notificación precedentes. No hubo pruebas claras de una relación entre la administración de la vacuna y los fallecimientos notificados. La Agencia Europea de Medicamentos evaluó los informes y llegó a la conclusión de que la relación entre beneficios y riesgos de Infanrix Hexa sigue siendo positiva. Esta relación beneficio/riesgo sigue supervisándose habitualmente.

Los efectos adversos de los medicamentos se evalúan en relación con sus beneficios, y no es posible definir criterios numéricos generales de aceptabilidad de las reacciones adversas.

En cuanto a la información sobre ensayos clínicos, la Comisión está de acuerdo con Su Señoría en la necesidad de mejorar la transparencia, por lo que ha presentado una propuesta de Reglamento ([1]) que mejorará considerablemente la situación actual.

([1]) COM(2012) 369 final de 17.7.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003985/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Infanrix vaccine

Following the leak from the Belgian division of the pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) of a confidential document on the safety its Infanrix hexa vaccine (used to vaccinate against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B, polio and *Haemophilus influenzae* type b), it has come to light that 36 possible deaths of babies who were given the vaccine have been acknowledged in just a two-year period. Since the vaccine was launched in 2000, there may have been at least 73 deaths in total. In addition to these deaths, the GSK study reveals that 1 742 adverse reactions were reported during the vaccination period. Apparently, no health alert of any kind has been issued about the Infanrix vaccine.

Is the Commission aware of these possible reactions to the Infanrix hexa vaccine?

What are the criteria for health alerts? How many adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports, including deaths, are necessary? How many babies have to die before the authorities warn the public of the dangers of a drug?

Does the Commission believe that allergy and heavy metal testing should be performed prior to vaccinations in order to avoid adverse reactions in people sensitive to them?

Does the Commission not agree with the request made by researchers and science publishers for scientific information from tests on medicinal products to be transparent? Does the Commission not believe that researchers should have access to the data from tests on medicinal products, which pharmaceutical companies do not make public?

Will the Commission take any action in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

Since 2000, Infanrix Hexa has been authorised as the benefit/risk balance has been considered positive. In the marketing authorisation dossier, the applicant had to show that patients developed immunity and had to report all adverse reactions. The clinical trials outcomes allowed identifying of the risk of allergy and reactions to heavy metals.

Since its authorisation, the safety of Infanrix Hexa is monitored to ensure that, in case of adverse reactions that present an unacceptable level of risk, appropriate action is taken. Until October 2011 nearly 73 million doses of Infanrix Hexa had been distributed. As part of the regular monitoring, GSK reported in 2011 information on adverse reactions. A total of 28 cases with a fatal outcome were received during the reporting period 2009 to 2011, compared to 23 and 19 cases reported in the previous two reporting periods. There was no clear evidence of a link between the administration of the vaccine and the reported fatalities. The European Medicines Agency assessed the reports and concluded that the benefit/risk profile of Infanrix Hexa remained positive. The benefit/risk profile continues to be routinely monitored.

Unfavourable effects of medicines are assessed in relation to their benefits. It is not possible to define general numerical criteria for the acceptability of adverse reactions.

With respect to information on clinical trials, the Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that increased transparency is necessary. Therefore the Commission has put forward a proposal for a regulation ([1]), which will greatly improve the current situation.

([1]) COM(2012) 369 final 17.7.2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003986/13
al Consejo
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas

Tras seis años de negociaciones, la Asamblea General de la ONU ha aprobado el Tratado sobre Comercio de Armas (TCA) prácticamente por unanimidad (155 votos a favor, 3 en contra y 22 abstenciones), lo que representa un logro histórico para la comunidad internacional en la protección de los derechos humanos, en su esfuerzo por disminuir la violencia en el mundo, y consagra en el Derecho internacional un conjunto de reglas para las transferencias de armas y municiones. El Tratado estará abierto a la firma y ratificación a partir del 3 de junio de 2013 en la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas y entrará en vigor al poco tiempo de haber sido ratificado por 50 Estados. La coalición Armas bajo Control y organizaciones como Amnistía Internacional hacen un llamamiento a todos los Estados para que den prioridad a la firma y ratificación del Tratado.

Se pide a todos los gobiernos que se comprometan a aprobar la legislación nacional necesaria para que el Tratado entre en vigor lo antes posible. Asimismo, aseguran que es imperativo que todos los gobiernos que han votado a favor del Tratado demuestren su compromiso de establecer los más altos estándares internacionales posibles en su aplicación. Por ejemplo, pueden empezar incluyendo todas las armas convencionales y todo tipo de transferencia en sus listas nacionales de control y haciendo explícito que siempre van a rechazar las transferencias de armas cuando exista un riesgo sustancial de vulneración de los derechos humanos y del Derecho humanitario.

¿Va a llevar a cabo el Consejo alguna acción para garantizar que los Estados miembros firmen y ratifiquen el Tratado lo antes posible?

Respuesta
(10 de junio de 2013)

El Consejo ha manifestado reiteradamente su firme compromiso con el éxito de las negociaciones relativas al Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas (TCA) ([1]).

El Consejo ha autorizado a la Comisión a negociar el TCA para los puntos que sean competencia exclusiva de la Unión. Tras la conclusión de la Conferencia diplomática tica de las Naciones Unidas de 28 de marzo de 2013 y la posterior adopción del TCA por la Asamblea General, el 12 de abril de 2013, la Comisión presentó una propuesta de Decisión del Consejo sobre la firma del TCA. El Consejo tonó nota de la fecha de apertura a la firma, el 3 de junio de 2013. Estudiará la propuesta de la Comisión como asunto prioritario de forma que se garantice que los Estados miembros puedan firmar lo antes posible el TCA.

([1]) Véase la Decisión 2013/43/PESC del Consejo, de 22 de enero de 2013, sobre el mantenimiento de las actividades de la Unión en apoyo de las negociaciones del Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas, en el marco de la Estrategia Europea de Seguridad (DO L 20 de 23.1.2013, pp. 53-56).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003986/13
to the Council
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Arms Trade Treaty

After six years of negotiations, the UN General Assembly has adopted the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) practically unanimously (155 votes for, 3 against and 22 abstentions). This represents a historic achievement for the international community in protecting human rights, as part of its effort to reduce violence in the world, and enshrines in international law a set of rules for the transfer of arms and ammunition. The Treaty will be open for signature and ratification as of 3 June 2013 at the General Assembly of the United Nations and will enter into force soon after it is ratified by 50 states. The Control Arms coalition and organisations such as Amnesty International are calling on all states to sign and ratify the Treaty as a priority.

All governments are called on to commit to adopting the national legislation necessary for the Treaty to enter into force as soon as possible. It is also vital that all governments that voted in favour of the Treaty demonstrate their commitment to setting the highest possible international standards when applying it. For example, they can start by including all conventional weapons and all types of transfer in their national control lists and explicitly state that they will always reject arms transfers where there is a substantial risk of human rights and humanitarian law being violated.

Will the Council take any action to ensure that Member States sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible?

Reply
(10 June 2013)

The Council has regularly expressed its firm commitment to the successful outcome of negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) ([1]).

The Council has authorised the Commission to negotiate the ATT on those matters coming under the exclusive competence of the Union. Following the conclusion of the UN Diplomatic Conference on 28 March 2013 and the subsequent adoption of the ATT by the UN General Assembly on 2 April 2013. The Commission has submitted a proposal for a Council Decision regarding the signing of the ATT. The Council has taken note of the opening date for signing on 3 June 2013. It will examine the Commission's proposal as a matter of priority so as to ensure that Member States can sign the ATT as soon as possible.

([1]) See Council Decision 2013/43/CFSP of 22 January 2013 on continued Union activities in support of the Arms Trade Treaty negotiations, in the framework of the European Security Strategy (OJ L 020, 23.1.2013, p. 53-56).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003987/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas

Tras seis años de negociaciones, la Asamblea General de la ONU ha aprobado el Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas (TCA) prácticamente por unanimidad (155 votos a favor, 3 en contra y 22 abstenciones), lo que representa un logro histórico para la comunidad internacional en la protección de los derechos humanos, en su esfuerzo por disminuir la violencia en el mundo, y consagra en el Derecho internacional un conjunto de reglas para las transferencias de armas y municiones. El Tratado estará abierto a la firma y ratificación a partir del 3 de junio de 2013 en la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas y entrará en vigor al poco tiempo de haber sido ratificado por 50 Estados. La coalición Armas bajo Control y organizaciones como Amnistía Internacional hacen un llamamiento a todos los Estados para que den prioridad a la firma y ratificación del Tratado.

Se pide a todos los gobiernos que se comprometan a aprobar la legislación nacional necesaria para que el Tratado entre en vigor lo antes posible. Asimismo, aseguran que es imperativo que todos los gobiernos que han votado a favor del Tratado demuestren su compromiso de establecer los más altos estándares internacionales posibles en su aplicación. Por ejemplo, pueden empezar incluyendo todas las armas convencionales y todo tipo de transferencia en sus listas nacionales de control y haciendo explícito que siempre van a rechazar las transferencias de armas cuando exista un riesgo sustancial de vulneración de los derechos humanos y del Derecho humanitario.

¿Va a llevar a cabo la Comisión alguna acción para garantizar que los Estados miembros firmen y ratifiquen el Tratado lo antes posible?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de mayo de 2013)

A raíz de la adopción del Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas (TCA) por la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas el 2 de abril de 2013 y la consiguiente apertura a la firma a partir del 3 de junio de 2013, la Comisión está tomando medidas para garantizar que se lleven a cabo lo antes posible los procedimientos internos de la UE que permitan y animen a los Estados miembros a firmar el Tratado desde el primer día en que esté abierto a la firma.

Para que sea posible la ratificación del TCA por los Estados miembros se necesita primero la aprobación del Parlamento, de conformidad con el artículo 218, apartado 6, del TFUE. La subsiguiente ratificación a nivel nacional dependerá de los respectivos marcos constitucionales que a menudo requieren la aprobación previa del Parlamento nacional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003987/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Arms Trade Treaty

After six years of negotiations, the UN General Assembly has adopted the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) practically unanimously (155 votes for, 3 against and 22 abstentions). This represents a historic achievement for the international community in protecting human rights, as part of its effort to reduce violence in the world, and enshrines in international law a set of rules for the transfer of arms and ammunition. The Treaty will be open for signature and ratification as of 3 June 2013 at the General Assembly of the United Nations and will enter into force soon after it is ratified by 50 states. The Control Arms coalition and organisations such as Amnesty International are calling on all states to sign and ratify the Treaty as a priority.

All governments are called on to commit to adopting the national legislation necessary for the Treaty to enter into force as soon as possible. It is also vital that all governments that voted in favour of the Treaty demonstrate their commitment to setting the highest possible international standards when applying it. For example, they can start by including all conventional weapons and all types of transfer in their national control lists and explicitly state that they will always reject arms transfers where there is a substantial risk of human rights and humanitarian law being violated.

Will the Commission take any action to ensure that Member States sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible?

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

In the wake of the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the UN General Assembly on 2 April 2013 and the subsequent opening for signature as of 3 June 2013, the Commission is undertaking action to ensure the earliest possible completion of the EU internal procedures allowing and encouraging Member States to sign the Treaty as of the first day it is open for signature.

Authorising the ratification of the ATT by Member States will first require the consent of Parliament pursuant to Article 218 (6) TFEU. The subsequent ratification at national level will depend on the respective constitutional frameworks that very often require the prior approval of the national parliament.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003988/13
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Representante da Comissão Europeia em Portugal

No dia 22 de março, o Secretário para as Relações Internacionais do Partido Socialista tomou a iniciativa de contactar os embaixadores dos países da UE acreditados em Portugal, para lhes dar conhecimento da decisão de o PS apresentar, na Assembleia da República, uma moção de censura ao Governo português e explicar sucintamente as suas motivações. Todos os Embaixadores agradeceram a atenção e informaram o Secretário Internacional de que iriam informar as respetivas capitais. O mesmo não aconteceu com o Representante da Comissão Europeia em Portugal, que se pronunciou politicamente contra a iniciativa, aduzindo argumentos sobre as possíveis consequências da moção de censura.

Tendo em conta o Estatuto dos Funcionários das Instituições Europeias, bem como o mandato dos chefes das Representações da Comissão Europeia nos Estados-Membros, manifesto a minha estranheza e descontentamento pelo sucedido e pergunto à Comissão com que base estatutária ou política está aquele funcionário autorizado a tecer considerações políticas e a criticar a atuação de um partido político, no caso, o maior partido da oposição.

Para melhor perceber o que se passou, solicito à Comissão cópia do relatório que sobre o assunto o Chefe da Representação certamente enviou à hierarquia.

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(27 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão confirma que o seu Representante em Lisboa recebeu em 22 de março de 2013 um telefonema do secretário do Partido Socialista encarregado das relações internacionais e da comunicação, que o informou da intenção do Partido Socialista de apresentar uma moção de censura ao Governo.

A Comissão não se pronuncia sobre as tomadas de posição dos partidos políticos nacionais. No caso específico de Portugal, a Comissão exprimiu várias vezes a importância da estabilidade política e de um amplo consenso político para que o país possa ultrapassar as dificuldades atuais.

O pedido de acesso a documentos que a Senhora Deputada apresentou será tratado em separado, nos termos do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1049/2001 relativo ao acesso do público aos documentos do Parlamento Europeu, do Conselho e da Comissão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003988/13
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Commission representative in Portugal

On 22 March 2013, the international relations secretary of the Portuguese Socialist Party (PS) contacted the accredited ambassadors of the Member States in Portugal to inform them of the decision taken by the PS to table a motion of censure against the government in the Portuguese Parliament and to briefly explain the reasons behind the decision. All the ambassadors expressed their gratitude and informed the international secretary that they would pass the information on to their respective capitals. The Commission representative in Portugal did not do likewise, instead expressing his political opposition to the initiative and setting out the potential consequences of the motion of censure.

In view of the EU institutions' Staff Regulations, as well as the mandate of heads of Commission representations in the Member States, I am astonished and dissatisfied with what has happened. Can the Commission explain on what statutory or political grounds this official is authorised to express political opinions and to criticise the actions of a political party, the largest opposition party in this case?

In order better to understand what happened, can the Commission provide a copy of the report on this matter that the head of the representation will certainly have submitted to his superiors?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(27 mai 2013)

La Commission confirme que son Représentant à Lisbonne a reçu le 22 mars 2013 un appel du secrétaire du Parti Socialiste chargé des relations internationales et de la communication par lequel il a été informé de l'intention du Parti Socialiste de présenter une motion de censure au gouvernement.

La Commission ne se prononce pas sur les positions prises par les partis politiques nationaux. Dans le cas spécifique du Portugal, la Commission a exprimé à plusieurs reprises l'importance de la stabilité politique et d'un large consensus politique pour que le pays puisse surmonter à ses difficultés actuelles.

La demande d'accès à des documents introduite par l'Honorable Parlementaire sera traitée séparément conformément au règlement (CE) n° 1049/2001 relatif à l'accès du public aux documents du Parlement européen, du Conseil et de la Commission.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003989/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Utilizzo dei fondi comunitari diretti e indiretti da parte del Comune di Siena (Toscana)

Considerando che in Italia la spesa certificata al 31 dicembre 2012 relativa all'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari per il periodo 2007-2013 si attesta al 37 %, per quanto riguarda il Comune di Siena (Toscana), può la Commissione:

— fornire i dati e le percentuali relativi ai fondi comunitari, diretti e non, disponibili per Siena e al loro utilizzo?

— fornire un quadro dei finanziamenti cui il Comune di Siena potrebbe accedere per promuovere attività e progetti che rientrano nel settore della cultura;

— fornire un quadro dei finanziamenti cui il Comune di Siena potrebbe accedere per promuovere attività e progetti che rientrano nel settore del turismo e dei servizi correlati, con particolare riguardo alla promozione del suo patrimonio naturale, culturale e architettonico;

— fornire un quadro dei finanziamenti cui il Comune di Siena potrebbe accedere per promuovere attività imprenditoriali, con particolare riferimento alle PMI, anche in vista del nuovo programma COSME 2014-2020?

— precisare se e in che modo il Comune di Siena potrebbe usufruire dei fondi attualmente in corso di discussione relativamente agli orientamenti TEN-T?

— chiarire se e in che modo il Comune di Siena potrebbe usufruire dei fondi attualmente in corso di discussione relativi ai nuovi regolamenti che rientrano nella politica di coesione, destinati allo sviluppo e alla riqualificazione delle aree urbane?

Risposta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2013)

1. Per quanto riguarda l'utilizzo dei fondi dell'UE disponibili per Siena, si invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare il sistema di trasparenza finanziaria per i progetti gestiti direttamente dalla Commissione al seguente indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

Si invita inoltre l'onorevole parlamentare a contattare le autorità italiane che gestiscono i progetti nell'ambito della gestione concorrente, in quanto non esiste un'unica banca dati generale contenente tutti i progetti gestiti dai singoli Stati membri. I dati per contattare le autorità italiane competenti figurano nei siti web riportati in nota ([1]).

2.-4. Per informazioni sulle opportunità di finanziamento dell'UE relative ai tipi di attività e progetti richiesti è possibile visitare i siti web riportati in nota ([2]).

5. Le informazioni riguardanti la revisione degli orientamenti TEN-T sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

È possibile consultare schede informative sulle buone pratiche pubblicate dalla Commissione, che indicano come utilizzare al meglio tali fondi, semplificando e razionalizzando le procedure ad essi relative, al seguente indirizzo: http://tentea.ec.europa.eu/en/beneficiaries_info_point/good_practice_working_group/good_practice_working_group_02.htm

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/manage/authority/authorities.cfm?lan=EN&pay=it
http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=386&langId=en
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/beneficiaries/shared/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/eff/apply_for_funding/national_authorities.pdf
http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/
http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/

([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/funding/2013/
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/eden/good-practices/funding-support-tourism_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7652
http://ec.europa.eu/small-business/funding-partners-public/finance/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/cip/eip/access-finance/index_en.htm

6. Il quadro legislativo proposto per il periodo 2014-2020 offre diverse possibilità per sostenere lo sviluppo urbano integrato attraverso i Fondi strutturali e di investimento. L'articolo 7 del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) prevede che almeno il 5 % dello stanziamento FESR per ogni Stato membro sia destinato allo sviluppo urbano integrato sostenibile, con il coinvolgimento delle autorità urbane per mezzo di strategie urbane integrate. Le esigenze dello sviluppo potrebbero essere soddisfatte anche tramite investimenti settoriali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003989/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Use of direct and indirect funds by the Municipality of Siena (Tuscany)

Given that, in Italy, certified expenditure as at 31 December 2012 for the use of EU funds for the period 2007-2013 stood at 37%, with regard to the Municipality of Siena (Tuscany) can the Commission:

— Provide data and percentages for the direct and indirect EU funds available to Siena and how they have been used?

— Give an overview of the funding to which the municipality of Siena could have access to promote activities and projects in the field of culture;

— Give an overview of the funding to which the municipality of Siena could have access to promote activities and projects in the field of tourism and related services, most notably with regard to promotion of its natural, cultural and architectural heritage;

— Give an overview of the funding to which the municipality of Siena could have access to promote entrepreneurial activities, most notably with regard to small and medium-sized enterprises, especially in preparation for the new COSME programme for 2014-2020?

— State whether and how the municipality of Siena could make use of the funds currently being discussed in relation to the TEN-T Guidelines?

— State whether, and how, the municipality of Siena could use the funds currently being discussed with regard to the new regulations that fall under the cohesion policy, for the development and revitalisation of urban areas?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

1. Concerning the use of EU funds available to Siena, the Honourable Member is invited to consult the Financial Transparency System for projects managed directly by the Commission at: http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm and to contact relevant authorities in Italy for projects managed under the shared management as there is no unique comprehensive database with all projects managed by individual Member States (MS). The contact details of relevant Italian authorities can be found on the websites below ([1]).

2-4. Information on EU funding opportunities regarding the types of activities and projects requested is available on the websites hereafter ([2]).

5. Information on the revision of the TEN-T Guidelines the question relates to is available on: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

Good practice information sheets issued by the Commission giving guidance on how to best make use of these funds by simplifying and streamlining the associated procedures can be accessed via: http://tentea.ec.europa.eu/en/beneficiaries_info_point/good_practice_working_group/good_practice_working_group_02.htm

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/manage/authority/authorities.cfm?lan=EN&pay=it
http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=386&langId=en
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/beneficiaries/shared/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/eff/apply_for_funding/national_authorities.pdf
http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/
http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/

([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/funding/2013/
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/eden/good-practices/funding-support-tourism_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7652
http://ec.europa.eu/small-business/funding-partners-public/finance/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/cip/eip/access-finance/index_en.htm

6. The proposed 2014-2020 legislative framework is offering several possibilities to support integrated urban development using Structural and Investment Funds. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Article 7 states that a minimum 5% of a MS ERDF allocation is to be spent on integrated sustainable urban development with the involvement of urban authorities through integrated urban strategies. The development needs could be tackled also by sectorial investments.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003990/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Enforcing Regulation (EC) No 261/2004

In 2010, I tabled a question to the Commission (E-005020/2010) about UK companies breaching their obligations under Regulation (EC) No 261/2004. The Commission answered that since 2007 it had been organising regular (general and bilateral) meetings with the National Enforcement Authorities (NEB) to harmonise and strengthen enforcement procedures. Nevertheless, travel companies continue to refuse compensation to passengers who are entitled to such under Regulation (EC) No 261/2004.

— Whilst the responsibility for enforcement and sanctioning lies with the NEB, what other measures can the Commission take to ensure that these rules are enforced and upheld by travel companies and airlines?

— Does the Commission have any data regarding the number of European airline passengers that have been refused compensation owed?

— Furthermore, how many cases have there been of companies being successfully prosecuted for not adhering to Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 in each year since the legislation was passed?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission has put in place a series of measures in view of improving the application and enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 on air passenger rights. In addition to monitoring the work of the NEBs ([1]), and as mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission organises regular meetings with the NEBs to harmonise and strengthen enforcement procedures. In these occasions, particular attention is given to key areas of the legislation, including the concept of 'extraordinary circumstances' which exempts air carriers from paying compensation (but not from providing care and assistance). This ensures that NEBs have a common understanding of this concept across the EU which, in accordance with the CJEU's ([2]) case-law ([3]), should be interpreted strictly. Finally, the amendments proposed by the Commission for the revision of Regulation (EC) 261/2004 ([4]) also lay down measures to improve especially the handling of individual complaints and the access to out-of-court redress, the exchange of information between the different NEBs and their cooperation with the support of the Commission, and the availability of statistics on their activities including on the sanctions imposed on air carriers.

The Commission does not have data on the number of cases where the airline refused (or accepted) to pay compensation, or on the outcome of court proceedings against airlines.

([1]) National Enforcement Bodies in charge of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 in each Member State.
([2]) Court of Justice of the European Union.
([3]) See in particular the Wallentin-Hermann (C-549/07) and Eglītis and Ratnieks (C-294/10) judgments.
([4]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights and Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their baggage by air, COM(2013) 130 final, 2013/0072 (COD), 13.3.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003991/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Progetto del Qatar per «islamizzare» Gerusalemme Est

Il 28 marzo 2013, il Times di Londra ha riferito che durante il vertice della Lega araba di codesta settimana, l'emiro del Qatar, sceicco Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, si era impegnato a spendere 250 milioni di dollari per finanziare un progetto a Gerusalemme Est, al fine di mantenere il «carattere arabo e islamico della città e rafforzare la fermezza della sua gente». Ciò farà parte di un fondo di 1 miliardo di dollari e dovrebbe essere gestito dalla Banca islamica per lo sviluppo, che ha sede a Jeddah, in Arabia Saudita.

Allo stato attuale, sia gli israeliani che i palestinesi considerano Gerusalemme la propria capitale. Un portavoce del ministero degli Esteri israeliano, Yigal Palmos, ha detto che la nuova iniziativa è «un distintivo di vergogna» per il Qatar. Nel frattempo, gli Stati Uniti hanno dichiarato che forniranno 500 milioni di dollari per aiutare l'Autorità nazionale palestinese (Anp), e Israele ha anche ripreso il trasferimento del gettito fiscale per ridurre le difficoltà finanziarie dell'Anp. Quanto all'offerta da parte dell'Emiro del Qatar, il presidente dell'Anp ha accolto con favore la notizia.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto all'annuncio della creazione di un fondo per Gerusalemme Est da parte dell'Emiro del Qatar?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sta considerando di effettuare passi onde chiedere alle autorità del Qatar di mantenere contatti o discutere con le controparti israeliane prima di tentare di avviare progetti a Gerusalemme Est?

3. Alla luce dei progetti dell'UE e dell'assistenza finanziaria UE all'Autorità nazionale palestinese, la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante vorrà consultare l'Emiro del Qatar, sulla natura dei progetti che il Qatar intende sviluppare a Gerusalemme Est?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2013)

L'UE ha preso atto del fatto che l'emiro del Qatar si è impegnato a costituire un fondo a favore di Gerusalemme Est. Responsabili dell'attuazione dei progetti finanziati a titolo del fondo sono i donatori del fondo, tra i quali non figura l'UE.

L'UE si coordina tuttavia regolarmente con tutti gli altri donatori attivi a Gerusalemme Est.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003991/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Qatari project to 'Islamise' East Jerusalem

On 28 March 2013, the UK's *Times* reported that during the Arab League summit this week, the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, had pledged to spend USD 250 million to finance a project in East Jerusalem in order to maintain the 'Arab and Islamic character of the city and reinforce the steadfastness of its people'. This will be part of a USD 1 billion fund and is expected to be managed by the Islamic Development Bank, which is based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

At present, both the Israelis and the Palestinians consider Jerusalem to be their capital. A spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Yigal Palmor, said that the new initiative was 'a badge of shame' for Qatar. Meanwhile, the United States has said it will provide USD 500 million to aid the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), and Israel has also resumed the transfer of tax revenue to ease the PNA's financial difficulties. With regard to the offer by the Qatari Emir, the PNA President welcomed the news.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the Emir of Qatar's announcement about setting up a fund for East Jerusalem?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative considering taking steps in order to request the Qatari authorities to liaise or have discussions with their Israeli counterparts before attempting to launch projects within East Jerusalem?

3. In light of the EU's own projects and financial assistance to the Palestinian National Authority, will the Vice-President/High Representative consult with the Qatari Emir over the nature of the projects Qatar wishes to develop in East Jerusalem?

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

The EU has taken note of the pledge made by the Emir of Qatar to set up a fund for East Jerusalem. Matters relating to the implementation of projects to be assisted from such a fund are the responsibility of donors to the fund, in which the EU is not involved.

There is regular coordination between the EU and all other donors who are active in East Jerusalem.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003992/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Richieste di liberazione di attivisti anticorruzione cinesi

Human Rights Watch (HRW) ha riferito che il 31 marzo 2013, quattro attivisti anticorruzione — Hou Xin, Yuan Dong, Zhang Baocheng e Ma Xinli — sono stati arrestati a Pechino. HRW è del parere che la loro detenzione sia l'azione più dura mai intrapresa contro attivisti di base che chiedono al governo di onorare le promesse di combattere la corruzione. I quattro avevano chiesto che i funzionari del governo rivelino pubblicamente il loro patrimonio.

Il gruppo aveva mostrato striscioni con slogan quali: «esigere che i funzionare dichiarino pubblicamente i loro beni» e «a meno che non mettiamo fine alla corruzione dei funzionari, il sogno cinese sarà solo un sogno a occhi aperti». Sono stati arrestati dalla polizia per «adunata sediziosa», che in Cina comporta una pena fino a cinque anni di carcere.

In Cina, i funzionari di governo sono tenuti a dichiarare i propri beni, ma non a divulgare le informazioni al pubblico. Nel dicembre 2012, un gruppo di intellettuali ha pubblicato una lettera con cui si chiedeva ai membri del Comitato centrale del Partito comunista cinese di dichiarare i rispettivi beni, infatti gli attivisti anticorruzione vogliono che il governo cinese passi una legge che richieda la dichiarazione pubblica delle attività finanziarie dei funzionari. Sebbene il Presidente cinese Xi Jinping abbia lanciato una campagna per combattere la corruzione, i singoli attivisti che fanno campagna su questo tema sono soggetti a vessazioni e detenzione.

1. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è a conoscenza dell'arresto dei quattro attivisti anticorruzione cinesi, ed è disposta a sollevare la questione con il governo di Xi Jinping e a chiedere il loro rilascio?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta a chiedere che la questione dell'attivismo per la lotta alla corruzione in Cina sia messa all'ordine del giorno del prossimo dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani?

3. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari della delegazione dell'UE a Pechino sulla diffusione della corruzione tra i funzionari del governo cinese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è effettivamente a conoscenza dell'arresto dei quattro attivisti anticorruzione — Hou Xin, Yuan Dong, Zhang Baocheng e Ma Xinli — e condivide le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole parlamentare. L'UE considera la corruzione una questione grave che sembra aver avuto un impatto fortemente negativo sulla società cinese. Di conseguenza, l'UE accoglie con favore l'importanza che il Presidente cinese Xi Jinping ha attribuito alle misure anticorruzione, sottolineando più volte la necessità di ridurre l'uso non autorizzato dei fondi pubblici da parte dei funzionari governativi, soprattutto per coprire spese di viaggio, trasporto e rappresentanza.

L'Alta Rappresentate/Vicepresidente chiederà che il tema dell'attivismo anticorruzione in Cina venga messo all'ordine del giorno del prossimo dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani, previsto per la fine di giugno.

Secondo la valutazione della delegazione dell'UE a Pechino, il governo cinese, i mezzi di comunicazione ufficiali e l'opinione pubblica (come risulta dai social media e dai sondaggi d'opinione cinesi) sono molto preoccupati per l'aumento della corruzione tra i funzionari governativi. Il tema è molto sentito dai cittadini che si sono serviti dei social media per denunciare pubblicamente i funzionari corrotti. Diversi fattori indicano, quindi, che la corruzione fra i funzionari del governo cinese è una pratica molto diffusa. Alcuni analisti e commentatori hanno richiesto che siano rese pubbliche le dichiarazioni patrimoniali dei funzionari cinesi sia per ostacolare la corruzione sia per dimostrare la serietà del governo nell'affrontare il problema; ad ogni modo, tale misura non è stata ancora adottata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003992/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Calls for the release of Chinese anti-corruption activists

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has reported that on 31 March 2013, four anti-corruption activists — Hou Xin, Yuan Dong, Zhang Baocheng and Ma Xinli — were arrested in Beijing. HRW considers their detention to be the harshest action yet taken against grassroots activists calling on the government to honour its promises to fight corruption. The four individuals had asked that government officials disclose their assets publicly.

The group had been displaying banners with slogans such as 'Require officials to make public disclosures of assets' and 'Unless we put an end to corrupt officials, the China Dream can only be a daydream'. They were arrested by the police for 'illegal assembly', which in China carries a penalty of up to five years in prison.

In China, government officials are expected to report their assets, but they do not have to disclose the information publicly. In December 2012, a group of public intellectuals issued a letter calling on members of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to declare their assets, as anti-corruption activists want the Chinese Government to pass a law requiring public disclosure of officials' financial assets. Even though Chinese president Xi Jinping has launched a campaign to tackle corruption, individual activists campaigning on this issue are subject to harassment and detention.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the arrest of four Chinese anti-corruption activists, and is she prepared to raise the issue with Xi Jinping's government and ask for their release?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask that the issue of anti-corruption activism in China be put on the agenda for the next EU-China human rights dialogue?

3. What is the assessment of EU delegation officials in Beijing regarding the extent of corruption among Chinese Government officials?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is indeed aware of the arrest of the four anti-corruption activists Hou Xin, Yuan Dong, Zhang Baocheng and Ma Xinli and shares the Honourable Member's concern. The EU regards corruption as a serious issue which appears to have produced a profoundly negative impact on Chinese society. Consequently, the EU welcomes the high priority that Xi Jinping has accorded to anti-corruption measure, repeatedly stressing the need to reduce government officials' unauthorised use of public funds, particularly for travel, vehicles and entertainment.

The High representative/Vice-President will ask that the subject of anti-corruption activism in China be put on the agenda of the next EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which is expected to take place at the end of June.

To the assessment of the EU Delegation in Beijing, the Chinese government, official media and public opinion (as reflected in Chinese social media and opinion polls) are all seriously concerned about the extent of corruption among government officials. Citizens feel strongly about the subject and have been using social media to 'out' corrupt officials. A number of factors therefore suggest that corruption among Chinese government officials is widespread. Some analysts and commentators have called for the public declaration of Chinese officials' assets, both as a way of making corruption more difficult and as a sign of the government's seriousness in tackling the problem; however, such a measure has yet to be taken.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003993/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Aggressione ai danni di giornali iracheni

Il 2 aprile 2013, numerose agenzie stampa hanno riferito che uomini armati avevano effettuato una scorreria negli uffici di quattro giornali indipendenti in Iraq picchiando e accoltellando numerosi dipendenti. I giornali i cui uffici sono stati attaccati erano Al-Dastour, Al-Parliament, Al-Mustaqbal e Al-Nas. Tutti sono stati presi di mira dopo che avevano riferito di materiale critico concernente un religioso sciita chiamato Mahmud al-Sarkhi. Gli individui armati hanno anche fracassato computer e mobili con coltelli e manganelli. Un redattore ha osservato che gli aggressori sembravano essere sciiti legati a un gruppo militante sciita. Il redattore capo di Al-Mustaqbal, Ali Darraji, ha anche riferito: «Hanno dato fuoco alla mia macchina, e sono entrati in ufficio, hanno spaccato tutti i computer e tutto il resto intorno».

Si ritiene che l'Iraq sia uno dei paesi più pericolosi al mondo per l'attività dei giornalisti. Nella classifica sulla libertà di stampa di Reporters senza frontiere l'Iraq si colloca al 150esimo posto su 179 paesi. Secondo il Committee to Protect Journalists, che ha sede a New York, almeno 150 giornalisti sono stati uccisi in Iraq dal 2003 al 2011. Ancor più preoccupante è che l'organizzazione osserva che nessuno è ancora stato accusato in Iraq per l'uccisione di un giornalista.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto ai recenti raids ai danni di quattro giornali iracheni?

2. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari della delegazione dell'UE a Baghdad, sulle minacce per la società civile rappresentate dai gruppi di militanti sciiti?

3. Quali passi è disposta ad effettuare la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante onde contribuire a fornire una maggiore protezione ai membri della società civile irachena, tra cui i giornalisti, che sono a rischio di attacchi da parte di siffatti gruppi di militanti?

4. Quali aiuti umanitari fornisce attualmente l'UE per sostenere i membri della società civile irachena che vivono nel paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(31 maggio 2013)

L'UE segue con la massima attenzione la situazione dei diritti umani in Iraq, che suscita forte preoccupazione. L'UE è a conoscenza dell'episodio di violenza contro i media e giornalisti cui fanno riferimento gli onorevoli parlamentari e condanna tale aggressione. La stampa ha un ruolo fondamentale da svolgere nello sviluppo di un sistema democratico sano in Iraq che l'UE ha sempre cercato di promuovere.

Gruppi armati di ogni tipo, tra cui quelli ritenuti responsabili dell'aggressione in questione, costituiscono una costante minaccia per la società civile e la società irachena in generale. Rientra nelle responsabilità del governo iracheno adottare le misure necessarie per garantire la sicurezza delle organizzazioni della società civile e della stampa.

Proprio nel contesto della difficile situazione dei diritti umani in Iraq, l'UE ha insistito sulla necessità che costituiscano una componente essenziale dell'accordo di partenariato e di cooperazione. Grazie all'attuazione dell'accordo, l'UE sarà in grado di rafforzare il dialogo con le autorità irachene e non intende lesinare i propri sforzi nell'esprimere le proprie preoccupazioni e nel ricordare a tali autorità i loro obblighi internazionali, nonché gli ulteriori impegni assunti nel corso dell'esame periodico universale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003993/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Raid on Iraqi newspapers

On 2 April 2013, a number of news agencies reported that armed gunmen had attacked the offices of four independent newspapers in Iraq and started to beat and stab a number of employees. The newspapers whose offices were attacked were *Al-Dastour*, *Al-Parliament*, *Al-Mustaqbal* and *Al-Nas*. All were targeted after they had reported critical material on a Shi'ite Muslim cleric called Mahmud al-Sarkhi. The armed individuals also smashed computers and furniture with knives and batons. One editor noted that the attackers seemed to be Shi'ites linked to a Shi'ite militant group. The editor-in-chief of *Al-Mustaqbal*, Ali Darraji, also reported that: 'They set fire to my car, and they entered the office, broke all the computers and everything around'.

Iraq is believed to be one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists to work in. Reporters without Borders ranks Iraq 150th out of 179 countries in its Press Freedom Index. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, based in New York, at least 150 reporters were killed in Iraq from 2003 to 2011. More worryingly, the organisation notes that no one has yet been charged in Iraq for killing a reporter.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the recent raid on four Iraqi newspapers?

2. What is the assessment of EU delegation officials in Baghdad regarding the threats to civil society posed by militant Shi'ite groups?

3. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take in order to help provide greater protection to members of Iraq's civil society, such as journalists, who are at risk of attacks by such militant groups?

4. What humanitarian aid is the EU currently providing to support members of Iraqi civil society living inside the country?

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

The EU has been following very closely the human rights situation in Iraq, which gives grounds for concern. The EU is aware of the assault against the media organisations and journalists that the Honorable Members are referring to and condemns any such attacks. The press has a vital role to play in the development of a healthy democratic system in Iraq, which the EU has consistently endeavoured to promote.

Armed groups of all kinds, including those who were allegedly responsible for this assault, do pose a continued threat to civil society, and to Iraqi society in general. It is the responsiblity of the Government of Iraq to take steps to ensure the security of civil society organisations and the press.

It was against the background of the challenging human rights situation in Iraq that the EU insisted on including human rights as a prominent element of the partnership and cooperation agreement. With the implementation of the Agreement, the EU will be able to enhance its dialogue with the Iraqi authorities and will spare no efforts to raise its concerns, and to remind them of their international obligations and further commitments made during the Universal Periodic Review.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003994/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Nuevo ataque de Israel a la Franja de Gaza

El pasado 2 de abril de 2013 el ejército de Israel volvió a realizar un ataque aéreo sobre territorio palestino, el primero desde la tregua alcanzada con Hamás el pasado mes de noviembre. Tras un supuesto ataque con misiles lanzados desde la Franja, Israel lanzó un ataque aéreo sobre dos posiciones en Gaza.

El Gobierno de Israel ha declarado que éste supone el tercer ataque con misiles a territorio israelí desde la declaración de la tregua, culpando, como viene siendo habitual, a Hamás de dichos ataques y ejerciendo represalias bélicas sin ningún tipo de investigación. De esta forma, Israel vuelve a actuar unilateralmente de espaldas a la comunidad internacional, bombardeando posiciones civiles en la Franja sin ningún tipo de miramiento por el respeto del Derecho internacional.

Más allá de estos recientes bombardeos, el ejército de Israel no ha detenido sus maniobras de intimidación a la población civil frente a inofensivas actividades como la recolección de cultivos, confirmando una estrategia militar de exterminio que considera a la población civil como objetivo militar. Los palestinos sufren a diario el fuego y las maniobras de intimidación del ejército israelí sin que la comunidad internacional se haga eco de tales violaciones.

Ante esta gravísima situación de atropello de los derechos humanos, la Unión Europea está actuando como aliado de Israel, permitiendo que ejercite su política de exterminio sin exigir en ningún momento el cese de las violaciones y ataques a la población civil, y manteniendo un Acuerdo de Asociación que fomenta las relaciones con un país que viola diariamente la práctica totalidad del Derecho internacional.

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la inmediata congelación del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel como medida de presión para que Israel respete los derechos humanos y el Derecho internacional? ¿Está haciendo un seguimiento de los ataques e intimidaciones que el ejército de Israel realiza a diario sobre la población civil? ¿Qué acciones piensa desarrollar para impedirlos?

¿Considera que el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel está promoviendo la impunidad de un Estado criminal en la región al colaborar con el país que más viola el Derecho internacional?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2013)

La UE sigue de cerca la situación en la Franja de Gaza. Se ha producido una notable mejora de la situación sobre el terreno a raíz del alto el fuego del 21 de noviembre de 2012 en Gaza y el sur de Israel. Por ello, a la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta le han preocupado especialmente las violaciones del alto el fuego producidas sobre todo en abril. Todas las partes deben respetar el alto el fuego del 21 de noviembre. La UE está decidida a aprovechar el alto el fuego y contribuir a un cambio fundamental en la situación de la Franja de Gaza en beneficio de la población local. Los reiterados ataques con cohetes y los bombardeos aéreos en represalia de Israel ponen en peligro ese objetivo.

La UE no admite que Israel esté llevando a cabo una política de «exterminación». La UE plantea su preocupación por la situación en la Franja de Gaza ante todas las partes con las que mantiene una relación cada vez que resulta necesario. La UE no es partidaria del uso de sanciones en el contexto de las relaciones bilaterales UE-Israel. El Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel es fundamental en nuestras relaciones con Israel. De hecho, este Acuerdo es la base jurídica de nuestro diálogo permanente con las autoridades israelíes, incluso sobre asuntos políticos y cuestiones internacionales así como el respeto de los derechos humanos. La UE cree firmemente que un compromiso con Israel es la manera más eficaz de transmitir las preocupaciones de la Unión Europea sobre los asuntos planteados por Su Señoría.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003994/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — New attack by Israel on the Gaza Strip

On 2 April 2013, the Israeli army conducted a new air strike on Palestinian territory, the first since the truce with Hamas last November. After an alleged missile attack launched from the Gaza Strip, Israel launched an air strike on two positions in Gaza.

The Israeli Government stated that this was the third missile attack on Israeli territory since the truce was declared and, as usual, blamed Hamas for the attacks and carried out military reprisals without any investigation. Israel has thus once again ignored the international community and acted unilaterally, bombing civilian positions in the Gaza Strip without any respect for international law.

Beyond these recent bombings, the Israeli army has continued to intimidate the civilian population, in response to harmless activities such as harvesting crops, confirming a military strategy of extermination that considers the civilian population as a military target. Palestinians are shot at and intimidated by the Israeli army on a daily basis, without the international community calling attention to such violations.

In the face of this extremely serious situation of human rights abuse, the European Union acts as Israel's ally, allowing it to carry out its extermination policy without calling at any time for an end to the violations and attacks on civilians, while maintaining an Association Agreement that promotes relations with a country that commits daily breaches of international law, practically in its entirety.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative considering an immediate freeze on the EU-Israel Association Agreement to put pressure on Israel to respect human rights and international law? Is she monitoring the attacks and intimidation carried out daily by the Israeli army against the civilian population? What action does she intend to take to prevent the attacks and intimidation?

Does she think that the EU-Israel Association Agreement is promoting the impunity of a criminal state in the region, by cooperating with the country that is the most prolific violator of international law?

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

The EU closely monitors the situation in the Gaza Strip. There was a noticeable improvement in the situation on the ground following the 21 November 2012 ceasefire in Gaza and southern Israel. The HR/VP has therefore been particularly concerned by breaches of the ceasefire, notably in April. All parties must respect the 21 November ceasefire. The EU is determined to build on the ceasefire and work towards a fundamental change in the situation of the Gaza Strip for the benefit of the local population. Repeated rocket attacks and Israeli retaliatory air strikes threaten to undermine this.

The EU does not accept that Israel is carrying out a policy of 'extermination'. The EU raises its concerns about the situation in the Gaza Strip with all parties with whom it enjoys a relationship as and when necessary. The EU does not promote the use of sanctions in the context of bilateral EU-Israel relations. The EU-Israel Association agreement is as the cornerstone of our relations with Israel. Indeed, this agreement is the legal basis for our ongoing dialogue with the Israeli authorities, including on political and international issues, as well as on respect for human rights. The EU firmly believes that engagement with Israel is the most effective way to convey the European Union's concerns on the issues to which you refer.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003995/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Disparità tra i paesi dell'Unione nell'accesso ai fondi

Considerando il bando POS CCE 2007-2013 per la Romania riguardo all'asse prioritario in materia di competitività da ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e innovazione e considerati i criteri di eleggibilità stabiliti dalle autorità locali;

considerando che numerose società di diritto romeno ma a capitale straniero hanno riscontrato difficoltà ad accedere a tali fondi, in particolare per quanto concerne la complessità di redazione del bando e l'eccessiva rigidità ed incongruenza della documentazione da allegare;

considerando che molti progetti presentati da società a capitale straniero sono stati ritenuti non ammissibili sulla base di giustificazioni formali e/o di valutazioni economiche non fondate su evidenze scientifiche;

considerando inoltre che l'obiettivo dell'Unione consiste nell'integrazione economica e sociale all'interno dei suoi paesi membri, attraverso l'attuazione di politiche tese all'omologazione legislativa e considerando che una disparità nell'attuazione di tali politiche andrebbe a minare le fondamenta di eguaglianza su cui si basa l'Unione;

considerando che le aziende costituite in Romania, seppur con capitale straniero, devono legittimamente concorrere sulla base di criteri esclusivamente meritocratici all'assegnazione dei fondi e che eventuali discriminazioni spingerebbero tali realtà societarie a non partecipare a bandi la cui accessibilità è de facto disciplinata su «base nazionale»;

considerando che le finalità perseguite dai fondi strutturali sono: la riduzione delle disparità regionali in termini di ricchezza e benessere, l'aumento della competitività e dell'occupazione e il sostegno della cooperazione transfrontaliera.

Alla luce di quanto sopra riportato, e nella convinzione che molte imprese si siano trovate nella stessa situazione di difficoltà, si chiede che venga fatta chiarezza sui diversi sistemi nazionali di assegnazione dei bandi, sottolineando anche come la progettazione stessa da presentare al fine di sperare nell'accesso ai fondi comporti impegni di spesa non indifferenti.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere al seguente quesito:

— non reputa la Commissione che condizioni di accesso diverse possono alterare il corretto funzionamento del mercato comune ponendo un freno allo sviluppo della competitività, obiettivo ultimo del POS CCE 2007-2013?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

Dalle verifiche condotte in Romania ad opera dei servizi della Commissione e delle autorità nazionali non sono emersi casi di discriminazione contro i candidati a un finanziamento sulla base dell'origine del capitale né sono giunte denunce in relazione a tale aspetto dalle imprese che hanno chiesto un finanziamento UE.

In base alle regole che disciplinano la politica di coesione, i criteri di selezione dei progetti sono stabiliti a livello nazionale dalle autorità responsabili dell'attuazione del programma. Tali criteri devono essere conformi anche alle norme nazionali poiché sono cofinanziati con fondi nazionali.

I criteri di selezione sono delineati in modo trasparente e dettagliato nelle linee guida per i candidati pubblicate per ciascun invito a presentare progetti dalle autorità di gestione dei programmi. La Commissione segue l'attuazione dei programmi finanziati dall'UE per assicurare il rispetto delle pertinenti norme UE e nazionali e per accertare in che modo questi raggiungano gli obiettivi della politica di coesione incentivando la crescita e la creazione di posti di lavoro per i cittadini europei. La Commissione interviene ogni qualvolta vengano individuate o portate alla sua attenzione delle irregolarità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003995/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Disparities among EU Member States in accessing funds

Considering the POS CCE 2007-2013 call for tenders for Romania with regard to the priority axis of competitiveness through research, technological development and innovation, and given the eligibility criteria established by the local authorities;

Considering that many Romanian companies with foreign capital have found it difficult to access these funds, especially given the complexity of the text of the call for tenders and the disproportionate rigidity and inconsistency of the documentation to be attached;

Considering that many projects submitted by foreign companies were deemed ineligible on formal grounds and/or following financial assessments not backed by scientific evidence;

Considering that the aim of the EU is economic and social integration among its Member States, by implementing policies aimed at legislative harmonisation and considering that a disparity in implementing such policies would undermine the principles of equality on which the EU is founded;

Considering that enterprises incorporated in Romania, albeit with foreign capital, must legitimately compete for funds exclusively on the basis of merit, and that any discrimination would push companies not to participate in tenders, if the *de facto* accessibility criteria were to exclude anyone who was not a Romanian national;

Considering that the aims of the structural funds are to reduce regional disparities in terms of wealth and well-being, increase competitiveness and employment, and support cross-border cooperation.

In view of the above, and in the belief that many businesses have found themselves in similar difficult situations, we call for clarification on the various national systems for allocating tenders, emphasising that the applications presented in the hope of accessing these funds involve considerable expense.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— Does the Commission not consider that different conditions of access can distort the proper functioning of the common market by putting a brake on the growth of competitiveness, which is the ultimate objective of POS CCE 2007-2013?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Verifications perfomed in Romania by the Commission services and national authorities have not identified deficiencies related to discrimination against applicants for funds on the basis of the origin of the capital nor has a particular complaint been received from companies applying for EU funds in relation to this aspect.

According to cohesion policy rules project selection criteria are established at national level by the authorities responsible for programme implementation. These criteria must comply with national rules as well, as they are co-financed with national funds.

Selection criteria are set out in a transparent and detailed manner in the guidelines for applicants published for each call for projects by the managing authorities of the programmes. The Commission monitors the implementation of EU-funded programmes to ensure compliance with relevant EU and national legislation and how they reach the objectives of cohesion policy, enabling growth and jobs for European citizens. It will act if irregularites are detected or brought to its attention.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003996/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Propostas de renegociação das condições de ajustamento a Portugal

Tendo em conta que:

— O Tribunal Constitucional português chumbou três normas da lei orçamental portuguesa que representam um buraco orçamental de mais de 1 200 milhões de euros, em termos líquidos, tornando impossível cumprir a meta do défice para este ano de 5,5 %;

— A queda no produto interno bruto é bastante superior à prevista no Orçamento de Estado para este ano, atingindo 2,3 %, e não 1 % como estava previsto;

— Se instalou uma crise política em Portugal, no âmbito da qual o líder do Partido Socialista sublinhou a necessidade de uma renegociação das condições de ajustamento com metas e prazos exequíveis e credíveis;

— A Comissão já anunciou que iria avaliar com os parceiros a possibilidade de uma flexibilização das condições acordadas na sétima avaliação da «troika»;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Se considera possível que o Banco Central Europeu possa reembolsar os lucros obtidos pelas operações de compra de dívida soberana portuguesa, que se estimam em 3 mil milhões de euros;

2. Se considera prudente renegociar as condições de ajustamento com metas e prazos que possibilitem uma alavancagem da economia portuguesa;

3. Se pondera renegociar o alargamento dos prazos de pagamento de parte da dívida pública e a renegociação de juros a pagar pelos empréstimos obtidos.

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão não intervém nas políticas do Banco Central Europeu (BCE), uma instituição independente que possui um conjunto de regras próprio para a distribuição de lucros.

As condições de ajustamento económico são avaliadas e negociadas pela Comissão, juntamente com o BCE e o FMI, durante cada missão e no melhor interesse do país, nomeadamente os objetivos e os prazos estipulados para o seu cumprimento. São revistas sempre que necessário, tomando em consideração as evoluções e projeções mais recentes. Os objetivos orçamentais, entre outros elementos, foram revistos no passado e podem vir a ser revistos no futuro, se tal se considerar necessário e nos termos dos procedimentos pertinentes.

Sob reserva dos procedimentos nacionais, o Conselho (Ecofin) e o Eurogrupo acordaram, em princípio, em alargar os prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos do MEEF e do FEEF a Portugal e à Irlanda, mediante o aumento do limite médio ponderado de vencimento do prazo por sete anos, e desde que a «Troika» confirme a execução continuada e bem sucedida do programa, bem como a 7.ª revisão do programa português, que acabará por ser concluído com sucesso, e a 9.ª revisão do programa de ajustamento irlandês.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003996/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Proposals for renegotiating Portugal's adjustment conditions

The Portuguese Constitutional Court has rejected three sections of the Portuguese budget law, leaving a real-terms budget shortfall of over EUR 1.2 billion and making it impossible to hit this year's deficit target of 5.5%.

At 2.3% rather than the forecast 1%, the decline in Portuguese gross domestic product is far higher than envisaged in this year's national budget.

A crisis has broken out in Portugal, in which the leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party has stressed the need to renegotiate the adjustment conditions with feasible and realistic targets and deadlines.

The Commission has already announced that it will examine with its partners the possibility of agreeing more flexible conditions in the seventh evaluation conducted by the Troika.

1. Does the Commission think it will be possible for the European Central Bank to pay back the profits gained from transactions to purchase Portuguese sovereign debt, estimated at EUR 3 billion?

2. Does it think it is wise to renegotiate the adjustment conditions, with targets and deadlines that make it possible to stimulate the Portuguese economy?

3. Is it considering renegotiating or extending the payment deadlines for part of the public debt, and renegotiating the interest paid on the loans granted?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission does not intervene into policies of the European Central Bank (ECB), which is an independent institution that has a set of rules for its profit distribution.

The economic adjustment conditions are assessed and negotiated by the Commission, together with the ECB and the IMF, during each mission in the best interest of the country, including the targets and the deadlines to reach them. They are revised whenever necessary taking into consideration the latest developments and projections. The fiscal targets, among others, have been revised in the past and can also be revised in the future if deemed necessary, in accordance with the relevant procedures.

The Council (Ecofin) and the Eurogroup have agreed in principle, subject to national procedures, to lengthen the maturities of the EFSM and EFSF loans to Portugal and Ireland by increasing the weighted average maturity limit by seven years provided their continued successful programme implementation is confirmed by the Troika together with the 7th review of the Portuguese programme, which has just been successfully completed, and the 9th review of the Irish adjustment programme.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-003997/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δικαιώματα αποφοίτων Ελληνικής ΕΣΔΔΑ — Κατάρτιση στελεχών και ταχεία εξέλιξη στην Ελλάδα

Η Εθνική Σχολή Δημόσιας Διοίκησης (πλέον Εθνική Σχολή Δημόσιας Διοίκησης και Αυτοδιοίκησης ή ΕΣΔΔΑ) λειτουργεί ως παραγωγική Σχολή Στελεχών του ελληνικού κράτους από το 1983 (ν. 1388/83). Συνολικά έχουν αποφοιτήσει περίπου δύο χιλιάδες στελέχη, τα οποία υπηρετούν σε όλο το φάσμα της Δημόσιας Διοίκησης, στην Ελλάδα και στο εξωτερικό. Με κοινή απόφαση της Ελληνικής Κυβέρνησης και της Επιτροπής το 1992 τα προγράμματα σπουδών της σχολής εντάχθηκαν στις συγχρηματοδοτούμενες δράσεις του Β' ΚΠΣ. Η χρηματοδότηση της ΕΣΔΔΑ από κοινοτικούς πόρους — η οποία συνεχίζεται έως σήμερα μέσω του Γ' ΚΠΣ και του ΕΣΠΑ — πρόσφερε ξεχωριστή ώθηση και αναβάθμισε ποσοτικά και ποιοτικά το παραγόμενο αποτέλεσμα. Σύμφωνα με τα τεχνικά δελτία, στόχο της Σχολής αποτελεί η κατάρτιση στελεχών ταχείας εξέλιξης. Ωστόσο, στο πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων με την τρόικα, ορισμένες προβλέψεις σχετικά με την αναδιάρθρωση του δημοσίου τομέα στην Ελλάδα δεν εξυπηρετούν τον παραπάνω στόχο, καθώς δεν αξιοποιούνται οι απόφοιτοι της ΕΣΔΑΑ αλλά και δεν είναι εγγυημένη η παραμονή τους στη δημόσια διοίκηση.

Κατόπιν των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ως συγχρηματοδοτούμενη δράση, ποια στοιχεία διαθέτει σχετικά με την επίτευξη του προγραμματικού στόχου της ταχείας ανέλιξης των αποφοίτων της ΕΣΔΔΑ και σε ποιες δράσεις προτίθεται να προβεί προκειμένου να αξιοποιηθούν στο μέγιστο δυνατό βαθμό οι απόφοιτοι της ΕΣΔΔΑ οι οποίοι πρόσφατα υποβαθμίστηκαν βαθμολογικά (ν. 4024/11);

2. Πώς θα διασφαλίσει με απόλυτο τρόπο ότι, στο πλαίσιο της αναδιάρθρωσης των δομών, δεν θα απομακρυνθεί όχι μόνο από την θέση για την οποία επελέγη και εκπαιδεύθηκε αλλά και γενικά από το ελληνικό κράτος κανείς απόφοιτος της ΕΣΔΔΑ, ώστε να μην ακυρωθεί η στοχευμένη αυτή επένδυση για την αναβάθμιση της ελληνικής Δημόσιας Διοίκησης;

3. Καθώς οι απόφοιτοι της ΕΣΔΔΑ διακρίνονται για τις άριστες ικανότητες και δεξιότητες που διαθέτουν και για τον υψηλό επαγγελματισμό τους, απόρροια του ιδιαιτέρως απαιτητικού και αξιοκρατικού τρόπου εισαγωγής, αλλά και του επιπέδου σπουδών σε αυτή και ενώ λόγω της δημοσιονομικής κατάστασης της χώρας έχει συμφωνηθεί με την τρόικα ο περιορισμός των προσλήψεων στο δημόσιο (1 πρόσληψη — 5 αποχωρήσεις) — με ποιο τρόπο προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να διαφυλάξει τη λειτουργία της σχολής και τη στελέχωση του δημοσίου με μέλη της — όπως άλλωστε προβλέπεται από τη λειτουργία της σχολής, την οποία και η ΕΕ συγχρηματοδοτεί, ιδίως στο πλαίσιο της φερόμενης πρότασης για προσλήψεις νέων προσοντούχων υπαλλήλων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2013)

Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος, οι απολύσεις ή οι μετατάξεις των εργαζομένων στο καθεστώς κινητικότητας θα πρέπει να βασίζονται σε αυστηρή αξιολόγηση των διοικητικών δομών και υπαλλήλων από μέρους της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης, για να διατηρηθεί διαχρονικά ο ορθός συνδυασμός δεξιοτήτων των εργαζομένων. Το πρόγραμμα δεν έχει ως σκοπό να στερήσει τον ελληνικό δημόσιο τομέα από εργαζόμενους με υψηλά προσόντα. Αντιθέτως, το πρόγραμμα έχει ως στόχο να βελτιώσει την ποιότητα της δημόσιας διοίκησης και να διασφαλίσει ότι τα καθήκοντα που είναι απαραίτητα επί του παρόντος ασκούνται από εργαζόμενους με υψηλά προσόντα.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003997/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Rights of Greek National School of Public Administration graduates — training for fast-stream public service recruitment in Greece

The Greek National School of Public Administration (ESDDA) has been training recruits to fill senior public service posts in Greece since 1983 (Law 1388/83), around 2000 of its graduates having been appointed to serve in this capacity in all departments, both at home and abroad. In 1992, the Greek Government and the Commission jointly decided to accord EU funding for this purpose under the Second CSF. This measure proved to be of substantial assistance, greatly enhancing standards in qualitative and quantitative terms, and was accordingly continued under the third CSF and the NSRF. According to the relevant fact sheets, the purpose of this institution is to supply fast-stream administrative recruits. It appears, however that this is now being called into question since, following the anticipated restructuring of the Greek public service being discussed with the Troika, ESDDA graduates will no longer enjoy career advancement or even any guarantee of continued public service employment.

In view of this:

1. What information does the Commission have regarding the effectiveness of the co-funded ESDDA fast-stream graduate recruitment programme? What action can it take to ensure that ESDDA graduates, who have recently suffered downgrading (under Law 4024/11), are able to achieve their full potential?

2. How will it ensure that restructuring measures do not cause any ESDDA graduates to be removed from the posts to which they were recruited, having undergone the necessary training, or indeed be forced to abandon the Greek public service altogether and thereby guarantee that investment to date in improving public service efficiency is not effectively nullified?

3. Given that ESDDA, with its extremely exacting enrolment requirements and high academic standards, turns out graduates distinguished by their excellent qualifications, skills and professional abilities, how does the Commission intend to ensure the continued functioning of the school and the public service recruitment of its graduates, this being the purpose for which it was accorded EU funding, particularly in view of current proposals agreed in consultation with the Troika, given the financial situation of Greece, to restrict newly-qualified public service intake (one recruitment for every five departures)?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

In the context of the programme, dismissals or transfers of employees to the mobility scheme should be based on a rigorous evaluation by the Greek Government of administrative structures and personnel, in order to maintain the right skill mix of employees over time. It is not the intention of the programme to deprive the Greek public sector of highly qualified employees. On the contrary, the goal is to increase the quality of the public administration and ensure that highly qualified staff covers functions currently needed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003998/13
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Vendita a distanza di vino a privati

La vendita diretta è uno strumento efficace per controbilanciare il potere della grande distribuzione. Stiamo lavorando alla riforma della Politica agricola comune e anche in tale ambito essa viene richiamata come importante strumento a favore dei piccoli produttori.

Le vendite dirette rappresentano per diversi settori un importante guadagno. Per il settore del vino la percentuale è considerevole. In Italia, ad esempio, ben il 37 % dei consumatori preferisce acquistare direttamente dai produttori.

Le piccole realtà produttive rappresentano spesso un'attrattiva turistica. Lo sviluppo del settore enoturistico può rappresentare una soluzione alla crisi attuale per diverse realtà. Sono diversi però gli ostacoli che si incontrano: i turisti che visitano le cantine di altri paesi e che vogliono ordinare vino una volta rientrati nel proprio Stato membro si scontrano con la burocrazia.

Attualmente la direttiva 2008/118/CE autorizza un privato che acquista vino, in uno Stato membro diverso dal suo, a trasportarlo e introdurlo nel proprio Stato, senza dover pagare le accise. Sono previsti limiti, ossia 90 litri per il vino e 60 per lo spumante.

Qualora un privato volesse acquistare a distanza piccole quantità da un produttore di un altro Stato membro, le difficoltà sono notevoli: bisogna passare attraverso un rappresentante fiscale che paghi le accise e il prezzo della bottiglia aumenta velocemente.

Queste barriere, di fatto, impediscono al piccolo produttore di beneficiare del mercato comune e colpiscono al tempo stesso il consumatore.

Quali sono i motivi che impediscono di assimilare l'acquisto da parte dei privati alle vendite a distanza nei limiti dei quantitativi previsti dalla normativa sopra citata?

Quali misure intende intraprendere la Commissione per conseguire una soluzione a questa distorsione del mercato, per cui vengono agevolate solo le grandi aziende?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(6 maggio 2013)

In base alla direttiva 2008/118/CE, se un privato acquista per uso personale prodotti sottoposti ad accisa e li trasporta da uno Stato membro a un altro, è tenuto a pagare l'accisa solo nello Stato membro in cui è avvenuto l'acquisto, il che costituisce un'eccezione alla regola generale in base alla quale l'accisa è esigibile nello Stato membro in cui i prodotti vengono consumati.

Considerando il calo nel gettito delle accise che registrerebbero alcuni Stati membri se tale principio fosse esteso alle vendite a distanza, la Commissione ritiene che la proposta di modificare in tal senso la direttiva 2008/118/CE rischierebbe di produrre effetti di distorsione sproporzionati sul mercato unico.

La Commissione è impegnata a ridurre gli oneri amministrativi a carico dei piccolo produttori di vino. Essa ha istituito un gruppo di esperti ([1]) composto da rappresentanti della Commissione e degli Stati membri per studiare come migliorare gli attuali accordi in materia di conformità fiscale, in particolare quelli basati sull'articolo 36 della direttiva 2008/118/CE. Entro giugno 2014 verrà pubblicata una relazione preliminare sulle migliori prassi nel quadro degli attuali accordi.

([1]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/.

In base all'articolo 45, paragrafo 2, della direttiva 2008/118/CE, nel 2015 la Commissione presenterà al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio una relazione sull'attuazione della direttiva, comprese le disposizioni in materia di vendita a distanza. Laddove la Commissione ritenga che sia necessario apportare modifiche all'attuale quadro giuridico per ridurre gli oneri amministrativi, tali modifiche saranno incluse nella relazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003998/13
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Distance selling of wine to private customers

Direct selling is an effective tool to counterbalance the power of the large retailers. We are currently working on the reform of the common agricultural policy and, in this regard, too, it is being referred to as an important tool for small-scale producers.

Direct sales are a major source of income for a number of sectors. The wine sector has a very high percentage of direct sales. In Italy, for example, as many as 37% of consumers prefer to buy directly from producers.

Small-scale producers are often a tourist attraction. The development of wine tourism can be a solution to the current crisis in many different areas. There are, however, several obstacles that can be encountered: for instance tourists who visit wine cellars in other countries and want to order wine once they are back in their own country often have problems with red tape.

At present, Directive 2008/118/EC allows an individual who buys wine in a Member State other than his own to take it home to his own country without having to pay excise duty. There are, however limits — 90 litres for wine and 60 for sparkling wine.

But if an individual wants to purchase, from a distance, small quantities from a producer of another Member State, the difficulties are considerable, as the person has to go through the intermediary of a tax representative who pays the excise duty, and the price per bottle thus increases rapidly.

These barriers are actually preventing small-scale producers from benefiting from the common market whilst at the same time affecting consumers.

What are the reasons preventing distance selling from being put on the same footing as purchases made by private individuals, within the limits of the quantities laid down by the abovementioned rules?

What measures will the Commission take to find a solution to this market distortion, which is to the benefit of large companies alone?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

Under Directive 2008/118/EC when a private individual acquires excise goods for his own use, and transports them from one Member State to another he is charged excise duty only in the Member State of purchase. This is an exception to the general rule that excise duty is chargeable in the Member State where the goods are consumed.

Given the loss of excise revenue that some Member States would suffer if this principle were extended to distance selling the Commission is of the opinion that a proposal to change Directive 2008/118/EC in this way would risk distorting the Single Market in a disproportionate way.

The Commission is committed to reducing administrative burdens on small scale producers of wine. The Commission has established a Project Group ([1]) consisting of the Commission and representatives of the Member States to investigate how current arrangements for fiscal compliance can be improved, particularly those based on Article 36 of Directive 2008/118/EC. An initial report on best practice under the current arrangements will be produced by June 2014.

Under Article 45(2) of Directive 2008/118/EC the Commission will submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council in 2015 on the implementation of the directive, including the provisions on distance selling. Where the Commission considers changes to the current legal situation to be necessary to reduce administrative burden such changes will be included in the report.

([1]) see http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003999/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: La situación del sector oficina de Farmacia catalán y la Directiva 2001/7/UE sobre morosidad

La situación del sector oficina de Farmacia catalán se muestra a modo de resumen en el siguiente enlace: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

Las administraciones del Reino de España están incumpliendo el marco contractual que han firmado con las oficinas de Farmacia catalanas, la Directiva 2011/7/UE sobre morosidad y las disposiciones legales del Reino de España, entre otras el Real Decreto-ley 4/2013.

¿Puede intervenir de oficio la Comisión solicitando explicaciones al Reino de España sobre esta situación?

¿Puede notificar la Comisión al Reino de España el cumplimiento de la legislación vigente?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004000/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Situación del sector oficina de Farmacia y retraso en el pago de las administraciones públicas

La situación del sector oficina de Farmacia catalán se muestra a modo de resumen en el siguiente enlace: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

El acceso de la población a los tratamientos farmacológicos es un objetivo social básico. Los atrasos acumulados por las administraciones españolas a las oficinas de Farmacia catalanas dificultan el cumplimiento de este objetivo. Además del impacto social, la propia Comisión ha elaborado informes donde demuestra el impacto económico negativo de la morosidad de las administraciones públicas sobre la economía de los Estados y el crecimiento económico. En rueda de prensa de 8 de abril de 2009, el entonces Vicepresidente de la Comisión Europea Günter Verheugen, dijo que el retraso en el pago de las administraciones públicas no se toleraría por más tiempo.

¿Puede intervenir de oficio la Comisión solicitando explicaciones al Reino de España sobre esta situación?

¿Puede la Comisión exigir al Reino de España el cumplimiento de la legislación vigente?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de junio de 2013)

Por norma general, una vez se han adoptado de forma satisfactoria las medidas nacionales de transposición de la Directiva 2011/7/UE por la que se establecen medidas de lucha contra la morosidad en las operaciones comerciales, las infracciones de la legislación nacional deberían normalmente resolverse ante los tribunales nacionales competentes. La Comisión tiene asimismo conocimiento del mecanismo de financiación español para enfrentarse a los pagos atrasados a partir de 2012 ([1]).

Por lo que se refiere a la medida de transposición española, España ha implementado la Directiva 2011/7/UE por el Real Decreto-ley 4/2013, que se notificó el 22 de febrero de 2013. El Gobierno español ha decidido que el Real Decreto-ley solo se aplicará a los contratos concluidos después de febrero de 2013.

La Comisión está realizando actualmente un análisis jurídico de las medidas nacionales notificadas, incluida la legislación nacional española, para comprobar que las medidas se ajustan a lo dispuesto en la Directiva. A este respecto, la Comisión está en contacto con las autoridades españolas competentes.

([1]) El plan de pago a proveedores 2012 constituyó un primer tramo para los proveedores y pudo restablecer 28 000 millones de euros adeudados por las autoridades públicas a sus proveedores. Gracias a esta inyección de liquidez, el empleo y las empresas se salvaron. El Gobierno español anunció recientemente un segundo tramo para los proveedores en 2013 a fin de cubrir las deudas pendientes.

La Comisión supervisará de cerca la correcta aplicación de la Directiva a nivel nacional a través del grupo de expertos sobre morosidad, que será convocado para una tercera reunión que tendrá lugar en los próximos meses. La Comisión también apoya la correcta aplicación a través de la campaña de información sobre la morosidad en los pagos ([2]), en marcha desde octubre de 2012 en todos los países de la UE ([3]).

([2]) La campaña de información sobre la morosidad en los pagos pretende aumentar la sensibilización entre las partes interesadas europeas, en particular las PYME, y en el seno de las autoridades públicas, sobre los nuevos derechos que otorga la Directiva 2011/7/UE y sobre cómo aplicar sus disposiciones en situaciones de la vida real. Esta campaña se llevará a cabo en todos los Estados miembros y en Croacia.

([3]) Por lo que se refiere a España, recientemente han tenido lugar tres actos: uno en Barcelona el 28 de febrero y otros dos en Barcelona y Madrid en los meses de marzo y abril respectivamente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003999/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: The situation of the Catalan pharmacy industry and Directive 2011/7/EU on late payment

An overview of the situation of the Catalan pharmacy industry is available at the following link: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

The public administrations of the Kingdom of Spain are failing to comply with the contractual framework they signed with Catalan pharmacies, Directive 2011/7/EU on late payment, and the legal provisions of the Kingdom of Spain, including Royal Decree-Law No 4/2013.

Can the Commission act on its own initiative to ask the Kingdom of Spain to explain this situation?

Can the Commission update the Kingdom of Spain on compliance with current legislation?

Question for written answer E-004000/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Situation of the pharmacy industry and late payments by public administrations

The following link provides a summary of the situation of the Catalan pharmacy industry: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

Public access to drug treatment is a primary social objective. The arrears accumulated by the Spanish Government with regard to Catalan pharmacies make it difficult to achieve this objective. Besides the social impact, the Commission itself has issued reports showing the negative economic impact of government default on Member States' economies and on economic growth. At a press conference on 8 April 2009, the then Vice-President of the European Commission, Günter Verheugen, said that late payments by public administrations should be no longer tolerated.

Can the Commission act on its own initiative to demand explanations from the Kingdom of Spain for this situation?

Can the Commission demand that the Kingdom of Spain complies with current legislation?

Joint answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

As a general rule, once satisfactory national transposition measures of Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment have been adopted, infringements of the national legislation ought normally to be resolved before the national competent courts. The Commission is also aware of the Spanish financing mechanism to cope with the arrears from 2012 ([1]).

As regards the Spanish transposition measure, Spain has implemented Directive 2011/7/EU by Royal Decree Law No 4/2013, which was notified on 22 February 2013. The Spanish Government has decided that the Decree law will only apply to contracts concluded after February 2013.

([1]) Plan de pago a proveedores 2012 was a first instalment to suppliers and was able to restore EUR 28 000 million owed by public authorities to their suppliers. Thanks to this injection of liquidity, jobs and companies were saved. The Spanish Government recently announced a second instalment to suppliers in 2013 to pay outstanding debts.

The Commission is currently undertaking a legal analysis of the notified national measures, including the Spanish national law, to verify whether the measures comply with the directive. With regard to this, the Commission is in contact with the competent authorities in Spain.

The Commission will closely monitor the correct implementation of the directive at national level through the late payment expert group that will be called for its third meeting in the following months. The Commission also supports correct implementation through the Late Payment Information Campaign ([2]) that has been running since October 2012 in all EU countries ([3]).

([2]) The European Late Payment Information Campaign aims to increase awareness amongst European stakeholders, in particular SMEs, and within public authorities on the new rights conferred by Directive 2011/7/EU and how to apply its provisions in real life situations. This campaign will take place in all Member States and Croatia.

([3]) As Regards Spain, three events took place recently: one in Barcelona on 28 February and two others again in Barcelona in March and in Madrid in April.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004001/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: El retraso en el pago a las oficinas de Farmacia por parte de las administraciones españolas

La situación del sector oficina de Farmacia catalán se muestra a modo de resumen en el siguiente enlace: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

La cadena del medicamento se financia en el caso catalán a través de los ingresos de las oficinas de Farmacia, que liquidan directamente a sus proveedores. El retraso en el pago a las oficinas de Farmacia por parte de las administraciones españolas está poniendo en peligro la viabilidad económica de las propias oficinas de Farmacia, de los mayoristas, de los distribuidores y de la industria farmacéutica. Un fallo financiero sectorial sería negativo para la economía productiva y dificultaría la mejora económica de la Unión Europea.

¿Dispone la Comisión de líneas de financiación que aporten financiación competitiva para las oficinas de Farmacia catalanas?

En caso negativo, ¿puede solicitar la Comisión la creación de líneas de crédito del Banco Europeo de Inversiones para financiar estas facturas pendientes de cobro?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004002/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Situación del sector oficina de Farmacia: inversiones colectivas en nuevas tecnologías de la información y comunicación comprometidas

La situación del sector oficina de Farmacia catalán se muestra a modo de resumen en el siguiente enlace: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

El sector de oficina de Farmacia de Cataluña proyecta realizar inversiones colectivas en nuevas tecnologías de la información y comunicación, en equipamientos tecnológicos y en infraestructuras que mejoren su posición de valor tanto asistencial como de eficiencia operativa. Esta inversión debe contribuir al crecimiento económico de la Unión Europea. La descapitalización que el sector está sufriendo a causa de los retrasos expuestos impide su ejecución.

¿Dispone la Comisión de líneas de financiación que aporten financiación competitiva para las oficinas de Farmacia catalanas?

En caso negativo, ¿puede solicitar la Comisión la creación de líneas de crédito del Banco Europeo de Inversiones para financiar estas facturas pendientes de cobro?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004003/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Situación del sector oficina de Farmacia y posibles líneas de financiación europeas

La situación del sector oficina de Farmacia catalán se muestra a modo de resumen en el siguiente enlace: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

La inversión farmacéutica a través de las oficinas de Farmacia no tiene efecto inflacionista (inferior al 19 % en el período 2009-2012). Las asignaciones de recursos para financiar facturas pendientes de cobrar no generan inflación. Por el contrario, se canalizan a través de un sector productivo con elevada tasa de ocupación profesional y capacidad de desarrollo de servicios sanitarios.

¿Dispone la Comisión de líneas de financiación que aporten financiación competitiva para las oficinas de Farmacia catalanas?

En caso negativo, ¿piensa la Comisión crear líneas de crédito del Banco Europeo de Inversiones para financiar estas facturas pendientes de cobro?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de junio de 2013)

Pagar las facturas atrasadas de los organismos públicos y evitar que se acumulen nuevos atrasos sigue siendo una prioridad para la Comisión. Según la Directiva 2011/7/UE sobre la morosidad en las operaciones comerciales, las autoridades públicas tendrán que pagar en 30 días naturales los bienes y servicios que se les hayan suministrado, con la posibilidad de ampliar el plazo de pago a un máximo de 60 días naturales para entidades públicas que presten servicios de asistencia sanitaria y que estén debidamente reconocidas para ello.

Las autoridades nacionales españolas han adoptado un acto ([1]) que ha puesto en marcha un mecanismo de financiación para que las autoridades locales y las comunidades autónomas cumplan sus obligaciones pendientes con respecto a sus proveedores. Por lo tanto, la Comisión aconseja a Su Señoría que se ponga directamente en contacto con el Gobierno español.

La UE no cuenta con una financiación específica para los productos farmacéuticos que se destinan directamente a las farmacias. No obstante, en el marco del PIC ([2]) 2007-2013, la Comisión apoya a las empresas de la UE con instrumentos facilitados por el FEI ([3]) a través de intermediarios financieros (en su mayoría bancos, fondos de garantía y fondos de capital riesgo). En particular, los sistemas de garantía financiados con cargo a este programa van dirigidos a ayudar a las empresas en todos los sectores, incluidas las farmacias, a tener mejor acceso a los préstamos bancarios ([4]).

Las competencias fundamentales del BEI consisten en proporcionar financiación y conocimientos para proyectos de inversión sólidos y sostenibles que contribuyan a los objetivos políticos de la UE, pero no interviene en los retrasos en los pagos. A través de los préstamos a las PYME de que es intermediario, el BEI ([5]) garantiza la disponibilidad de financiación específica para las PYME, incluidas las farmacias, lo que ayuda a la economía real, incrementando el volumen de financiación disponible ([6]) y reduciendo el coste de los créditos por parte de las PYME gracias a la bajada de los tipos de interés y a la concesión de préstamos a más largo plazo.

([1]) Real Decreto-ley 4/2012 http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/02/25/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-2722.pdf y
Real Decreto-ley 7/2012 http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/03/10/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-3395.pdf

([2]) Programa Marco para la Innovación y la Competitividad.

([3]) Fondo Europeo de Inversiones.

([4]) Para una lista completa de los intermediarios financieros que trabajan con los programas de la UE, puede consultar la siguiente dirección: http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu

([5]) Banco Europeo de Inversiones.

([6]) Para préstamos de inversión, así como para necesidades de capital de explotación a largo plazo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004001/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Late payments to pharmacies by Spanish public administrations

An overview of the situation of the Catalan pharmacy industry is available at the following link: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136.

In Catalonia, the drug chain is financed through the revenue of pharmacies, which pay their suppliers directly. Late payments to pharmacies by Spanish public administrations are endangering the economic viability of the pharmacies themselves, of wholesalers, distributors and the pharmaceutical industry. Financial collapse in the industry would have a negative impact on the productive economy and would hamper the EU's economic recovery.

Does the Commission have lines of funding that can provide competitive financing for Catalan pharmacies?

If not, can the Commission call for European Investment Bank credit lines to be established to fund these outstanding invoices?

Question for written answer E-004002/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Situation of the pharmacy industry: promised collective investments in new information and communication technologies

The following link provides a summary of the situation of the Catalan pharmacy industry: http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136.

The pharmacy industry in Catalonia is planning to make collective investments in new information and communication technologies, in technology and in infrastructure to improve its status as an operationally efficient healthcare provider. This investment should aid economic growth in the European Union. The industry's performance is hampered by a lack of capital caused by late payments.

Does the Commission have lines of funding that can provide competitive financing for Catalan pharmacies?

If not, can the Commission call for the creation of European Investment Bank loans to fund these outstanding invoices?

Question for written answer E-004003/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Situation of the pharmacy industry and potential European lines of funding

The following link provides a summary of the situation of the Catalan pharmacy industry:

http://www.cofb.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ea5f6a90-ec8c-42f9-a6d3-1f74ee76c77f&groupId=10136

Pharmaceutical investment through pharmacies has no inflationary impact (less than 19% in the period 2009-2012). Allocating resources to finance outstanding invoices does not cause inflation. On the contrary, resources are channelled through a manufacturing sector with a high rate of employment and which is capable of developing health services.

Does the Commission have lines of funding that can provide competitive financing for Catalan pharmacies?

If not, will the Commission create European Investment Bank loans to fund these outstanding invoices?

Joint answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

Clearing arrears in payments by public bodies and avoiding the build-up of new arrears remains a priority for the Commission. According to Directive 2011/7/UE on late payment in commercial transactions, public authorities will have to pay within 30 calendar days for the goods and services they procured, with the possibility to extend the payment period to a maximum of 60 calendar days to public entities providing healthcare which are duly recognised for that purpose.

Spain's National Authorities have adopted a regulation ([1]) that has put in place a funding mechanism for both the Local Authorities and the Autonomous Communities to meet outstanding obligations to their providers. The Commission would therefore suggest that the Honourable Member contacts the Spanish Government directly.

The EU does not have specific funding for pharmaceuticals going directly to pharmacies. However, within the CIP ([2]) 2007-2013, the Commission supports EU companies with instruments provided by the EIF ([3]) through financial intermediaries (mainly banks, guarantee funds and venture capital funds). In particular, guarantee schemes supported by this programme are available to help businesses across sectors, including pharmacies, to have better access to bank loans ([4]).

EIB's core remit is to provide finance and expertise for sound and sustainable investment projects that contribute to EU policy objectives, not to intervene in payment delays. Through its intermediated SME loans, the EIB ([5]) ensures the availability of dedicated funding for SMEs, including pharmacies, that helps the real economy by increasing the amount of funding available ([6]), reducing the cost of borrowing by SMEs through lower interest rates and providing longer-term loans.

([1]) Real Decreto-ley 4/2012http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/02/25/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-2722.pdf and Real Decreto-ley 7/2012 http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/03/10/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-3395.pdf
([2]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.
([3]) European Investment Fund.
([4]) For a complete list of financial intermediaries working with EU programmes, you may refer to this website: http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu.
([5]) European Investment Bank.
([6]) For investment loans as well as for long term working capital needs.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004004/13
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Posible vulneración de las normas comunes para el mercado interior del gas natural

El proyecto Castor de almacenamiento de gas natural, situado en el término municipal de Vinaroz (Castellón), limítrofe con otros términos municipales de la Comunidad Autónoma de Cataluña, ha provocado el desequilibrio del sector gasístico ante el aumento de los costes asociados al proyecto, que se han triplicado de forma alarmante pasando de 500 millones de euros a 1 500 millones de euros en la actualidad, por lo que se pone en entredicho la necesidad de este proyecto.

Eurogas Corporation (Eurogas), el Grupo ACS y Enagás firmaron un acuerdo que impulsará el Proyecto Castor de Almacenamiento Subterráneo de gas natural, situado en la provincia de Castellón. Mediante este acuerdo, ACS aumentó su participación en Escal UGS S.L. (la compañía española que desarrolla el proyecto) desde el 5 % hasta el 66,67 %. Castor Limited Partnership (CLP), de la que Eurogas posee un 73,7 %, tendrá el 33,33 % de Escal UGS. Cuando entre en funcionamiento el almacenamiento Castor, ACS venderá a Enagás la mitad de su participación del 66,67 %. A partir de ese momento CLP, ACS y Enagás poseerán un 33,33 % de Escal UGS cada una.

La Directiva 2009/73/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 2009, sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior del gas natural, por la que se deroga la Directiva 2003/55/CE, establece que «las empresas de gas natural, cualquiera que sea su régimen de propiedad o su personalidad jurídica, establecerán, publicarán y someterán su contabilidad anual a una auditoría con arreglo a las normas de la legislación nacional sobre contabilidad anual de las sociedades de responsabilidad limitada […]. Las empresas de gas natural llevarán en su contabilidad interna cuentas separadas para cada una de sus actividades de transporte, distribución, GNL y almacenamiento tal como se les exigiría si dichas actividades fueran realizadas por empresas distintas, a fin de evitar discriminaciones, subvenciones cruzadas y distorsión de la competencia».

¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión para verificar que, en cumplimiento de la citada Directiva, el Reino de España ha obligado, y en qué términos, a las empresas accionistas de dicho proyecto, a llevar una contabilidad interna de cuentas separadas, al objeto de evitar discriminaciones, subvenciones cruzadas y distorsión de la competencia?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004005/13
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(10 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Posible vulneración de las normas comunes para el mercado interior del gas natural (2)

El proyecto Castor de almacenamiento de gas natural, situado en el término municipal de Vinaroz (Castellón), limítrofe con otros términos municipales de la Comunidad Autónoma de Cataluña, ha incrementado sus costes pasándose de 500 millones de euros inicialmente a aproximadamente 1 300 millones de euros, alarmando incluso al sector energético nacional. El interés económico general se encuentra comprometido en la medida en que el precio final, como es el caso, es trasladado al consumidor y se produce una conducta abusiva respecto de los principios de competitividad y transparencia, como es el caso de este proyecto.

La Comisión Nacional de la Energía, en su informe sobre el sector energético español —medidas para garantizar la sostenibilidad económico-financiera del sistema gasista, de 7 de 3 de 2012, señalaba que «la aparición del déficit obedece a dos factores esenciales: de una parte al significativo crecimiento de los costes regulados por la puesta en servicio de un número importante de infraestructuras […], y en particular, por la prevista puesta en servicio en 2012-2013 de instalaciones con un elevado volumen de inversión, tales como los Almacenamientos Subterráneos (AA.SS.) de Castor […]». El impacto en los costes regulados para 2012 se estima en 230 millones de euros, y para 2013 en 378 millones de euros, cantidades que agravan la magnitud del déficit actual.

Por otro lado, se aconseja analizar la posibilidad de reconocer por norma los efectos que en la retribución reconocida de las infraestructuras podría tener la asignación mediante mecanismos no concurrenciales de determinadas partidas de inversión. Asimismo se pone de manifiesto la existencia de partidas adjudicadas directamente en el AASS de Castor que pueden haber supuesto costes adicionales para el sistema, así como contrataciones externas de actividades de operación y mantenimiento, que se puedan producir sin la existencia de procedimientos competitivos para su adjudicación.

¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión para verificar el grado de cumplimiento de los principios comunitarios de transparencia y concurrencia en los procedimientos de contratación administrativa del proyecto, tanto por las administraciones implicadas como por las empresas concesionarias o beneficiarias de autorizaciones administrativas sobre el dominio público?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión

(28 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta conjunta a las preguntas escritas E-005051/2012 y E-005052/2012 ([1]) presentadas en su día por Su Señoría.

En relación con el aspecto concreto de la contratación pública, la Comisión es consciente de la importancia del respeto a los principios de transparencia y libre competencia en los procedimientos de contratación del proyecto, en particular en lo que se refiere a las actividades reguladas habida cuenta del impacto potencial sobre los costes regulados.

La actividad de almacenamiento es una actividad económica regulada con acceso de terceros también regulado en virtud del marco jurídico español. El artículo 68 de la Ley española 34/1998 del sector de hidrocarburos garantiza que los operadores del sector del almacenamiento lleven a cabo sus actividades dentro del respeto a determinadas obligaciones. Entre estas figura la obligación de facilitar determinada información sobre sus planes anuales y plurianuales de inversión. Las autoridades españolas responsables de la fijación y aprobación de los regímenes de tarifas deben verificar la exactitud de los incrementos de los costes asociados a la construcción y explotación del proyecto y la coherencia con la información proporcionada por el operador de las instalaciones de almacenamiento en sus planes anuales y plurianuales de inversión. En principio, solamente se incluirán en las tarifas reguladas los costes justificados como consecuencia de procedimientos de contratación pública transparentes y competitivos.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004004/13
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Possible infringement of the common rules for the internal market in natural gas

The Castor natural gas storage project, in the municipality of Vinaroz (province of Castellón), bordering other municipalities in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, has caused an imbalance in the gas sector in view of the increase in the project's costs, which have tripled alarmingly, rising from EUR 500 million to EUR 1.5 billion at present, which calls the need for this project into question.

Eurogas Corporation (Eurogas), ACS Group and Enagás signed an agreement that will boost the Castor underground natural gas storage project, in the province of Castellón. Through this agreement, ACS increased its stake in Escal UGS S.L. (the Spanish company that is carrying out the project) from 5% to 66.67%. Castor Limited Partnership (CLP), of which Eurogas owns 73.7%, will hold a 33.33% stake in Escal UGS. When the Castor storage facility comes into operation, ACS will sell half of its 66.67% stake to Enagás. From that time on, CLP, ACS and Enagás will each own 33.33% of Escal UGS.

Directive 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas and repealing Directive 2003/55/EC, lays down that 'natural gas undertakings, whatever their system of ownership or legal form, shall draw up, submit to audit and publish their annual accounts in accordance with the rules of national law concerning the annual accounts of limited liability companies […]. Natural gas undertakings shall, in their internal accounting, keep separate accounts for each of their transmission, distribution, LNG and storage activities as they would be required to do if the activities in question were carried out by separate undertakings, with a view to avoiding discrimination, cross-subsidisation and distortion of competition.'

What measures does the Commission intend to take to establish that, in compliance with the aforementioned directive, the Kingdom of Spain has required, and on what terms, the shareholding companies in this project to carry out internal accounting with separate accounts, with a view to avoiding discrimination, cross-subsidisation and distortion of competition?

Question for written answer E-004005/13
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Possible infringement of the common rules for the internal market in natural gas (2)

The costs of the Castor natural gas storage project, in the municipality of Vinaroz (province of Castellón), bordering other municipalities of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, have risen from an initial EUR 500 million to approximately EUR 1.3 billion, to the alarm even of the national energy sector. The general economic interest has been compromised insofar as the final cost, as is the case here, is passed on to the consumer and there is improper conduct as regards the principles of competitiveness and transparency, as is the case with this project.

The National Energy Commission, in its report on the Spanish energy sector — measures to guarantee the economic and financial sustainability of the gas system, of 7 March 2012, noted that the emergence of the deficit was due to two basic factors: the significant increase in regulated costs due to the commissioning of a large number of infrastructures and, in particular, the planned commissioning in 2012-2013 of plant requiring high levels of investment, such as Castor's underground storage facilities. The estimated impact on the regulated costs for 2012 is EUR 230 million, and for 2013, EUR 378 million, sums which make the current deficit even larger.

Moreover, it is advisable to examine the possibility of making it a rule to recognise the effects that the allocation of certain investment items through non-competitive mechanisms could have on the recognised remuneration of infrastructures. It has also been shown that there are items awarded directly to the Castor underground storage facility that may have involved additional costs for the system, and outsourcing of operational and maintenance activities, which may occur without any competitive procedures being in place for their procurement.

What measures does the Commission intend to adopt to establish the degree of compliance with the EU principles of transparency and competition in the project's procurement procedures, both by the authorities involved and the licensee companies and companies holding administrative licences for the public domain?

Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint answer to written questions E-005051/2012 and E-005052/2012 ([1]) by the Honourable Member.

On the specific aspect of public procurement, the Commission is aware of the importance to respect the principles of transparency and competition in the project's procurement procedures, in particular for the regulated activities given the potential impact on regulated costs.

The activity of storage is a regulated business with regulated third party access under the Spanish legal framework. Article 68 of the Spanish Hydrocarbons Law 34/1998 ensures that storage operators carry out their activities respecting certain obligations. These include the obligation to provide certain information on the annual and multiannual investment plans. The Spanish authorities responsible for fixing and approving tariffs and methodologies should verify the accuracy of the increased costs associated with the construction and operation of the project and the consistency with the information provided by the storage operator in its annual and multiannual investment plans. As a matter of principle, only costs incurred attributed to transparent and competitive procurement procedures shall be included in the regulated tariffs.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004006/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Allegations of torture in Palestinian Authority-run jails

The European Union provides financial and other forms of support to the Palestinian Authority in order to cover, amongst other things, administrative costs for the general running of the administration.

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of allegations relating to the torture of prisoners in prisons run by the Palestinian Authority, particularly with regard to the Palestinian General Intelligence Service (GIS)?

— Can the Vice-President/High Representative outline what steps are being taken to ensure that EU funds are not used by authorities to breech basic human rights principles set out in the European Charter and international humanitarian law?

— Can the Vice-President/High Representative outline possible actions the EU could take, should there be sufficient evidence to substantiate claims that such breeches of human rights are being carried out by an authority which is in receipt of European funds?

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

As noted in the ENP 2013 progress report for Palestine, detention conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continue to be a matter of concern, with ongoing serious violations of detainees' rights by security agencies and patterns of ill-treatment and torture across Palestine.

The EU constantly raises these issues with the PA particularly in the framework of the subcommittee on 'Human Rights, Good Governance and Rule of Law'. The next session of this subcommittee is scheduled to take place later this year. The new ENP Action Plan also addresses the importance of taking all the necessary measures to uphold the absolute prohibition of the use of torture and to put in place internal and external investigation mechanisms to ensure accountability for those who commit ill-treatment and torture in detention and under interrogation.

The General Intelligence Service (GIS) is not a recipient of EU funds.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004007/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Charles Tannock (ECR) e Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Diritti di proprietà dei cittadini dell'UE in Egitto

Sotto la presidenza di Mubarak, gli egiziani benestanti residenti all'estero e gli investitori stranieri sono stati incoraggiati ad acquistare terreni nella regione del Sinai. In tal modo, i cittadini britannici (e sicuramente molti altri cittadini dell'UE) hanno potuto costruire case e avviare nuove attività, contribuendo allo sviluppo di un settore turistico di successo.

Il 13 settembre 2012, tuttavia, il governo egiziano ha varato una nuova legge che ha limitato la proprietà degli immobili e dei terreni nella suddetta regione (ad eccezione della città di Rafah), destinandola ai cittadini egiziani che non possiedono doppia nazionalità e che sono nati da genitori egiziani. Il generale Shawky Rashwan, capo dell'agenzia governativa responsabile dell'attuazione della riforma, ha dichiarato che le autorità mirano semplicemente a ottenere «giustizia fondiaria» per gli egiziani e a proteggere la sicurezza nazionale alla luce degli attacchi contro i soldati, delle incursioni di bande armate dall'Egitto in Israele e dell'attività dei tunnel. Il governo ha inoltre affermato che, nonostante il riferimento esplicito alla doppia nazionalità nella legge, i possessori di doppio passaporto non ne saranno colpiti.

Sono tuttavia in molti a non essere convinti delle dichiarazioni del governo egiziano. Indubbiamente la legge risente di una formulazione ambigua che fa temere che le suddette misure possano essere applicate in modo retroattivo e possano colpire anche chi possiede il doppio passaporto. Oltretutto le autorità locali hanno concesso agli stranieri soltanto sei mesi per vendere le loro proprietà a cittadini egiziani, con la conseguenza che non solo si privano i cittadini europei delle loro proprietà, ma viene anche meno un pilastro fondamentale dell'economia del luogo.

1. Quali misure ha adottato il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante negli ultimi sei mesi allo scopo di proteggere la proprietà privata dei cittadini dell'UE in Egitto?

2. Come intende reagire il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante qualora non siano tutelati i diritti dei cittadini europei al mantenimento di proprietà in Egitto, in particolare alla luce dell'importanza assunta dal consistente pacchetto di misure di sostegno e stabilizzazione dell'UE?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(31 maggio 2013)

L'Unione europea ha seguito con attenzione la questione dei diritti di proprietà in Egitto.

Il 3 febbraio 2013 l'Unione europea ha presentato al ministero degli Esteri egiziano una nota verbale in cui chiedeva chiarimenti in merito al decreto legge n. 14/2012 sullo sviluppo integrato della penisola del Sinai e alla decisione n. 959, pubblicata nella Gazzetta ufficiale il 13 settembre 2012, che introduce i regolamenti esecutivi del decreto legge.

In risposta alla nota verbale, il ministero degli Esteri egiziano ha confermato che il decreto legge n. 14/2012 è stato convertito e che i suoi regolamenti esecutivi non hanno effetto retroattivo. Poiché la decisione è stata adottata il 13 settembre 2012 ed entra in vigore dopo sei mesi, il decreto si applica dal 13 marzo 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004007/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR) and Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Property rights of EU citizens in Egypt

Under Mubarak's presidency in Egypt, wealthy Egyptian expatriates and foreign investors were encouraged to buy land in the Sinai region, leading British (and no doubt many other EU citizens) to build houses and set up businesses to fuel a successful tourist industry.

However, on 13 September 2012 the Egyptian Government passed a new law restricting land and property ownership in the Sinai region (with the exception of Rafah town) to Egyptians who hold no other nationality and have been born to Egyptian parents. Major-General Shawky Rashwan, head of the government agency charged with implementing the changes, claimed that officials were simply trying to seek 'justice' for Egyptians over land rights, and protect national security in the light of the attacks on soldiers, armed gangs' incursions into Israel from Egypt and tunnel activity. The government also claims that despite the explicit references to dual nationals in the legislation, holders of two passports would not be affected.

Yet many are not convinced by the Egyptian Government's statements. Certainly, the law suffers from ambiguous wording that has led to fears that the measures could be applied retroactively and dual passport holders may still be affected. Moreover, the Egyptian Government has given foreign nationals just six months to sell their property to Egyptian nationals. This will not only have the effect of depriving European nationals of their property, but remove a fundamental pillar that the local economy depends on.

1. What measures has the Vice-President/High Representative taken over the past six months to try to protect EU citizens' private property in Egypt?

2. How does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to respond if the rights of European citizens to maintain property in Egypt are not upheld, particularly given the leverage gained by the large EU aid and stabilisation package?

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

The EU has followed closely the issue on property rights in Egypt.

The EU presented a verbal note on 3 February 2013 to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs asking for clarifications concerning the Decree-Law No 14/2012 regarding the Integrated Development of the Sinai Peninsula and Decision No 959 published in the Official Gazette on 13 September 2012 introducing the Executive regulations for this Decree-Law.

The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in reply to the verbal note, confirmed that the Decree-Law No 14/2012 is confirmed and its executive regulations are not enforceable retroactively. Accordingly, given that the decision was adopted on 13 September 2012 and enters into force after six months, it is applicable from 13 March 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004008/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Applicazione della segregazione nelle scuole di Gaza

Il 1° aprile 2013 il quotidiano britannico *The Telegraph* ha riportato che a partire dall'anno prossimo nelle scuole di Gaza sarà applicata la segregazione di genere, che interesserà anche le scuole cristiane e private come pure quelle gestite dalle Nazioni Unite. Waleed Mezher, un consulente giuridico presso il ministero dell'Istruzione, ha affermato che con questa legge il governo di Hamas ha cercato di tutelare i valori islamici conservativi: «Siamo un popolo musulmano. Non abbiamo la necessità di convertire le persone all'islamismo, ci adoperiamo a favore della nostra popolazione e della sua cultura».

Tuttavia Hala Qishawi, direttore del Centro per le questioni femminili a Gaza, afferma: «Sono fondamentalisti che credono che l'Islam dica che le donne dovrebbero stare a casa e non uscire senza l'hijab. Si tratta di un partito fondamentalista che vuole avere il controllo su ogni fascia della società, compresi la società civile, i giovani e le donne».

Questa nuova decisione è solo l'ultima di una serie di restrizioni stabilite dal governo di Hamas per segregare le donne. Quest'anno è stata cancellata una maratona perché Hamas non voleva che le donne del posto o straniere gareggiassero con gli uomini e in precedenza il governo di Hamas aveva cercato di imporre alle studentesse universitarie e alle donne avvocato di indossare il velo. Questa disposizione è stata tuttavia ritirata a causa della forte opposizione.

1. Alla luce della dichiarazione del governo di Hamas in merito all'applicazione della segregazione in tutte le scuole di Gaza indipendentemente dalla confessione, e dato il sostegno fornito dall'Unione europea ai palestinesi che vivono a Gaza, quali provvedimenti è pronto ad adottare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per affrontare questa controversa questione?

2. Qual è la sua posizione in merito alle diverse norme approvate dal governo di Hamas che aumentano le restrizioni sociali nei confronti delle donne che vivono nella Striscia di Gaza?

3. È pronto a ridurre i contributi per gli aiuti umanitari alla Striscia di Gaza qualora Hamas continui a introdurre norme così restrittive?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2013)

La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante esprime la propria profonda preoccupazione e netta opposizione a qualsiasi tentativo di accrescere le restrizioni sociali nei confronti delle donne che vivono nella striscia di Gaza. Fintanto che la Striscia di Gaza rimane politicamente separata dalla Cisgiordania, però, i mezzi a disposizione dell'UE per affrontare adeguatamente tale questione sono limitati. Per quanto riguarda le scuole di Gaza, comprese quelle gestite dall'UNRWA, l'Unione europea è consapevole del fatto che nella Striscia di Gaza la maggior parte dei ragazzi e delle ragazze frequentano classi separate. Tuttavia, la recente decisione delle autorità *de facto* di attuare la separazione in tutte le scuole sembra rientrare in una preoccupante tendenza delle autorità ad imporre la loro ideologia sulla società di Gaza.

Gli interventi umanitari dell'UE continueranno ad essere guidati dalle esigenze umanitarie e non saranno pertanto modificati in base alle decisioni prese dalle autorità *de facto*, con le quali l'Unione europea non mantiene contatti. Gli interventi umanitari sono rivolti verso gli strati più vulnerabili della popolazione, vale a dire essenzialmente donne e bambini. La parità di accesso al sostegno umanitario dell'UE (che non comprende l'istruzione) continuerà ad essere garantita.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004008/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Enforced segregation in Gaza schools

On 1 April 2013, the UK's *Telegraph* newspaper reported that from next year, gender segregation in Gaza's schools will be enforced. This will include Christian, private and even UN-run schools. Waleed Mezher, a legal adviser to the Ministry of Education, has said that the Hamas government was making an attempt to protect conservative Muslim values with legislation: 'We are a Muslim people. We do not need to make people Muslims and we are doing what serves our people and their culture'.

However, Hala Qishawi, the director of the Women's Affairs Centre in Gaza, says: 'They are fundamentalists who believe Islam says women should stay at home and not go out without a hijab. They are a fundamentalist party who want every section of society under their control, including civil society, the young and women'.

This new ruling is just the latest in a string of restrictions issued by the Hamas government to segregate women. A marathon was cancelled this year because Hamas did not want local or foreign women to run with men, and previously, the Hamas government tried to force women university students and lawyers to wear the veil. However, this was dropped due to intense opposition.

1. In light of the Hamas government's declaration enforcing segregation in all Gaza schools irrespective of confession, and given the EU's support for Palestinians living in Gaza, what steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to address this controversial issue?

2. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the raft of legislation passed by the Hamas government increasing social restrictions on women living in the Gaza Strip?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to reduce humanitarian aid contributions to the Gaza Strip if Hamas continues to introduce such restrictive legislation?

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

The HR/VP is deeply concerned by and strongly opposed to all attempts to increase social restrictions on women living in the Gaza Strip. However, as long as the Gaza Strip remains politically separated from the West Bank, the EU has limited means to adequately address this issue. Concerning Gaza's schools, the EU is aware of the fact that most boys and girls are already taught separately in the Gaza Strip, including in UNRWA schools. Nevertheless, the recent decision by the de facto authorities to enforce segregation for all schools is part of a worrying trend whereby the authorities appear to be imposing their ideology on Gaza society.

The humanitarian interventions of the EU shall continue to be governed by humanitarian imperatives and will hence not be adjusted in response to decisions taken by the de facto authorities, with which the EU maintains no contact. Humanitarian interventions target the most vulnerable, who are mostly women and children. Equal access to the EU humanitarian supported services (which do not include education) will continue to be ensured.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004010/13
alla Commissione
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Piano di coordinamento per intervento aereo antincendio

L'Italia ha recentemente annunciato una restrizione delle attività antincendio; prevedibilmente, dunque, la prossima estate sarà caratterizzata da un alto rischio per l'incolumità delle persone e di beni preziosi quali boschi e foreste.

Le limitate disponibilità di mezzi e risorse da parte degli Stati Membri non possono determinare una rassegnata accettazione di nefaste conseguenze, ma richiedono un intervento dell'UE in applicazione dei principi di solidarietà e di sussidiarietà.

In attesa del perfezionamento dell'iter legislativo per la costituzione, nell'ambito della cooperazione rafforzata, di un meccanismo unionale di protezione civile, si impone l'esigenza di verificare cosa fin d'ora l'UE possa fare per evitare disastri come quelli verificatisi lo scorso anno in Attica e in diverse regioni di altri Stati Membri.

Vista l'urgenza che, per definizione, accompagna la preparazione degli interventi della protezione civile, può dire la Commissione che cosa sta facendo per attivare tutte le iniziative necessarie a livello di UE nel settore antincendio e, in particolare, nel coordinamento delle specifiche forze aeree, così da rendere effettivi ed efficaci gli interventi della protezione civile?

Risposta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione
(21 giugno 2013)

Il centro europeo di risposta alle emergenze della Commissione (CERE) organizza una riunione preparatoria e varie videoconferenze settimanali con gli Stati membri sia all'inizio che durante ogni stagione di incendi forestali per condividere le migliori prassi in materia di preparazione e di reazione, di emergenze in caso di gravi incendi boschivi, considerando anche la disponibilità/tempestività di flotte nazionali di aerei antincendio.

Il sistema europeo di informazione sugli incendi forestali (EFFIS) coordinato dalla Commissione è uno strumento fondamentale per la previsione degli incendi boschivi e viene utilizzato dal CER per rafforzare il coordinamento e la pianificazione degli interventi dei mezzi aerei.

Dal 2006 al 2010 sono stati eseguiti progetti pilota e azioni preparatorie, compresa la riserva tattica antincendio dell'UE (EUFFTR) del 2010, sono stati effettuati per aumentare le risorse operative e gli interventi d'emergenza disponibili per l'estinzione degli incendi.

Ai fini dell'efficacia dell'azione, la Commissione ha incluso elementi simili nella sua proposta di decisione del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio su un meccanismo unionale di protezione civile (COM(2011)934), tra cui la possibilità di preimpegnare risorse per un pool volontario e la possibilità di erogare finanziamenti UE per le capacità di riserva.

Nei programmi di sviluppo rurale, nel periodo 2007-2013, il Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR) ha stanziato per l'Italia 295 milioni di euro, ovvero 522 milioni di euro della spesa pubblica, per la «Ricostituzione del potenziale produttivo forestale e interventi preventivi».

La proposta di regolamento sullo sviluppo rurale da parte della Commissione per il periodo 2014-2020 [COM(2011)627/3], oggetto di discussione del legislatore, prevede di continuare a finanziare le attività che prevengono i danni alle foreste dovuti agli incendi o ad altre calamità naturali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004010/13
to the Commission
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Aerial firefighting coordination plan

Italy has recently announced a round of firefighting cuts; presumably, next summer will therefore see a much higher risk to the safety of people and to valuable natural heritage sites such as woods and forests.

The fact that Member States have limited equipment and resources does not have to mean a resigned acceptance of dire consequences, but requires EU intervention in applying the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity.

Pending completion of the legislative process to establish a Community mechanism for civil protection within the framework of enhanced cooperation, there is an impelling need to ascertain what the EU can do as of now to prevent disasters such as the ones last year in Attica and in various regions of other Member States.

Given the urgency which, by definition, underlies preparations for civil protection interventions, can the Commission say what it is doing to take all the steps needed in the fire-fighting field at EU level and, in particular, to coordinate specific aerial resources so as to make civil protection operations both efficient and effective?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

The Commission's Emergency Response Centre (MIC/ERC) organises a preparatory meeting and weekly videoconferences with Member States at the start of and during each forest fire season to share best practices on preparedness and response issues, major forest fires emergencies, including the availability/readiness of national fire fighting aerial fleets.

The European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS) coordinated by the Commission is a key instrument regarding forest fire forecasting. It is also used by the ERC to enhance coordination and planning of interventions by aerial means.

From 2006 to 2010, pilot projects and preparatory actions were carried out, including the 2010 EU forest fire tactical reserve (EUFFTR) to increase the available operational resources and emergency support for fire fighting capacities.

The effectiveness of the action prompted the Commission to include similar elements in its Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (COM(2011) 934), including the possibility to pre-commit assets to a voluntary pool and the possibility of EU funding for reserve capacities.

Within the Rural Development Programmes, during 2007-2013 for Italy, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) allocates EUR 295 million, or EUR 522 million of public expenditure, to 'Restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions'

The Commission's Rural Development Regulation proposal for 2014-2020 [COM(2011) 627/3], under discussion by the legislator, proposes continued funding for activities preventing forest damage from fires and other natural disasters.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004022/13
to the Commission
Rebecca Taylor (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Airport body scanners

The UK Government denies passengers the right to opt out from full-body scanners when passing through security checks at certain airports.

The Commission has confirmed that it is undertaking a legal assessment that aims to verify whether this constitutes a breach of EC law.

Can you state when this legal assessment will be completed?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission expects to finalise by July 2013 the legal assessment whether UK measures to deny passengers an opt-out from security scanner screening constitutes a breach of EU legislation. As already committed to at earlier occasions the Commission will inform the European Parliament as soon as it takes a position on this subject.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004023/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Patto di stabilità e cofinanziamento dei fondi dell'UE: nuovi criteri per investimenti di pubblica utilità

In Italia la spesa certificata per i programmi finanziati con i fondi strutturali dell'UE si attesta al 37 %. Il buon utilizzo delle risorse unionali è l'elemento principale delle negoziazioni in corso per la programmazione 2014 — 2020, che si concentra infatti su una migliore pianificazione, gestione, utilizzo delle risorse e su una maggiore partecipazione degli enti nazionali e locali.

Per le amministrazioni locali, infatti, uno dei fattori che rende difficile la loro partecipazione al co-finanziamento relativo alla programmazione dell'UE è dato dai vincoli imposti dal patto di stabilità.

Durante il Consiglio europeo di marzo è stato chiesto alla Commissione europea di portare avanti un risanamento di bilancio differenziato e favorevole alla crescita al fine di, tra le altre cose, permettere investimenti pubblici produttivi per contrastare gli effetti della recessione.

Premesso che un maggiore e migliore uso delle risorse dell'UE è fondamentale per stimolare la crescita e l'occupazione, può la Commissione comunicare:

1. se intende promuovere delle iniziative affinché la quota delle spese nazionali per il cofinanziamento di fondi europei possa essere scorporata dai criteri di deficit e di debito degli Stati membri, in particolare per i paesi con un deficit sotto il 3 %;

2. se, e in che modo, possano essere esclusi dagli aggregati rilevanti del Patto di stabilità interno le spese sostenute da enti locali e regioni per il cofinanziamento dei fondi strutturali europei;

3. se, e in che modo, i cofinanziamenti nazionali dei fondi strutturali dell'UE possano essere inseriti nei fattori di calcolo all'interno del Patto di stabilità;

4. un quadro della situazione negli altri paesi UE in termini di risorse assegnate e spesa certificata?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

Mediante la comunicazione dal titolo «Piano per un'Unione economica e monetaria autentica e approfondita» ([1]) la Commissione garantisce una flessibilità maggiore nell'ambito del patto di stabilità e crescita (PSC) per quanto riguarda i programmi di investimenti pubblici aventi un effetto dimostrato sulla sostenibilità delle finanze pubbliche. Il cofinanziamento nazionale dei programmi dell'Unione figurava esplicitamente tra le spese imputabili nel quadro di tale «clausola sugli investimenti».

Ciò mira a introdurre una maggiore flessibilità nel percorso di avvicinamento all'obiettivo a medio termine (OMT) così da agevolare il cofinanziamento dei programmi UE, ivi compresa la politica di coesione, le Reti Transeuropee e il Meccanismo per collegare l'Europa (*Connecting Europe Facility*).

La clausola sugli investimenti sarà implementata nell'ambito della parte preventiva del PSC. È opportuno che la deviazione dal percorso di avvicinamento all'obiettivo a medio termine sia solo temporanea, cosicché il termine fissato per il conseguimento dell'OMT rimanga invariato. Gli Stati membri che avranno già conseguito tale obiettivo potranno temporaneamente discostarsene. La clausola sugli investimenti sarà applicabile ai soli Stati membri la cui posizione di bilancio garantisca un margine di sicurezza sufficiente contro il rischio di superare il valore di riferimento del 3 % stabilito per il deficit pubblico.

La clausola sugli investimenti prende in considerazione il cofinanziamento dei programmi UE gestito dalla pubblica amministrazione (incluse le autorità locali e regionali).

([1]) Un piano per un'Unione economica e monetaria autentica e approfondita: avvio del dibattito europeo, COM(2012)777 def./2.

La Commissione invierà direttamente all'onorevole parlamentare e al segretario del Parlamento i dettagli relativi all'attuazione dei fondi strutturali e di coesione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004023/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Stability Pact and co-financing of EU funds: new criteria for investments in the public interest

In Italy, certified expenditure for projects financed with EU structural funds stands at 37%. Good use of EU resources is the main element of ongoing budget negotiations for 2014-2020, which focuses on better planning, management, resource utilisation and on greater involvement of national and local authorities.

One of the factors that makes it difficult for local government bodies to take part in EU co-financing projects are the constraints imposed by the Stability and Growth Pact.

At the European Council of March 2013, the Commission was asked to carry out differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation in order, amongst other things, to allow productive public investment to counter the effects of the recession.

Given that more and better use of EU resources is essential to stimulate growth and employment, can the Commission state:

1. whether it will promote initiatives to ensure that the portion of national expenditure for co-financing of EU funds can be separated from Member States deficit and debt criteria, particularly for those countries with a deficit of below 3%;

2. whether, and how, expenses incurred by local authorities and regions for co-financing of European structural funds can be excluded from the money supply pertaining to the domestic Stability and Growth Pact;

3. whether, and how, domestic co-financing of EU structural funds could be included in the calculation factors under the Stability and Growth Pact;

4. an overview of the situation in other EU countries in terms of resources allocated and certified expenditure?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

In its communication on a 'Blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union' ([1]), the Commission committed itself to allowing some flexibility within the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) for public investment programmes with a proven impact on sustainability of public finances. The national co-financing of EU programmes was explicitly cited as expenditure which could be eligible to such an 'investment clause'.

The mechanism envisaged is to provide some flexibility in the adjustment path towards the Medium Term Objective (MTO) to facilitate the co-financing of EU programmes including cohesion policy, Trans-European Networks and the Connecting Europe Facility.

The investment clause will be implemented within the preventive arm of the SGP. The deviation from the adjustment path towards the MTO should only be temporary implying that the deadline for reaching the MTO should be maintained. Member States which have already reached the MTO would be allowed to temporarily deviate from it. Finally, the investment clause would only be accessible to Member States whose budgetary position ensures a safety margin against breaching the 3% deficit limit.

The investment clause takes into account the co-financing of EU programmes by the general government sector (including local and regional authorities).

The Commission will send directly to the Honourable Member and the Parliament's Secretariat the details on the implementation of Structural and Cohesion Funds.

([1]) A blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union: Launching a European Debate, COM(2012) 777 final/2.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-004035/13
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(10. April 2013)

Betrifft: EASA-Untersuchung zu Fällen von kontaminierter Kabinenluft in Flugzeugen

In ihrer Antwort auf meine Anfrage zum Thema kontaminierte Kabinenluft in Flugzeugen (E-002295/2013) stellt die Kommission fest, dass aufgrund der EASA-Untersuchung des Sachverhalts kein Sicherheitsproblem und damit kein Handlungsbedarf besteht.

Allerdings hatte die EASA bei der Durchführung besagter Untersuchung nur beschränkt Zugang zu allen relevanten Informationen, wie etwa zu Daten der nationalen Aufsichtsbehörden im *European Central Repository* (diesen Zugang würde die EASA erst durch die neue *Occurrence Reporting Regulation* erhalten). Aufgrund dieses beschränkten Datenzugangs kann die Untersuchung nicht als ausreichend repräsentativ angesehen werden.

Ist daher die Schlussfolgerung der Kommission, dass keine Gesundheitsgefährdung besteht, nicht verfrüht?

Gedenkt die Kommission, eine umfassendere Studie, welche alle relevanten Daten mit einbezieht, in Auftrag zu geben?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(13. Mai 2013)

Die in der Anfrage E-002295/2013 erwähnte Entscheidung der Europäischen Agentur für Flugsicherheit (EASA) beruht auf einer umfassenden Prüfung aller Informationen, die aus den Berichten der beteiligten Akteure hervorgingen, einschließlich gemeldeter Vorfälle, sowie auf den Ergebnissen von Messungen während eines speziellen Flugüberprüfungsprogramms.

Wie bereits betont, wird die EASA auch weiterhin laufende Forschungsarbeiten, Untersuchungen anderer Stellen in diesem Bereich und die von den Mitgliedstaaten gemeldeten Daten verfolgen und die Kommission über alle relevanten Ergebnisse unterrichten.

Um die Mitgliedstaaten stärker für das Thema zu sensibilisieren, wurden sie bei der Ratstagung „Verkehr“ vom 29. Oktober 2012 zudem darauf hingewiesen, dass Ereignisse im Zusammenhang mit kontaminierter Kabinenluft über die entsprechenden Meldesysteme mitgeteilt werden sollten.

Wenngleich dies mit dem vorliegenden Dossier nicht in direktem Zusammenhang steht, möchte ich außerdem darauf hinweisen, dass die Kommission in ihrem Vorschlag für eine Verordnung über die Meldung von Ereignissen in der Zivilluftfahrt ([1]) vorsieht, den Zugang der EASA zum Europäischen Zentralspeicher auf alle darin gespeicherten Informationen auszuweiten, einschließlich Fällen von kontaminierter Kabinenluft.

([1]) KOM(2012)776 vom 18.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004035/13
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: EASA investigation into cases of contaminated cabin air in aircraft

In its reply to my question about contaminated cabin air in aircraft (E-002295/2013), the Commission states that, on the basis of the EASA investigation of the situation, no safety issue exists and therefore no action is required.

While the aforementioned investigation was being conducted, however, EASA had only limited access to all relevant information, such as data from the national supervisory authorities in the European Central Repository (EASA will only receive this access as a result of the new Occurrence Reporting Regulation). Given this limited access to data, the investigation cannot be considered sufficiently representative.

Is the Commission's conclusion that no risk to health is present not therefore premature?

Does the Commission intend to instigate a more comprehensive investigation which would take into account all relevant data?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The decision referred to in the Question E-002295/2013 was made by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) on the basis of the conclusions of a comprehensive study of all information, including reported occurences, provided by the stakeholders reports and of the results of measurements done during a specific flight test programme.

As already underlined, EASA continues to follow ongoing research, assessments done by other bodies in this area and data that are provided by the Member States, and keeps the Commission informed of any relevant outcome.

With a view to allowing a better awareness of this issue, Member States were also reminded during the Transport Council of 29 October 2012 that events of cabin air contamination should be reported through occurrence reporting systems.

Finally, while not directly linked to this specific file, it is to be noted that in its proposal for a regulation on occurrence reporting in civil aviation ([1]), the Commission has suggested to extend EASA access to all pertinent information contained in the European Central Repository, including information on contaminated cabin air occurences.

([1]) COM(2012)776 dated 18.12.2012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004036/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE) et Maurice Ponga (PPE)
(10 avril 2013)

Objet: Possible atteinte aux principes de non-discrimination et de respect de la dignité humaine

Depuis mars 2013, une compagnie aérienne desservant les îles du Pacifique et notamment la Polynésie française a mis en place une nouvelle offre commerciale. Désormais elle fera payer le billet d'avion en fonction du poids du passager. Ainsi plus le poids d'un passager est élevé, plus son billet d'avion sera cher.

Cette mesure commerciale semble être une forme de discrimination fondée sur le poids, puisque les passagers minces et ceux considérés comme étant en surpoids ne seront désormais plus traités de la même manière. Le principe de non-discrimination est pourtant un des principes fondamentaux du droit communautaire. L'article 21 de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne précise que toute forme de discrimination est interdite.

Par ailleurs, cette offre commerciale semble aussi être une atteinte au principe du respect de la dignité humaine. L'article 1er de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne précise que «La dignité humaine est inviolable. Elle doit être respectée et protégée».

La France étant partie à la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne, cette dernière s'applique à l'ensemble des pays et territoires d'outre-mer et notamment à la Polynésie française dont les ressortissants sont également des citoyens européens à part entière.

1. Alors que l'Union européenne ne cesse de réaffirmer le principe de non-discrimination et le principe du respect de la dignité humaine comme des principes fondamentaux du droit communautaire, la Commission européenne ne pense-t-elle pas que cette offre commerciale est une atteinte à ces deux principes?

2. Par ailleurs, la législation européenne prévoit-elle des sanctions pour le non-respect de ces deux principes fondamentaux par une entreprise non européenne mais opérant sur des territoires où la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne s'applique?

3. Alors que cette offre commerciale fait suite à l'idée déjà évoquée par plusieurs compagnies aériennes d'obliger les personnes en surpoids à acheter deux places dans un avion, la Commission européenne prévoit-elle de prendre les mesures nécessaires à une application plus effective du principe de non-discrimination?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2013)

1 et 2. La compagnie aérienne en question n'offre pas de liaisons au départ ou à destination de régions des États membres situées sur le territoire de l'Union européenne. La Polynésie française est soumise uniquement au régime spécial d'association défini dans la quatrième partie du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'UE. La Commission ne peut donc prendre position sur les questions soulevées par l'Honorable Parlementaire. En outre, la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne ne s'applique pas à tous les cas de violation présumée des droits fondamentaux. Conformément à son article 51, paragraphe 1, la Charte s'applique aux institutions, organes, organismes et agences de l'Union et aux États membres uniquement lorsqu'ils mettent en œuvre le droit de l'Union européenne.

3. Conformément à l'article 4, paragraphe 2, du règlement (CE) n° 1107/2006 ([1]), les transporteurs aériens peuvent exiger, dans des circonstances très particulières liées à la sécurité, qu'une personne handicapée ou à mobilité réduite soit accompagnée lorsqu'elle effectue un voyage aérien. Le règlement ne précise pas si le siège pour l'accompagnateur devrait être offert gratuitement. Les lignes directrices relatives à l'application du règlement ([2]) recommandent que le siège soit offert gratuitement ou à un tarif très réduit ([3]). Le même raisonnement pourrait être appliqué en l'espèce: si une personne en surpoids a besoin, pour des raisons de sécurité ou autres, d'un siège supplémentaire, les compagnies aériennes pourraient le proposer gratuitement ou à un taux réduit.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 1107/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 5 juillet 2006 concernant les droits des personnes handicapées et des personnes à mobilité réduite lorsqu'elles font des voyages aériens, JO L 204 du 26.7.2006.

([2]) Lignes directrices, réponse à la question 5 (b).

([3]) Lignes directrices relatives à l'application du règlement (CE) n° 1107/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 5 juillet 2006 concernant les droits des personnes handicapées et des personnes à mobilité réduite lorsqu'elles font des voyages aériens, SWD (2012)171 final du 11.6.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004036/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE) and Maurice Ponga (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Possible infringement of the principles of non-discrimination and respect for human dignity

In March 2013, an airline serving the Pacific Islands, in particular French Polynesia, put in place a new commercial offer: from now on, airfares will be charged according to how much passengers weigh. Therefore, the heavier the passenger, the more expensive the ticket will be.

This commercial measure appears to be a form of discrimination based on weight, since slim passengers and those considered overweight will no longer be treated in the same way. The principle of non-discrimination is, however, one of the fundamental principles of EC law. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union specifies that all forms of discrimination are prohibited.

Moreover, this commercial offer also seems to undermine the principle of respect for human dignity. Article 1 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union specifies that 'human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected'.

France being a party to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, this Charter applies to all countries and overseas territories, including the French Polynesia, whose nationals are also European citizens in the full sense of the term.

1. While the European Union constantly reaffirms the principle of non-discrimination and the principle of respect for human dignity as fundamental principles of EC law, does the Commission not believe that this commercial offer undermines these two principles?

2. Furthermore, does EU legislation provide for sanctions in the event of non-compliance with these two fundamental principles by a non-European business operating in territories where the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union applies?

3. While this commercial offer follows the idea already put forward by several airlines to require overweight people to buy two seats on an aeroplane, does the Commission intend to take the necessary measures to ensure a more effective application of the principle of non-discrimination?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

1 and 2. The airline in question does not offer services to and from the EU territory of Member States. French Polynesia is only subject to the special arrangement for association set out in Part Four of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. The Commission cannot therefore take a position on the issues raised by the Honourable Member. In addition, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union does not apply to every situation of an alleged violation of fundamental rights. According to its Article 51(1), the Charter applies to the institutions, bodies offices and agencies of the Union and to Member States only when they are implementing European Union law.

3. According to Article 4(2) of Regulation 1107/2006 ([1]) air carriers can require in very specific circumstances related to safety that a disabled person or person with reduced mobility is accompanied when travelling by air. The regulation is silent on whether the seat for the accompanying person should be offered for free. In the guidelines on the application of the regulation ([2]), it is recommended that the seat be offered for free or at a significantly discounted rate ([3]). The same approach could be followed in the present case: if an overweight person needs, for safety reasons or others, an additional seat, air carriers could offer it for free or at a discounted rate.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air (OJ L 204, 26.7.2006).
([2]) Guidelines on the application of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air (SWD(2012) 171 final, 11.6.2012).
([3]) Guidelines, answer to Q5 (b).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004037/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 avril 2013)

Objet: Mesure américaine de représailles face à un non-respect de l'accord transatlantique sur le transport aérien

En avril 2007 est signé entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis un accord concernant le transport aérien, visant à faciliter le transport transatlantique, notamment pour les compagnies européennes.

En mars 2013, le Département du transport américain menaçait d'interdire à une compagnie italienne d'effectuer des vols dans le ciel nord-américain mais aussi de vendre des billets de compagnies partenaires en partage de code pour cause de «concurrence déloyale» des aéroports italiens. Le Département du transport américain reproche notamment aux aéroports italiens de facturer des taxes plus élevées au départ et à l'arrivée des vols internationaux par rapport aux taxes imposées aux vols intra-européens. Ces mesures sont jugées par les États-Unis comme «une discrimination injustifiable ou anticoncurrentielle déraisonnable contre les transporteurs américains».

Néanmoins, le préjudice porté aux compagnies américaines effectuant des vols au départ et à destination de l'Italie proviendrait non pas de la compagnie italienne mais de la décision prise par les aéroports italiens de mettre en place des taxes potentiellement discriminatoires. Il semblerait alors que les mesures de représailles souhaitées par les États-Unis en direction de la compagnie aérienne ne soient pas fondées.

1. Comment la Commission qualifierait-elle la réaction des États-Unis face à cette discrimination commerciale? Ne semble-t-elle pas infondée au vue de la non-responsabilité de la compagnie italienne concernant la mise en place de taxes discriminatoires?

2. Au vu du préjudice que cette mesure de représailles pourrait constituer pour la compagnie italienne, la Commission a-t-elle prévu de se saisir de la question?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(23 mai 2013)

Les États-Unis envisagent, en vertu de leur acte pour des pratiques de concurrence loyale en matière de services aériens internationaux («International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act», IATFCPA), de prendre des mesures contre les redevances d'atterrissage et de décollage imposées, dans les aéroports italiens, aux vols à destination et en provenance de pays hors UE, car ils les jugent contraires aux dispositions de l'accord UE/États-Unis sur les services aériens.

La Commission examine actuellement cette question. Les autorités italiennes lui ont communiqué des informations dans lesquelles elles justifient la perception de redevances d'atterrissage et de décollage différentes selon qu'il s'agit de vols intra-UE ou hors UE. Le bien-fondé de ces justifications fait l'objet d'une vérification à la lumière des dispositions de l'accord UE/États-Unis sur les services aériens et de la directive sur les redevances aéroportuaires.

La Commission ne doute pas qu'il sera possible de trouver une solution dans le cadre de la bonne application du droit de l'UE à l'aide des procédures internes de l'UE. Dans le cas contraire, la Commission est d'avis que l'accord UE/États-Unis prévoit les mécanismes appropriés pour traiter ce type de questions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004037/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Retaliatory measures by the US following a failure to comply with the transatlantic air transport agreement

In April 2007, the EU and the US signed an air transport agreement with the aim of facilitating transatlantic transport, in particular for European airlines.

In March 2013, the US Department of Transportation threatened to ban an Italian airline from flying in North American airspace, and also from selling tickets issued by code-share partners owing to 'unfair competition' by Italian airports. In particular, the US Department of Transportation has criticised Italian airports for charging extra-European flights higher take-off and landing fees than those imposed on intra-European flights. The United States considers these measures to be 'an unjustifiable or unreasonable discriminatory or anticompetitive practice against US air carriers'.

Nevertheless, the disadvantage suffered by US airlines flying to and from Italy does not appear to be the fault of the Italian airline but instead stems from a decision made by the Italian airports to charge potentially discriminatory fees. The retaliatory measures which the United States intends to take against the airline therefore seem groundless.

1. How would the Commission describe the United States's reaction to this commercial discrimination? Does it not consider it unjustified given that the Italian airline was not responsible for putting discriminatory charges in place?

2. Given the harm that these retaliatory measures could cause the Italian airline, does the Commission intend to address this issue?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The United States has envisaged taking action under their International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act (IATFCPA) concerning landing and take-off charges imposed upon flights to/from non-EU destinations at Italian airports they indeed consider as non-compliant with the provisions of the EU-US air services agreement.

The Commission is investigating the matter and has received information from the Italian authorities regarding the justification for levying different landing and take-off charges upon EU and non-EU flights. Such justification is being checked against the EU-US air services agreement and the Airport Charges Directive.

The Commission trusts that it will be possible to resolve this issue in the framework of proper application of EC law via the EU's internal procedures. Should it not be the case, it is the Commission's opinion that the agreement provides for the appropriate mechanisms to adress this kind of issues.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004038/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 avril 2013)

Objet: Discrimination caractérisée de passagers palestiniens à destination d'Israël

Le 15 avril 2012, une compagnie aérienne européenne obligeait le débarquement d'une passagère avant le décollage du vol Nice-Tel Aviv, au motif qu'elle était palestinienne et qu'elle ne pouvait de fait atterrir en Israël. La compagnie aérienne avait justifié cette décision en expliquant que, comme toutes compagnies aériennes et conformément à la Convention de Chicago, elle devait refuser l'embarquement de toute personne «déclarée inadmissible par le pays de destination». Dans le cas présent, Israël aurait alors refusé le débarquement de passagers palestiniens.

La passagère a porté plainte contre la compagnie aérienne pour «discrimination caractérisée». En effet, comme le précise le procureur en charge de l'affaire, dès lors que la compagnie «s'arroge le droit de poser des questions sur la nationalité et de surcroît sur la religion, elle commet le délit de discrimination». L'argument de la demande formulée par l'État d'Israël a été rejeté puisque la compagnie «était parfaitement en droit de refuser».

Cette décision de la compagnie pourrait être définie comme une discrimination fondée sur la nationalité et la religion. L'article 21 de la Charte européenne des Droits de l'homme interdit toute forme de discrimination et notamment celle fondée sur la nationalité. Le débarquement de la passagère semble alors être contraire à un principe fondamental de l'Union, à savoir le principe de non-discrimination.

Le 4 avril 2013, un tribunal français a d'ailleurs condamné cette compagnie à 10 000 euros d'amende et 3 000 euros de dommages et intérêts pour discrimination caractérisée.

Il convient néanmoins de souligner que cet exemple n'est pas un cas isolé, puisque d'autres affaires du même type, dans lesquelles une compagnie aérienne refuse l'embarquement ou le voyage de passagers palestiniens à destination d'Israël, se sont produites au sein de l'Union européenne.

1. Au vu de cette affaire, la Commission ne trouve-t-elle pas que la décision de la compagnie aérienne est contraire au principe de non-discrimination, principe fondamental de l'Union européenne?

2. D'autres cas similaires ayant été recensés, la Commission a-t-elle prévu de prendre les mesures nécessaires afin que ce genre de discrimination, contraire aux principes fondamentaux du droit communautaire, devienne désormais impossible sur le territoire des États membres de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(30 mai 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton a suivi les questions posées par l'Honorable Parlementaire et sa position au sujet des compagnies aériennes qui refusent l'embarquement de passagers déclarés inadmissibles par le pays de destination est énoncée dans la réponse à la question écrite E-4056/2012 ([1]). S'agissant de l'incident spécifique auquel il est fait référence dans la question, à savoir le refus d'embarquement opposé à un voyageur le 15 avril 2012, il semble que la compagnie aérienne ait interrogé la personne en cause sur sa confession religieuse avant de la forcer à débarquer. Toutefois, comme il ressort clairement de la question, il semble désormais que cette affaire ait été tranchée par le tribunal compétent de l'État membre concerné.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004038/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Flagrant discrimination against Palestinian passengers travelling to Israel

On 15 April 2012, a European airline forced a passenger to disembark prior to the take-off of the Nice-Tel Aviv flight, on the ground that she was Palestinian and could not in fact land in Israel. The airline justified its decision by explaining that, like all other airlines and in accordance with the Convention on International Civil Aviation, it had to refuse boarding to anyone 'declared inadmissible in the country of destination'. In this case, Israel would not have allowed Palestinian passengers to disembark.

The passenger filed a complaint against the airline for 'flagrant discrimination'. Indeed, as the public prosecutor for the case stated, when the airline 'takes it upon itself to ask questions about nationality and, moreover, religion, it commits the offence of discrimination'. The argument of the request formulated by the State of Israel was rejected since the airline was 'perfectly within its rights to refuse'.

The airline's decision could be defined as discrimination based on nationality and religion. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits all forms of discrimination, in particular discrimination on grounds of nationality. The removal of the passenger therefore appears to run counter to a fundamental principle of the EU, namely the principle of non-discrimination.

Moreover, on 4 April 2013, a French court ordered the airline to pay a fine of EUR 10 000 and EUR 3 000 in damages for flagrant discrimination.

It should nevertheless be stressed that this example is not an isolated case, since other episodes of this kind, where an airline refuses to allow Palestinian passengers going to Israel to board or travel, have occurred in the EU.

1. Does the Commission not find that the airline's decision runs counter to the principle of non-discrimination, a fundamental principle of the European Union?

2. Given that other similar cases have been recorded, does the Commission intend to take the necessary measures so that this kind of discrimination, which runs counter to the fundamental principles of EC law, will from now on be impossible in the EU Member States?

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

The HR/VP has followed the issues raised by the Honourable Member and her position with regard to airlines refusing to allow passengers to board if they have been decleared inadmissable in the country of destination can be found in answer to Written Question E-4056/2012 ([1]). Subsequently in the specific incident of one passenger refused boarding on 15 April 2012, referred to in the question, it appears the airline questioned the religious affiliation of the person concerned before forcing the passenger to disembark. However, as the question makes clear, the matter now appears to have been settled by the competent court in the member state concerned.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-004039/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(10 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιτόκια επιχειρηματικών δανείων στην Ευρωζώνη

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

— Ποια είναι τα επιτόκια χορηγήσεων των επιχειρηματικών δανείων στις επί μέρους χώρες της Ευρωζώνης;

— Ποια είναι η πορεία τους τα τελευταία πέντε χρόνια και ποια αναμένει ότι θα είναι η πορεία τους την επόμενη τριετία;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου θα μπορούσε να συμβουλευθεί τη βάση δεδομένων της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, η οποία παρέχει ενδελεχή ανασκόπηση της τρέχουσας κατάστασης και των τάσεων του παρελθόντος όσον αφορά τα επιτόκια των δανείων προς τις μη χρηματοπιστωτικές εταιρείες (http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu). Όπως διαπιστώνεται εκεί, τα επιτόκια των νέων δανείων προς επιχειρήσεις, διάρκειας έως ενός έτους, κυμαίνονται σήμερα από 2% στη Γερμανία και τη Γαλλία σε 6,5% στην Ελλάδα. Η διαφορά των επιτοκίων μεταξύ των χωρών της ευρωζώνης είναι απότοκο της οικονομικής κρίσης.

Οι μελλοντικές τάσεις στα επιτόκια είναι δύσκολο να προβλεφθούν και ως εκ τούτου η Επιτροπή δεν προβαίνει σε προβλέψεις των εξελίξεων των επιτοκίων.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004039/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Interest on business loans in the euro area

What are the interest rates on business loans in the individual countries of the euro area?

What have been the trends in this respect over the last five years and what are the anticipated trends over the next three years?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Honourable Member might consult the database of the European Central Bank that provides a detailed overview over the current situation and past trends of interest rates on loans to to non-fiancial corporations (http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu). As can be seen there, interest rates on new loans to enterprises -maturities of up to one year- are currently ranging from 2% in Germany and France to 6.5% in Greece. The divergence in interest rates among euro area countries began in the aftermath of the financial crisis.

Future trends in interest rates are difficult to predict and the Commission does therefore not provide a forecast of interest rate developments.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004040/13
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Horsemeat

As a result of EU-wide testing following the exposure of the horsemeat scandal, traces of the drug bute have been discovered in some food samples. Given that this substance is not permitted to enter the human food chain:

1. Is the Commission concerned by these developments?

2. Could the Commission outline what it intends to do in order to determine how bute-contaminated horse products were permitted to enter the human food chain, whether legitimately labelled as horsemeat or not?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The EU wide testing of horsemeat for the presence of residues of phenylbutazone ('bute') as part of the coordinated control program established by Commission Recommendation 2013/99/EC ([1]) has revealed 16 non-compliant results on a total of 3 115 samples (0.51%).

In their joint statement, the European Food Safety Authority and the European Medicines Agency concluded that the risks associated to phenylbutazone were of 'low concern for consumers due to the low likelihood of exposure and the overall low likelihood of toxic effects and that, on a given day, the probability of a consumer being both susceptible to developing aplastic anaemia and being exposed to phenylbutazone was estimated to range approximately from 2 in a trillion to 1 in 100 million.'

Even though none of the products related to the 16 non-compliant test results reached the final consumer and although the joint EFSA and EMA statement is rather reassuring, the Commission remains concerned and recently addressed a five-point action plan to be carried out over the short, medium and longer term to Member States' national authorities. This action plan aims to restore consumer confidence in Europe's food supply chain by strengthening an array of controls through a series of measures falling under five key areas: 1) Food fraud; 2) Testing program; 3) Horse passport; 4) Official controls and penalties and 5) Origin labelling.

([1]) Commission Recommendation 2013/99/EU on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices in the marketing of certain foods (2013/99/EU) (OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004041/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(10 april 2013)

Betreft: Stopzetting van de werkzaamheden van de onderzoekscommissie op Cyprus

Op 2 april kondigde de regering van Cyprus de oprichting aan van een commissie die onderzoek zou gaan doen naar de uitstroom van geld uit het land voorafgaand aan de goedkeuring van het financieel reddingsplan. Volgens een op 9 april in de Nederlandse krant *De Telegraaf* gepubliceerd artikel was de informatie die de centrale bank van Cyprus deze onderzoekscommissie heeft verstrekt onvolledig, aangezien ze slechts betrekking had op een periode van twee weken, hoewel gevraagd was om gegevens met betrekking tot transacties van het hele afgelopen jaar. Als gevolg hiervan heeft de onderzoekscommissie haar werkzaamheden moeten opschorten ([1]).

Daarnaast is in de Belgische krant *De Morgen* gemeld dat bankiers van de zwaar getroffen Bank of Cyprus bewijsmateriaal met betrekking tot meerdere gevallen van misbruik hebben vernietigd ([2]). Volgens een in opdracht van de centrale bank van Cyprus uitgevoerd onderzoek bevonden zich op de computers van twee voormalige managers slechts heel weinig of helemaal geen gesavede e-mails met betrekking tot de periode 2009-2012, en is gebleken dat er gebruik is gemaakt van speciale software die e-mails verwijdert. Dit betekent dat informatie over de aankoop van Griekse obligaties ook verdwenen kan zijn.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de bovenstaande feiten?

2. Is de Commissie het met mij eens dat aangezien belangrijke gegevens en informatie met betrekking tot transacties van de Bank of Cyprus ontbreken, de centrale bank van Cyprus haar toezichthoudende taken niet naar behoren heeft uitgevoerd?

3. Is de Commissie van oordeel dat de centrale bank van Cyprus zich naar behoren aan haar verplichtingen als lid van het eurosysteem heeft gehouden?

4. Hoe gaat de Commissie waarborgen dat er een gedegen onderzoek komt naar de uitstroom van geld uit Cyprus?

5. Hoe komt het dat tijdens de hoorzitting van de Commissie economische en monetaire zaken van het Europees Parlement op 21 maart de voorzitter van de eurogroep, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, geen antwoord kon geven op een vraag van mij over de uitstroom van geld uit Cyprus?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(11 juni 2013)

De commissie die door de Cypriotische autoriteiten is opgericht om de oorzaken van de economische en financiële crisis in Cyprus te onderzoeken, is officieel aangewezen op 2 april 2013.

De Europese Commissie kan niet vooruitlopen op de bevindingen van deze commissie.

De nationale centrale banken zijn onafhankelijke instellingen en de Europese Commissie is niet bevoegd om opmerkingen te maken over de werking ervan.

In het kader van de huidige beperkingen op kapitaalverkeer in Cyprus, volgt de Europese Commissie de kapitaalbewegingen op de voet. Vóór de oplegging van deze beperkingen, die slechts tijdelijk zouden moeten zijn, waren kapitaalbewegingen in Cyprus vrij. De Europese Commissie vertrouwt erop dat juridische onregelmatigheden met betrekking tot kapitaalbewegingen, indien deze door de betrokken partijen worden gesignaleerd, door de bevoegde rechterlijke organen grondig worden onderzocht.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/21462901/__Cypriotisch_crisisonderzoek_gestaakt__.html
([2]) http://www.demorgen.be/dm/nl/3324/Financiele-crisis/article/detail/1609599/2013/04/05/Cruciale-informatie-gewist-bij-Bank-of-Cyprus.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004041/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Cessation of the Cyprus investigative commission inquiry

On 2 April, the Cypriot government announced the setting up of a commission tasked with investigating the outflow of money from the country ahead of the approval of the financial rescue plan. According to an article published in the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* on 9 April, data provided to this commission by the Central Bank of Cyprus were insufficient, because although the commission had asked for data covering transactions from the past year, the information provided only covered a period of fifteen days. As a consequence, the commission has been forced to suspend its inquiry ([1]).

Furthermore, the Belgian newspaper *De Morgen* reported that bankers in the hard-hit Bank of Cyprus have destroyed evidence relating to several abuses ([2]). According to a report commissioned by the Central Bank of Cyprus, few or no saved e-mails were found on the computers of two former managers for the period 2009-12 and special e-mail removal software was found to have been in use. Therefore, data relating to the purchase of Greek bonds may have also disappeared.

In the light of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned facts?

2. Does the Commission agree that, since important data and information concerning Bank of Cyprus transactions are missing, the Central Bank of Cyprus has not properly carried out its supervisory function?

3. Is the Commission of the opinion that the Central Bank of Cyprus has duly fulfilled its obligations as a member of the Eurosystem?

4. How will the Commission ensure that outflows of money from Cyprus will be properly investigated?

5. Why is it that, during the hearing held by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs of the European Parliament on 21 March, President of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, was unable to answer a question of mine concerning outflows of money from Cyprus?

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

The commission set up by the Cypriot authorities to investigate the reasons for the economic and financial crisis in Cyprus was officially appointed on 2 April 2013.

The European Commission cannot prejudge of the findings of this commission.

The European Commission is not habilitated to comment upon the workings of national central banks, which are independent institutions.

The European Commission is monitoring very closely capital movements in the context of the current capital restrictions in Cyprus. Prior to the imposition of these restrictions, which are meant to be temporary only, capital movements in Cyprus were free. The European Commission trusts that any legal irregularities with capital movements, should they be signalled by the concerned parties, will be properly examined by the competent judicial organs.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/21462901/__Cypriotisch_crisisonderzoek_gestaakt__.html
([2]) http://www.demorgen.be/dm/nl/3324/Financiele-crisis/article/detail/1609599/2013/04/05/Cruciale-informatie-gewist-bij-Bank-of-Cyprus.dhtml.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-004042/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(11 avril 2013)

Objet: Importations d'œufs ukrainiens

Par le règlement d'exécution (UE) nº 88/2013, la Commission a modifié l'annexe II de la décision 2007/777/CE et l'annexe I du règlement (CE) nº 798/2008 afin d'ajouter l'Ukraine parmi les pays tiers à partir desquels certaines viandes, certains produits à base de viande et certains œufs et ovoproduits peuvent être introduits dans l'Union européenne.

Par ailleurs, le prix de l'œuf en Europe est en baisse depuis plusieurs mois, ce qui suscite l'inquiétude des producteurs européens.

La Commission justifie cette autorisation par les garanties offertes par l'Ukraine en matière sanitaire. L'Ukraine ne respecte en revanche pas les mêmes règles que l'Union européenne en matière de bien-être animal.

1. La Commission entend-elle mettre en œuvre des mesures concrètes pour empêcher la concurrence déloyale des producteurs ukrainiens, en particulier en ce qui concerne les normes de bien-être animal?

2. Concernant le prix de l'œuf, la Commission peut-elle mesurer l'impact des importations ukrainiennes sur les cours intra-communautaires?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(15 mai 2013)

L'accord d'association UE-Ukraine, qui inclut l'accord sur la zone de libre-échange approfondi et complet, a été paraphé en 2012. Il prévoit l'alignement de la législation ukrainienne relative à la santé animale et à la sûreté alimentaire, dont celle qui concerne le bien-être des animaux, sur la législation correspondante de l'Union. L'Ukraine doit fournir à celle-ci une liste de ses dispositions législatives en matière de bien-être des animaux et présenter le calendrier selon lequel elle entend procéder au rapprochement des législations.

En attendant l'achèvement de ce processus de rapprochement, l'Union européenne importera des produits d'origine animale en provenance d'Ukraine, y compris des œufs, dans les conditions applicables aux importations provenant d'autres pays tiers.

La Commission surveille de près les quantités d'œufs et d'ovoproduits importées dans l'Union. En janvier, février et mars 2013, aucun de ces produits n'a été importé d'Ukraine.

La baisse actuelle du prix de l'œuf dans l'UE est liée au volume important d'œufs produit depuis le début de l'année 2013. Elle découle aussi d'un ajustement à la baisse des prix du marché, qui avaient atteint un niveau très élevé en 2012, après l'application de la directive 1999/74/CE établissant les normes minimales relatives à la protection des poules pondeuses ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004042/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Imports of Ukrainian eggs

With Implementing Regulation (EU) No 88/2013, the Commission has amended Annex II to Decision 2007/777/EC and Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 798/2008 so as to include the Ukraine among the third countries from which certain meat, meat products, eggs and egg products may be introduced into the European Union.

Moreover, egg prices in Europe have been in decline for several months, which has given rise to concern among European producers.

The Commission has justified this authorisation on the grounds of the health guarantees offered by the Ukraine. However, the Ukraine does not apply the same animal welfare rules as the EU.

1. Does the Commission intend to implement concrete measures to prevent unfair competition from Ukrainian producers, particularly with regard to animal welfare standards?

2. Regarding the price of eggs, is the Commission able to evaluate the impact of Ukrainian imports on intra-EU prices?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreement was initialled in 2012. It foresees that the Ukrainian animal health and food safety legislation, including the animal welfare legislation, has to be approximated to the relevant Union legislation. Ukraine shall provide the EU with a list of its animal welfare legislation and indicate the timing for the approximation process.

Until the process of approximation of animal welfare legislation has been completed the Union will import products of animal origin, including eggs, from Ukraine under the same conditions as for other third countries.

The Commission is closely following amounts of imported eggs and egg products into the EU. In January, February and March 2013, there were no imports of eggs and egg products from Ukraine.

The current egg price fall in the EU is linked to a high level production since the beginning of 2013. It is also a result of a downward adjustment of the market that had reached very high prices in 2012 after the implementation of Directive 1999/74/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens ([1]).

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004043/13
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(11 april 2013)

Betreft: Baggerwerken voor oliewinning in het noordpoolgebied

Een Vlaams baggerbedrijf vroeg twee weken geleden een exportkredietverzekering aan bij de Nationale Delcrederedienst, teneinde een staatswaarborg te bekomen voor baggerwerken die het bedrijf zal uitvoeren in het kader van de uitbouw van de Sabetta-haven op het Jamal-schiereiland, gelegen in het Russische noordpoolgebied. Het bedrijf doet dit in opdracht van de Russische autoriteiten. Deze Sabetta-haven moet een cruciale rol gaan spelen in de Russische ambities om de olie- en gasvoorraden die zich onder het poolijs bevinden te gaan ontginnen.

Eind vorig jaar keurden dit Parlement en de Europese Raad de Verordening (EU) nr. 1233/2011 goed inzake de OESO-richtsnoeren op het gebied van door de overheid gesteunde exportkredieten ([1]).

In een Resolutie van 14 maart 2013 over het Stappenplan Energie 2050, neemt het Europees Parlement het op voor de Noordpoolwateren en wijst het op de gevaren van energiewinning voor het milieu ([2]).

Is de Commissie — als hoedster van de verdragen en toezichthouder op de uitvoering van Europese wetgeving — bereid dit dossier te onderzoeken en na te gaan of de toekenning van de staatswaarborg al dan niet in strijd zou kunnen zijn met Verordening (EU) nr. 1233/2011 en/of andere Europese regelgeving omtrent milieueffectenrapportage?

Greenpeace analyseerde het milieueffectenrapport dat het bedrijf bezorgde aan de Nationale Delcrederedienst en stelt vast dat het op verschillende vlakken niet voldoet aan de belangrijkste aspecten die zijn opgenomen in de OESO-Aanbeveling inzake de „Gemeenschappelijke Benaderingen betreffende door de overheid gesteunde exportkredieten en milieu- en sociale due dilligence" van 28 juni 2012. Welke stappen zal de Commissie zetten ten aanzien van de Belgische Staat en de Nationale Delcrederedienst om te verhinderen dat de OESO-Aanbeveling nog verder wordt genegeerd, en het noordpoolgebied nog verder wordt bedreigd?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(8 mei 2013)

De Commissie deelt de mening dat bij de toekenning van exportkredieten terdege rekening moet worden gehouden met milieuvraagstukken. De Commissie deelt ook het standpunt dat de aanbeveling van de Organisatie voor Economische Samenwerking en Ontwikkeling (OESO) inzake een gemeenschappelijke aanpak van door de overheid gesteunde exportkredieten en de in acht te nemen zorgvuldigheid op milieu- en sociaal gebied (de „gemeenschappelijke aanpak"), in de meest recente versie (28 juni 2012), in de internationale exportkredietgemeenschap brede steun geniet als referentie-instrument.

In het jaarlijkse activiteitenverslag over 2011 dat de Belgische autoriteiten uit hoofde van Verordening (EU) nr. 1233/2011 ([3]) hebben ingediend, wordt bevestigd dat de nationale exportkredietinstelling (nationale Delcrederedienst) de gemeenschappelijke aanpak van de OESO toepast om al haar transacties te toetsen op mogelijke negatieve effecten op het milieu of de samenleving.

Wat het in de vraag van het geachte Parlementslid genoemde individuele geval betreft, beveelt de Commissie aan in eerste instantie een verzoek tot de nationale Delcrederedienst of de met het toezicht op de exportkredietinstelling belaste Belgische autoriteiten te richten en te vragen naar hun standpunt over deze kwestie.

De Commissie is vanzelfsprekend altijd bereid haar rol als hoedster van het Verdrag uit te oefenen indien er redenen zijn om te vrezen dat de Europese wetgeving niet wordt toegepast. Er zij echter evenwel op gewezen dat de „gemeenschappelijke aanpak" geen onderdeel van de EU-wetgeving vormt.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:326:0045:01:NL:HTML.
([2]) P7_TA(2013)0088, paragraaf 112.
([3]) Verordening (EU) nr. 1233/2011 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 16 november 2011 betreffende de toepassing van bepaalde richtsnoeren op het gebied van door de overheid gesteunde exportkredieten en tot intrekking van de Beschikkingen 2001/76/EG en 2001/77/EG van de Raad, PB L 326 van 8.12.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004043/13
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Dredging for oil extraction in the Arctic

Two weeks ago a Flemish dredging company applied to the Belgian Export Credit Agency for export credit insurance in order to obtain a state guarantee for the dredging works the company will carry out as part of the development of the Sabetta port on the Yamal Peninsula in the Russian Arctic region. the company has been commissioned to do this work by the Russian Government. The Sabetta port is to play a crucial role in Russian ambitions to extract the oil and gas reserves that lie under the Arctic ice.

At the end of last year, this Parliament and the European Council adopted Regulation (EU) No 1233/2011 on the OECD guidelines in the field of government-backed export credits ([1]).

In its Resolution of 14 March 2013 on the Energy Roadmap 2050, the European Parliament expresses concern over the Arctic waters and points to the dangers that oil and gas operations pose to the environment ([2]).

Is the Commission — as guardian of the Treaties and the oversight authority for the implementation of European legislation — prepared to examine this issue and determine whether or not the granting of a state guarantee would be in conflict with Regulation (EU) No 1233/2011 and/or other European legislation on environmental impact assessment?

Having analysed the environmental impact report that the company submitted to the Belgian Export Credit Agency, Greenpeace notes that, in several areas, it fails to satisfy the most important requirements stipulated in the OECD Recommendation on 'Common Approaches for Government-Backed Export Credits and Environmental and Social Due Diligence' adopted on 28 June 2012. What measures will the Commission take with regard to the Belgian State and the Belgian Export Credit Agency to prevent the OECD Recommendation being further ignored and the Arctic threatened even more?

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

The Commission shares the opinion that environmental concerns should duly be taken into consideration in the process of granting export credits. The Commission also shares the view that the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Recommendation on Common Approaches for Officially Supported Export Credits and Environmental and Social Due Diligence (the 'Common Approaches') in its latest version (28 June 2012) enjoys wide support in the international export credit community as a reference instrument.

The Annual Activity Report submitted by the Belgian authorities for the year 2011 under Regulation (EU) No 1233/2011 ([3]) confirms that the national Export Credit Agency (the 'Office National du Ducroire — nationale Delcrederedienst' or 'ONDD') applies the OECD Common Approaches to screen all its transactions for possible negative environmental or social effects.

Concerning the individual case mentioned in the Honourable Member's question, the Commission would recommend addressing the query in the first place to the ONDD or the Belgian authorities which exercise the supervision of the Export Credit Agency and seek their views on the issue.

The Commission is of course always ready to exercise its role as Guardian of the Treaty where there is reason to fear that European legislation is not implemented. In any case, it has to be kept in mind that the 'Common Approaches' are not part of the EU legislation.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:326:0045:01:NL:HTML
([2]) P7_TA(2013)0088, paragraph 112.
([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1233/2011 of Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 on the application of certain guidelines in the field of officially supported export credits and repealing Council Decisions 2001/76/EC and 2001/77/EC, OJ L 326, 8.12.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004044/13
an die Kommission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Stuttgart 21-Subventionen

Die EU hat auf Antrag der Bundesrepublik Deutschland per Entscheidung am 12.12.2008 114,5 Mio. EUR Subventionen für das Bahnhofsprojekt Stuttgart 21 zur Verfügung gestellt.

In der Begründung wird auf eine Verdopplung der Leistungsfähigkeit des Bahnhofs durch S 21 verwiesen.

In der Antwort der Kommission auf die Frage von Michael Theurer am 01.03.2013 (E-002430-13) steht, die Förderung wäre von „unabhängigen Sachverständigen bewertet und gemäß den allgemeinen TEN-V-Bedingungen für die Finanzierung von Projekten, einschließlich des EU-Umweltrechts, als förderfähig befunden" worden.

1. Wer waren diese Sachverständigen; welches Urteil fällten diese über die zukünftige Leistungsfähigkeit des Bahnhofes, und war dieses Urteil ausschlaggebend für ihre Einschätzung?

2. Wie beurteilt die EU-Kommission die Vorwürfe, dass der neue Bahnhof nicht einmal die Kapazität des alten erreichen wird?

3. Sollten sich dies bewahrheiten, stellt dies eine politische Täuschung oder gar eine unrechtmäßige Beihilfe dar?

4. Welche Konsequenzen zieht die Kommission für die unter 3. genannten Fälle, insbesondere für die bereits ausgezahlten Mittel?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2013)

1. Bei den Sachverständigen, die diesen Vorschlag geprüft haben, handelte es sich um Fachleute, die die Kommission wegen deren Erfahrung auf dem betreffenden Gebiete und deren Unabhängigkeit von dem Projekt ausgewählt hatte. Für die befürwortende Bewertung des Vorschlags waren die Kriterien Zweckdienlichkeit, Auswirkungen, technische Ausgereiftheit und Qualität der Maßnahme ausschlaggebend. Zur quantitativen Leistungsfähigkeit des zukünftigen Bahnhofs haben sich die Sachverständigen nicht geäußert.

2.-4. Die Kapazität des neuen Bahnhofs ist nicht Gegenstand der TEN-V-Entscheidung der Kommission ([1]).

([1]) Entscheidung K(2008) 8055
http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2008/DE/3-2008-8055-DE-F-0.Pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004044/13
to the Commission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Subsidies for the Stuttgart 21 railway project

At the request of the Federal Republic of Germany, by decision of 12 December 2008 ([1]) the EU made available a subsidy of EUR 114.5 million for the Stuttgart 21 rail station project.

In support of this decision it is stated that Stuttgart 21 would double the station's performance.

In its answer to the question by Michael Theurer of 1 March 2013 (E-002430/2013) the Commission states that this subsidy 'was evaluated by external experts and was found eligible according to the general TEN-T conditions for financing projects, including due respect of the EU environmental legislation'.

1. Who were these experts? What was their finding about the future performance of the station, and did this finding have a decisive effect on their evaluation?

2. What is the Commission's response to the criticisms that the new station will not even reach the capacity of the old one?

3. Should this prove true, does this constitute political deception or even illegal aid?

4. If so, what action will the Commission take in consequence, particularly as regards funds already paid?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

1. The experts who assessed the proposal were professionals chosen by the Commission on the basis of their experience in the relevant field and their independence from the project. The positive assessment of the proposal was made against the criteria of relevance, impact, maturity and quality of the action. The performance of the future station was not quantified by the experts.

2-4. The capacity of the new station is not an objective of the TEN-T Commission decision ([2]).

([1]) Translator's note: This document, K(2008) 8055, exists only in German.
([2]) Decision K(2008) 8055, http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2008/DE/3-2008-8055-DE-F-0.Pdf.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004045/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Umzugshilfen

Die Ziegler SA hat am 12. Dezember 2012 vor dem Europäischen Gerichtshof Klage gegen die Kommission eingereicht. Es geht um die Entscheidung der Kommission COMP/38.543 — Auslandsumzüge, in der Absprachen zwischen Umzugsunternehmen in Brüssel sanktioniert wurden. Die Kommission hat für die Erstattung der Umzugskosten ihrer Beamten die Einholung von drei verschiedenen Kostenvoranschlägen zur Bedingung gemacht.

Die Klägerin wirft nun der Kommission vor, in zweierlei Hinsicht rechtswidrig gehandelt zu haben:

Zum einen habe die Kommission ihre Sorgfaltspflicht und das Grundrecht der Klägerin auf ordnungsgemäße Verwaltung verletzt, indem die Kommission die Bedingung für die Erstattung — die Einholung von drei verschiedenen Kostenvoranschlägen — nicht überprüft habe, obwohl ihr die Auswüchse der Regelung bekannt gewesen seien.

Zum anderen hätten Beamte die Klägerin unmittelbar dazu aufgefordert, Schutzangebote bei Wettbewerbern einzuholen, und hätten damit die Klägerin unmittelbar zur Zuwiderhandlung verleitet. Aufgrund der Weigerung der Klägerin nach der Entscheidung der Kommission (COMP/38.543) weiterhin Schutzangebote bei Wettbewerbern einzuholen, erlitt die Klägerin einen erheblichen Gewinnausfall.

1. Wie lange gab es die Praxis, fingierte Kostenvoranschläge für Umzüge einzuholen?

2. Wie viele Fälle gibt es? Wie viele Jahre sind betroffen?

3. Seit wann wusste die Kommission von den Absprachen der Umzugsunternehmen?

4. Seit wann wusste die Kommission vom Verhalten ihrer Beamten hinsichtlich der Erstattung von Umzugskosten? Seit wann hätte die Kommission dies wissen müssen?

5. Hat die Kommission die von den Beamten eingeholten Kostenvoranschläge überprüft? Wenn ja, wie?

6. Wie kontrolliert die Kommission mittlerweile die Kostenvoranschläge? Wie kontrolliert die Kommission, dass die Angebote von verschiedenen Unternehmen eingeholt wurden?

7. Wie wird die Aufforderung von Beamten an die Umzugsunternehmen Schutzangebote von Mitbewerbern einzuholen, bzw. die Aufforderung selbst Angebote zu fingieren von der Kommission geahndet? Welche dienstrechtlichen Konsequenzen hat dies?

8. Welche dienstrechtlichen Konsequenzen hat das Nichtanzeigen von offensichtlichem Fehlverhalten?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004259/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16. April 2013)

Betrifft: Umzugshilfen II

Die Ziegler SA hat am 12. Dezember 2012 vor dem Europäischen Gerichtshof Klage gegen die Kommission eingereicht. Es geht um die Entscheidung der Kommission COMP/38.543 — Auslandsumzüge, in der Absprachen zwischen Umzugsunternehmen in Brüssel sanktioniert wurden. Die Kommission hat für die Erstattung der Umzugskosten ihrer Beamten die Einholung von drei verschiedenen Kostenvoranschlägen zur Bedingung gemacht.

Die Klägerin wirft nun der Kommission vor, in zweierlei Hinsicht rechtswidrig gehandelt zu haben:

Zum einen habe die Kommission ihre Sorgfaltspflicht und das Grundrecht der Klägerin auf ordnungsgemäße Verwaltung verletzt, indem die Kommission die Bedingung für die Erstattung, die Einholung von drei verschiedenen Kostenvoranschlägen, nicht überprüft habe, obwohl sie die Auswüchse der Regelung gekannt hätte.

Zum anderen hätten Beamte die Klägerin unmittelbar dazu aufgefordert, Schutzangebote bei Wettbewerbern einzuholen, und hätten damit die Klägerin unmittelbar zur Zuwiderhandlung verleitet. Aufgrund der Weigerung der Klägerin, nach der Entscheidung der Kommission (COMP/38.543) weiterhin Schutzangebote bei Wettbewerbern einzuholen, erlitt die Klägerin einen erheblichen Gewinnausfall.

1. Wie viele OLAF-Mitarbeiter haben persönlich ebenfalls gefälschte Angebote vorgelegt?

2. Wie viele OLAF-Ermittlungen gab es? Gegen wie viele Personen/EU-Beamte/EU-Mitarbeiter wurde ermittelt? Was waren die Ergebnisse?

3. Gab es Ermittlungen auch gegen OLAF-Mitarbeiter? Wer führte die Ermittlungen durch? Was waren die Ergebnisse?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juni 2013)

Die geschilderte Problematik ist der Kommission gut bekannt. Wie der Anfrage zu entnehmen, werden dieselben Argumente von den Anwälten des Umzugsunternehmens in ihrer Klage gegen die Kommission vor dem Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union angeführt; mit dieser Klage wird die Entscheidung der Kommission in der Sache COMP/38.543 (Auslandsumzüge) angefochten, mit der sie Absprachen zwischen Umzugsunternehmen in Brüssel sanktioniert hat.

Die Kommission weist diese Argumente im Rahmen des Rechtsverfahrens förmlich zurück. Angesichts der anhängigen Rechtssachen T-150/13 und T-539/12 enthält sich die Kommission weiterer Bemerkungen und beschränkt sich auf den Hinweis, dass nach ihrem Wissen OLAF-Mitarbeiter nicht von dieser Angelegenheit betroffen sind.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004045/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Relocation grants

On 12 December 2012, Ziegler SA brought an action before the European Court of Justice against the Commission. It is contesting the Commission's decision in case COMP/38.543 (international removal services), which penalises agreements between removal companies in Brussels. The Commission made it a requirement for its officials to obtain three different quotes before relocation costs would be reimbursed.

The applicant complains that the Commission has acted illegally on two counts.

First, the Commission has infringed its duty of care and the applicant's fundamental right to sound administration in that the Commission failed to verify the condition requiring three different quotes to be obtained before relocation costs would be reimbursed, even though it should have been familiar with its own regulatory excesses.

Second, officials asked the applicant directly to obtain cover quotes from competitors, thereby directly inciting the applicant to commit an infringement. Following the applicant's refusal to continue obtaining cover quotes from competitors in the wake of the Commission's decision (COMP/38.543), the applicant sustained considerable loss of earnings.

1. How long has it been common practice to obtain fictitious relocation quotes?

2. How many cases have there been, and in how many years?

3. When did the Commission learn about the collusion between removal companies?

4. How long has the Commission known about the conduct of its officials seeking reimbursement of relocation costs? Since when should the Commission have known about this?

5. Did the Commission verify the quotes obtained by officials? If so, how?

6. How has the Commission been verifying quotes in the meantime? How does the Commission verify that the quotes have been obtained from different companies?

7. How does the Commission penalise officials for asking removal companies to obtain cover quotes from competitors or make up quotes themselves? What are the consequences of this under public sector employment law?

8. What consequences does the failure to report obvious misconduct have under public sector employment law?

Question for written answer E-004259/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Removal subsidies II

On 12 December 2012, Ziegler SA filed a complaint against the Commission before the Court of Justice of the European Union contesting the Commission's decision in case COMP/38.543 (international removal services), which penalises collusion between removal companies in Brussels. The Commission requires its officials to obtain three different quotations as a condition for the reimbursement of removal costs.

The applicant is now complaining that the Commission has acted illegally on two counts.

First, the Commission infringed its duty of care and the applicant's fundamental right to sound administration, by failing to review the condition requiring three different quotations to be obtained for the purpose of reimbursing relocation costs, even though it should have realised what the outcome of that rule would be.

Second, officials asked the applicant directly to obtain cover quotes from competitors, thereby directly encouraging the applicant to commit the infringement. Following the applicant's refusal to continue to obtain cover quotes from competitors in the wake of the Commission's decision (COMP/38.543), the applicant sustained considerable loss of earnings.

1. How many OLAF employees have also personally submitted bogus quotes?

2. How many OLAF investigations were there? How many people/EU officials/EU employees were investigated? What were the outcomes?

3. Were any OLAF employees also investigated? Who carried out the investigations? What were the outcomes?

Joint answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

The matters raised in those two questions are well known by the Commission. As indicated in the questions themselves, the same arguments are used by the lawyers of the removal company in their complaint against the Commission before the Court of Justice of the European Union contesting the Commission's decision in case COMP/38.543 (international removal services), which penalises collusion between removal companies in Brussels.

The Commission formally refutes those arguments within the judicial proceedings. In the light of the ongoing *sub judice* procedures T-150/13 et T-539/12, the Commission refrains from making further comments, limiting itself to indicating that to the best of its knowledge, no staff members of OLAF are concerned by the matter.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004046/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Athens office of the Commission's Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs

As we approach the first anniversary of the setting-up of the Athens office of its Directorate- General for Economic and Financial Affairs, can the Commission provide me with details of the following:

— the number of Commission officials (including temporary and contract staff) seconded to or on mission to the above Athens office, and their functions;

— the mission costs of seconded staff on long-term mission expressed on a monthly basis, indicating the number of staff and the number of days of mission;

— any additional allowances (including reimbursement for any accommodation) paid to staff serving in the above office;

— rental and utility costs for any premises related to the above office, including offices or accommodation for staff;

— any communications or representational budgets for the above office;

— the number (if any) of locally engaged staff (including part-time and contract staff) and their functions;

— the staffing costs of any such locally engaged staff, expressed on a monthly basis?

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

On 1 May 2013, the Athens office employed 24 Commission agents of which 19 at administrator level and 5 at assistant level. None of these are local agents:

14 agents (11 at administrator level and 3 at assistant level) were on long-term mission arrangements for a total commitment of ca. EUR 29 000 per month with no additional allowances specific to the staff of the office.

The office is hosted in a Greek Agency; no rent is charged and utilities are of EUR 12 700 per month. It has no communications or representational budget.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004047/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Breach of Directive 1999/74/EC on the protection of laying hens

In January 2013, the Commission gave its answer to a parliamentary question (E-010256/2012) regarding the ban on battery cages for egg-laying hens in the EU.

With regard to Member States failing to comply with the minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, the Commission answered that it expected to be able to close Member States' cases on evidence of compliance in January and February 2013, but may also refer others to the Court of Justice of the European Union if the use of unenriched cages continues to persist.

Which Member State cases did the Commission close this year in view of evidence of compliance, and which Member States does the Commission consider still to be breaching the welfare standards for laying hens?

Will the Commission be referring to the Court of Justice any Member States which have still not met the ban on battery cages? If not, can the Commission give reasons for this and detail what action it will take to enforce the requirements laid down in Directive 1999/74/EC?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

On 25 April 2013 the Commission referred Italy and Greece to the European Court of Justice for their failure to fully implement the requirements of Council Directive 1999/74/EC ([1]).

The other 11 Member States against which an infringement procedure was launched in 2012 have declared that they are compliant having fully phased out unenriched cages for laying hens. The Commission has closed the majority of these infringement cases but is still in the process of assessing the evidence demonstrating compliance provided by two of these Member States. Thus in total 4 infringement cases remain open.

([1]) Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens; OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 53.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004048/13
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(11 april 2013)

Betreft: Anti-dumping- en anti-subsidie-onderzoek van de Commissie naar Chinese zonnepanelen

Afgelopen zomer startte de Commissie een anti-dumping- en anti-subsidie-onderzoek naar Chinese zonneproducten, die een serieuze impact hebben op de Europese fotovoltaïsche industrie (PV) over de gehele PV-waardeketen. Vanwege de financiële crisis en de fenomenale toename van de vraag is er drastisch gesnoeid in fondsen zoals *feed-in*-tarieven. Als gevolg van de crisisperiode vinden momenteel fusies plaats in de PV-industrie, een situatie waarin producenten van PV-producten onder druk staan en bedrijven in de PV-waardeketen, zoals installateurs en projectontwikkelaars, gedwongen zijn om banen te schrappen. Doordat zij niet in staat waren voldoende kosten te besparen in een cruciale fase in de ontwikkeling van de industrie, zijn de Europese bedrijven, die het al zwaar te verduren hadden door de verminderde vraag, verzwakt. Het opleggen van aanvullende rechten staat haaks op de kostendaling die de bedrijfstak nodig heeft om te kunnen overleven.

1. Met de stijgende prijzen van Chinese zonneproducten valt er in de hele EU een daling van de vraag naar PV-installaties te verwachten. Hoe denkt de Commissie deze tegenstrijdigheid op te lossen met betrekking tot haar doelen inzake hernieuwbare energie voor 2020? Hoe past dit in het kader van de onlangs door de Commissie gelanceerde raadpleging over bindende klimaat- en hernieuwbare-energiedoelstellingen voor 2030?

2. Veel producenten van zonneproducten in de EU hebben een kleine productiecapaciteit (minder dan 100 MW). De invoering van anti-dumping- en/of compenserende rechten zal hun zwakke positie niet veranderen. Wat zou de Commissie doen ter compensatie van deze potentiële verliezen, zowel voor de EU-producenten als voor de EU-markt voor hernieuwbare energie?

3. Hoe rechtvaardigt de Commissie het om Europese banen in de gehele PV-waardeketen in deze zeer moeilijke economische periode op het spel te zetten ten gunste van een of twee Europese producenten van zonnepanelen?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(15 mei 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op de schriftelijke vragen E-3781/13, E-3489/13, E-2027/13, E-425/13 en E-220/13. ([1])

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004048/13
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Anti-dumping and anti-subsidy Commission investigations into Chinese solar products

Last summer the Commission launched anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations into Chinese solar products, since these are having serious implications for the European solar photovoltaic (PV) industry across the entire PV value chain. The financial crisis, as well as a staggering increase in demand, have led to funds such as feed-in tariffs being cut sharply. As a result of the bust period, the PV industry is currently in a state of consolidation, a situation which has affected producers of PV products and forced companies in the PV value chain, such as installers and project developers, to cut jobs. The inability to make sufficient cuts in costs at a crucial stage in the industry's development has injured European companies already suffering from decreased demand. Imposing additional duties is in blatant contradiction with the decrease in costs that is needed for the industry to survive.

1. With prices for Chinese solar products increasing, demand for PV installations across the EU is likely to decrease. How does the Commission propose to resolve this contradiction with respect to its 2020 renewable energy goals? How does this fit with the Commission's recently launched consultation on binding climate and renewable targets for 2030?

2. Many EU solar producers have a small production capacity (below 100 MW). The imposition of anti-dumping and/or countervailing duties will not change the weakness of the EU producers. What action will the Commission take to adjust for these potential losses, both for EU producers and the EU renewable energy market?

3. How does the Commission justify putting European jobs at risk across the entire PV value chain in these very challenging economic times, for the sole benefit of one or two European solar panel producers?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-3781/13, E-3489/13, E-2027/13, E-425/13, and E-220/13 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004049/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Conseguenze della proposta di regolamento relativo ai controlli tecnici periodici dei veicoli a motore e dei loro rimorchi (COM(2012)0380) sul settore delle autofficine in Italia

Già nel 2009, con l'articolo 2 della direttiva 2009/40/CE, la Commissione europea sollecitava gli Stati membri a prestare la massima attenzione nel caso in cui i centri di revisione delle automobili coincidessero anche con un'officina di riparazione, per contenere così i possibili svantaggi derivanti dalla sovrapposizione delle figure di «controllato» e «controllore».

Nel 2012, con la proposta di regolamento COM(2012)0380 finalizzata ad abrogare la direttiva 2009/40/CE, la Commissione ha manifestato la sua intenzione di introdurre in tutti gli Stati membri l'obbligo della assoluta divisione tra l'attività di revisione e l'attività di riparazione dei veicoli a motore.

Considerato che, nel suo comunicato del 29 marzo 2012, la Commissione ha reso noto che mentre in Germania, dove le revisioni sono da tempo affidate a soggetti diversi dalle officine, fra il 2010 e il 2011 le vittime da incidente stradale sono aumentate di circa il 10 %, in Italia si è invece registrata una diminuzione del 4 %; preso atto che non è mai stato presentato uno studio in grado di dimostrare la correlazione tra incidenti da guasto tecnico e aumento del numero di vittime; preso atto dell'importanza del settore delle autoriparazioni per l'economia e l'occupazione in Italia; considerato che il sistema di revisione italiano non è per nulla paragonabile a quello degli altri Stati membri e che molte autofficine hanno investito in protocolli molto costosi, come MCTCNet 2, che intende garantire il dialogo tra apparecchiature omologate all'interno del centro di revisione al fine di standardizzare, semplificare e automatizzare la procedura; la Commissione:

1. non ha considerato, prima di estendere questo obbligo a tutti gli Stati membri, di procedere a studi di valutazione che misurino il vero impatto del provvedimento sulla sicurezza?

2. ha valutato attentamente le disastrose conseguenze che un regolamento così rigido potrebbe avere sulle piccole e medie imprese e sulla rete dei professionisti italiani che rischiano di chiudere dopo aver effettuato ingenti investimenti in questa loro attività?

3. ha valutato i rischi e l'impatto sui cittadini europei legati alla creazione di un mercato oligopolistico delle revisioni guidato non dalla logica della sicurezza, ma da quella dei profitti?

4. ha considerato che questa scelta determinerà ingiustificati aumenti dei costi del servizio e che ciò andrà solamente a scapito dei consumatori, soprattutto in questo momento di particolare difficoltà economica?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

La Commissione desidera sottolineare che le proposte rientranti nel pacchetto controlli tecnici si basano su un'approfondita valutazione dell'impatto, conformemente all'agenda «Legiferare meglio».

La proposta di regolamento della Commissione relativo ai controlli tecnici periodici dei veicoli a motore e dei loro rimorchi ([1]) prevede la possibilità di autorizzare come centri di revisione organismi privati o officine che effettuano anche riparazioni dei veicoli.

([1]) COM(2012)0380.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004049/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Consequences for the Italian vehicle repair sector of the proposal for a regulation on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers (COM(2012)0380)

As long ago as 2009, the Commission, under Article 2 of Directive 2009/40/EC, urged the Member States to pay extremely close attention in cases where motor vehicle testing centres also carry out vehicle repairs, in order to limit the potential drawbacks of the 'inspected' party also being the 'inspector'.

In 2012, with the abovementioned proposal for a regulation (COM(2012)0380), aimed at repealing Directive 2009/40/EC, the Commission expressed its intention to make the complete separation of motor vehicle testing and repair activities obligatory in all the Member States.

In its communication of 29 March 2012, the Commission noted that whereas in Germany — where testing has long been entrusted to entities other than vehicle repair shops — the number of road accident victims increased by approximately 10% between 2010 and 2011, in Italy it fell by 4%. No study has ever been published that can demonstrate a correlation between accidents caused by technical failure and an increase in the number of victims. The motor vehicle repair sector is important for the economy and jobs in Italy. The Italian testing system is in no way comparable to that of the other Member States, many vehicle repair shops have invested in very costly protocols such as MCTCNet 2, which is intended to ensure a dialogue between type-approved equipment at testing centres in order to standardise, simplify and automate the procedure.

1. Has the Commission not considered carrying out studies to gauge the true impact of the measure on safety before extending this obligation to all the Member States?

2. Has it carefully assessed the disastrous consequences that such an inflexible regulation could have for small and medium-sized enterprises, and for the network of Italian professionals who may have to cease trading after investing huge amounts of money in their businesses?

3. Has it assessed the risks and the impact on EU citizens caused by the creation of an oligopolistic testing market driven by profit rather than by safety considerations?

4. Has it considered that this decision will lead to unjustified increases in service costs, and that this will only harm consumers, especially at this time of particular economic difficulty?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission would like to point out that the proposals which form part of the roadworthiness package have been based on a thorough Impact Assessment in line with the Better Regulation agenda.

The Commission's proposal for a regulation on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers ([1]) foresees the possibility to authorise as testing centres for periodic roadworthiness control private bodies or workshops that also carry out vehicle repair.

([1]) COM(2012)0380.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004050/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(11 april 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Baggerwerken voor oliewinning in het Noordpoolgebied

Een Vlaams baggerbedrijf vroeg twee weken geleden een exportkredietverzekering aan bij de Nationale Delcrederedienst, teneinde een staatswaarborg te bekomen voor baggerwerken die het bedrijf zal uitvoeren in het kader van de uitbouw van de Sabetta-haven op het Yamal-schiereiland, gelegen in het Russische noordpoolgebied. Jan De Nul doet dit in opdracht van de Russische autoriteiten. Deze Sabetta-haven moet een cruciale rol gaan spelen in de Russische ambities om de olie- en gasvoorraden die zich onder het poolijs bevinden te gaan ontginnen.

Eind vorig jaar keurden dit Parlement en de Europese Raad de Verordening (EU) nr. 1233/2011 goed inzake de OESO richtsnoeren op het gebied van door de overheid gesteunde exportkredieten ([1]).

In een recent goedgekeurde Resolutie van 14 maart 2013 over het Stappenplan Energie 2050, neemt het Europees Parlement het op voor de Noordpoolwateren en wijst op de gevaren van energiewinning voor het milieu ([2]).

Is de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger/Vice-President bereid er bij de lidstaten op aan te dringen geen staatsgaranties te verlenen aan bedrijven die olie en gas (willen) ontginnen in het Noordpoolgebied en de Arctische wateren?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(8 juli 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag P-004043/13 ([3]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:326:0045:01:NL:HTML.
([2]) P7_TA(2013)0088, paragraaf 112.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004050/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — dredging for oil extraction in the Arctic

Two weeks ago, a Flemish dredging company applied to the Belgian Export Credit Agency for export credit insurance in order to obtain a state guarantee for the dredging works the company will carry out as part of the development of Sabetta port on the Yamal Peninsula in the Russian Arctic region. The company has been commissioned to do this work by the Russian Government. Sabetta port is to play a crucial role in Russian ambitions to extract the oil and gas reserves that lie under the Arctic ice.

At the end of last year, this Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EU) No 1233/2011 on the OECD guidelines in the field of government-backed export credits ([1]).

In its Resolution of 14 March 2013 on the Energy Roadmap 2050, the European Parliament expressed concern over the Arctic waters and pointed to the dangers that oil and gas operations pose to the environment ([2]).

Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to urge the Member States to refrain from granting state guarantees to companies which aim to extract oil and gas in the Arctic and Arctic waters?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-004043/13 ([3]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:326:0045:01:NL:HTML.
([2]) P7_TA(2013)0088, paragraph 112.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004051/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(11 april 2013)

Betreft: Bemoeienis van commissaris Kroes met de Italiaanse verkiezingen

Hartelijk dank voor de antwoorden die de Commissie mij heeft gegeven op mijn vragen over het optreden van commissaris Kroes op de Nederlandse publieke televisie E-002101/2013.

Aangezien de Commissie niet op de hoogte is van het door mij aangehaalde televisie-interview voeg ik hieronder de link naar het interview toe ([1]). Ondanks het feit dat zij niet op de hoogte is van het interview stelt de Commissie dat vicevoorzitter Kroes daarin haar persoonlijke mening heeft gegeven. Mevrouw Kroes werd in het programma echter geïntroduceerd als eurocommissaris Neelie Kroes en heeft daar tijdens haar opmerkingen over de heer Berlusconi op geen enkele wijze afstand van genomen door te verklaren of uit te dragen dat zij op persoonlijke titel sprak. Daarbij heeft zij in het interview gemeld dat zij bij een bijeenkomst aanwezig was waar de heer Berlusconi een rede hield. Zij zat daar naast de (Italiaanse) minister van Financiën. Met die opmerking suggereert zij dat zij aanwezig was als eurocommissaris en niet als privébelangstellende. Ook bij haar beschrijving van die bijeenkomst heeft zij haar minachting geuit over de heer Berlusconi.

1. Op grond waarvan oordeelt de Commissie dat commissaris Kroes het interview op persoonlijke titel heeft gegeven?

2. Op welke wijze kan bij een publieke verklaring van een eurocommissaris door de toehoorder worden onderscheiden of hij / zij op persoonlijke titel spreekt of uit hoofde van zijn/haar functie?

3. Als er geen duidelijk en eenduidig onderscheid kan worden gemaakt tussen uitlatingen van een eurocommissaris uit hoofde van zijn/haar functie en die hij/zij doet als privépersoon, welke waarde moet er dan worden gehecht aan een uitspraak van een eurocommissaris?

4. Als er geen duidelijk en eenduidig onderscheid kan worden gemaakt tussen uitlatingen van een eurocommissaris uit hoofde van zijn/haar functie en die hij/zij doet als privépersoon, wat is dan de waarde van de gedragsregels voor commissarissen — C(2011)2904?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(27 juni 2013)

1.-2. Aangezien de deelname van de heer Berlusconi aan de Italiaanse verkiezingen geen kwestie is die onder de bevoegdheid van de Commissie valt, kan enkel worden geconcludeerd dat mevrouw Kroes haar standpunt over dit onderwerp in eigen naam heeft geuit.

3. Burgers kunnen vrij bepalen welke waarde zij hechten aan verklaringen van bekleders van een openbaar ambt.

4. In de gedragscode voor commissarissen zijn de verplichtingen die in artikel 17 van het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie en in artikel 245 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie zijn vastgelegd, voor zoveel als nodig nader uitgewerkt.

([1]) http://powervrouwen.blog.nl/politiek/2013/02/24/neelie-kroes-zegt-nee-tegen-berlusconi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004051/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Commissioner Kroes's interference with the Italian elections

I am sincerely grateful for the Commission's answers to my questions about Commissioner Kroes's appearance on Dutch national television — E-002101/2013.

Since the Commission is not familiar with the television interview I was referring to, I attach below a link to that interview ([1]). Even though the Commission is not familiar with the interview, it states that Vice-President Kroes was expressing her personal opinion. However, Ms Kroes was introduced in the programme as European Commissioner Neelie Kroes, and while making her comments about Mr Berlusconi, she did not disassociate herself in any way [from her position as European Commissioner] by explaining or conveying the fact that she was speaking in a personal capacity. She also said in the interview that she had attended a meeting where Mr Berlusconi made a speech. She sat during that meeting next to the (Italian) Minister of Finance. This comment suggests that she was there as a European Commissioner and not as a private individual. Also in her description of that meeting, she expressed contempt for Mr Berlusconi.

1. What is the basis for the Commission's view that Commissioner Kroes gave the interview in a personal capacity?

2. How can a listener distinguish when hearing a public statement by a European Commissioner whether he/she speaks in a personal or an official capacity?

3. If there is no clear and unambiguous distinction between a commissioner's personal and official remarks what value should then be attached to his/her statements?

4. If there is no clear and unambiguous distinction between a commissioner's personal and official remarks, what is the value of the code of conduct for Commissioners — C(2011)2904?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2013)

1-2. Given that the participation of Mr Berlusconi in the Italian elections is not an issue of Commission competence, the opinions expressed by Ms Kroes on that subject can only be considered as made in her personal capacity.

3. Citizens are free to assess themselves the value of the statements made by holders of public office.

4. The Code of Conduct for Commissioners details as far as appropriate the obligations contained in Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union and Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

([1]) http://powervrouwen.blog.nl/politiek/2013/02/24/neelie-kroes-zegt-nee-tegen-berlusconi.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004052/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Inventariação, estudo e preservação do património europeu no mundo II

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-001004/2013, a senhora Comissária Androulla Vassiliou declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «No que diz respeito aos países situados fora do território da UE, os programas regionais, como o Euromed Património e o Programa Cultural da Parceria Oriental, incluem igualmente ações destinadas a promover e a preservar o património cultural. Além disso, nos países parceiros orientais e meridionais, estão a ser lançadas iniciativas bilaterais ad hoc, tais como uma ação de reforço das capacidades no domínio da gestão do património — que está no centro de um programa importante a desenvolver futuramente com a Argélia — e o apoio concedido ao organismo nacional de conservação do património cultural da Geórgia para o desenvolvimento institucional. Nos países dos Balcãs Ocidentais, a Comissão apoia os esforços envidados pelo Conselho de Cooperação Regional no sentido de prosseguir o processo de Liubliana, designado "Reabilitar o nosso património comum".»

Da resposta da Comissão depreende-se a não existência de um programa especialmente destinado à inventariação, estudo e preservação do património europeu no mundo, circunstância que não posso deixar de lamentar.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Está disponível para considerar a criação de um programa destinado à inventariação, estudo e preservação do património europeu cultural material e imaterial no mundo?

2. Não considera que a circunstância de a ação europeia neste domínio se quedar pelas regiões do globo mais próximas da União Europeia põe em causa a sobrevivência do património europeu implantado nas regiões mais distantes? Precisamente naqueles países que, em regra, dispõem de menos meios e em que a sua conservação é mais difícil?

3. Não julga que a União Europeia deveria assumir a importância estratégica da sua manutenção e preservação? Se, como a própria Comissão afirma, «a preservação do património cultural europeu assume grande importância.», não tem o dever de procurar que assim seja efetivamente?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(29 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de realçar que o Programa Cultura investiu 32 milhões de euros do seu orçamento total em 108 projetos no domínio do património cultural, promovendo a cooperação e a ligação em rede entre os operadores culturais e facilitando a mobilidade dos profissionais ligados ao património e a circulação de obras neste setor. O Programa Cultura está aberto aos Estados-Membros da UE, aos três países do EEE e aos países candidatos e potencialmente candidatos (Croácia, Turquia, Sérvia, Montenegro, Antiga República Jugoslava da Macedónia, Bósnia-Herzegovina e Albânia). Além disso, todos os anos, dois países terceiros podem participar (em 2013, Austrália e Canadá).

A Comissão não considera, para já, a possibilidade de criar um programa destinado à inventariação, estudo ou preservação do património cultural europeu no mundo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004052/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Cataloguing, study and preservation of European heritage throughout the world II

In answer to my Question E-001004/2013, Commissioner Vassiliou stated on behalf of the Commission that '[a]s for countries outside the EU, regional programmes such as Euromed Heritage and Eastern Partnership Culture also include actions to promote and preserve cultural heritage. Moreover, bilateral ad hoc initiatives are taken in the Eastern and Southern Partner countries, such as a capacity building action in heritage management — which is at the core of an important upcoming programme with Algeria — and support provided for the institutional development of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia. In the Western Balkan countries, the Commission supports the efforts of the Regional Cooperation Council to continue the Ljubljana Process "Rehabilitating our common heritage".'

From the Commission's answer it is clear that there is no programme specifically aimed at cataloguing, studying and preserving European heritage throughout the world, which is a shame.

1. Is the Commission prepared to consider establishing a programme aimed at cataloguing, studying and preserving Europe's material and non-material cultural heritage throughout the world?

2. Does it not think that restricting EU action on this issue to those parts of the world closest to the EU puts the continued existence of European heritage further afield at risk, particularly in countries that generally have fewer resources and where preservation is more difficult?

3. Does it not agree that the EU should give strategic importance to maintaining and preserving European cultural heritage? If, as the Commission itself has stated, 'the safeguarding of European cultural heritage is of high importance', does the EU not have a duty to ensure it is safeguarded effectively?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission is happy to specify that the Culture programme has invested EUR 32 million out of its total budget in 108 cultural heritage projects promoting cooperation and networking among cultural operators, facilitating mobility of heritage professionals and the circulation of works. The Culture programme is open to EU Member States, the three EEA countries, and to candidate and potential candidate countries (Croatia, Turkey, Serbia, Montenegro, FYROM, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania). In addition, two third countries are eligible to participate each year (Australia and Canada in 2013).

The Commission currently has no plans to consider establishing a programme aimed at cataloguing, studying or preserving Europe's cultural heritage throughout the world.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004053/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Controlos oficiais — proposta da Comissão

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-001582/2013, o senhor Comissário Borg declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A próxima proposta da Comissão sobre os controlos oficiais procurará reforçar o sistema existente, incluindo no que diz respeito a disposições em matéria de sanções.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Quando pretende apresentar a sua próxima proposta sobre os controlos oficiais?

2. De que modo esta poderá reforçar o sistema existente?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(24 de maio de 2013)

A proposta da Comissão sobre os controlos oficiais foi adotada pela Comissão em 6 de maio de 2013.

A proposta dará às autoridades nacionais um quadro legal mais eficiente e instrumentos de execução mais fortes para que cumpram as suas tarefas de controlo ao longo de toda a cadeia agroalimentar, visto que exigirá a realização de controlos oficiais regulares sem aviso prévio, para que se identifiquem as violações intencionais, e a aplicação de sanções financeiras , que compensem a vantagem económica pretendida pelo autor da violação.

A proposta dará ainda à Comissão mais poderes para exigir aos Estados-Membros a realização de controlos e testes no âmbito de um plano de controlo coordenado de duração limitada, para determinar a extensão de deficiências específicas ao longo da cadeia agroalimentar e para estabelecer requisitos permanentes de controlo específicos em relação a setores específicos ou a riscos recentemente identificados que surjam ao longo da cadeia agroalimentar ou que resultem de novos padrões de produção ou de consumo de géneros alimentícios.

A proposta reforçará também os mecanismos de cooperação administrativa, para combater as violações transfronteiriças das regras, e consolidará o papel de coordenação da Comissão em casos de violações generalizadas ou recorrentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004053/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Commission proposal on official controls

In answer to my Question E-001582/2013, Commissioner Borg stated on behalf of the Commission that '[t]he forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.'

1. When will the Commission present its forthcoming proposal on official controls?

2. How might this strengthen the existing system?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The Commission proposal on official controls was adopted by the Commission on 6 May 2013.

The proposal will give national enforcers a more efficient legal framework and stronger enforcement tools to deliver on their control tasks along the whole agri-food chain as it will require the performance of regular unannounced official controls directed at identifying intentional violations and the application of financial penalties which offset the economic advantage sought by the perpetrator of the violation.

It will furthermore give the Commission more powers to require Member States to carry out controls and tests within a coordinated control plan of limited duration to ascertain the extent of specific shortcomings along agri-food chain and to establish permanent specific control requirements in relation to specific sectors or newly identified risks which emerge along the agri-food chain or which emerge from new patterns of production or consumption of food.

The proposal will finally strengthen the mechanisms for administrative cooperation to fight cross-border violations of the rules and the coordination role of the Commission in cases of widespread or recurrent violations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004054/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Práticas fraudulentas de rotulagem — inquéritos em curso

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-001582/2013, o senhor Comissário Borg declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A Comissão está a coordenar ativamente os inquéritos pendentes nos Estados-Membros em causa, tanto no plano político como no plano técnico. Adotou recentemente uma recomendação que insta à realização de controlos, no setor retalhista e à escala da UE, por forma identificar o grau das práticas fraudulentas relacionadas com a presença da carne de bovino, assim como para detetar eventuais resíduos de fenilbutazona, um medicamento veterinário cuja utilização em animais produtores de alimentos é ilegal.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Quantos inquéritos foram realizados ou estão pendentes neste momento?

2. Onde pode ser consultada a síntese de todos os resultados de disponibilidade anunciada para abril de 2013?

3. De que modo concreto se verificou a coordenação dos mesmos por seu intermédio tanto no plano político como no técnico?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(29 de maio de 2013)

1. A Comissão recebeu relatórios dos Estados-Membros de que constavam os resultados dos ensaios efetuados em conformidade com a Recomendação 2013/99. Todos os Estados-Membros efetuaram pelo menos, o número mínimo de testes recomendados pelo plano de controlo coordenado.

2. O resumo de todos os resultados já está disponível na seguinte página Web da Comissão:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/horsemeat/index_en.htm

3. A Comissão tem mantido contactos estreitos com as autoridades competentes em matéria de execução nos Estados-Membros, a fim de garantir que está a ser dado o seguimento apropriado às conclusões relativas aos casos de práticas fraudulentas no domínio dos produtos alimentares e que se verifica uma disponibilização e intercâmbio de informações atualizadas tão rapidamente quanto possível entre os Estados-Membros.

A Comissão tem igualmente gerido as informações relacionadas com os inquéritos e assegurou que estas fossem difundidas através do Sistema de Alerta Rápido para os Géneros Alimentícios e Alimentos para Animais (RASFF), por forma a permitir que os Estados-Membros orientam adequadamente as suas investigações.

Em 20 de março de 2013 foi elaborado um plano de ação pela Comissão, que foi subsequentemente enviado aos Estados-Membros. Nele se identificam cinco domínios em que é necessário adotar e dar seguimento a medidas, a fim de reforçar o sistema da UE e restabelecer a confiança dos consumidores. Os domínios prioritários de ação identificados incluem, nomeadamente, medidas para combater de forma mais eficiente a fraude alimentar, reforçar as regras sobre os passaportes para cavalos, controlos oficiais e regras de rotulagem mais eficazes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004054/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Investigations into fraudulent food labelling

In answer to my Question E-001582/2013, Commissioner Borg stated on behalf of the Commission that '[t]he Commission is actively coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned both on a political and a technical level. It recently adopted a recommendation which calls for EU-wide controls at retail level to identify the scale of the fraudulent practices as to the presence of beef as well as to detect possible residues of phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug, whose use in food producing animals is illegal.'

1. How many investigations have already been completed and how many are pending at the current time?

2. Where will the summary of all findings, announced for April 2013, be made available?

3. How exactly has the Commission intervened to coordinate these investigations, both on a political and a technical level?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

1. The Commission has received reports from the Member States with the results of the tests carried out pursuant to Recommendation 2013/99. All Member States have carried out at least the minimum number of tests recommended by the coordinated control plan.

2. The summary of all the findings is already available on the following Commission webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/horsemeat/index_en.htm.

3. The Commission has maintained close contacts with the enforcement authorities in the Member States to ensure that food fraud findings are being given appropriate follow up and that up-to-date information is made available and exchanged as rapidly as possible amongst Member States.

The Commission has also managed information related to the investigations and ensured that it has all been circulated via the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), thus allowing Member States to 'target' their investigations.

An action plan was prepared by the Commission and sent to Member States on 20 March 2013. It identifies five areas in which action is needed and will be pursued in order to strengthen the EU system and restore consumer confidence. Priority areas identified include action to better tackle food fraud, strengthen rules on horse passports, more effective official controls and labelling rules.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004055/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Primavera Árabe — assistência financeira europeia

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-000807/2013, a senhora Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a UE assumiu compromissos políticos desde os primeiros dias da Primavera Árabe, tendo também reorientado e intensificado a sua assistência financeira para apoiar os países na sua transição democrática e económica».

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Em termos quantitativos e qualitativos, em que medida se deu essa intensificação?

2. Quais as áreas em que o apoio europeu mais se intensificou?

3. Está em condições de apresentar resultados do apoio entretanto verificado?

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

Para além dos 3,5 mil milhões de EUR programados para o período 2011-2013, a UE mobilizou mais de 660 milhões de EUR em novas subvenções para os países vizinhos do Sul, nomeadamente através do programa Spring ([1]) que concede financiamento adicional aos países parceiros empenhados em reformas democráticas e que dão provas dos progressos realizados. A UE reorientou o seu apoio à democracia e ao crescimento inclusivo, apoiando a reforma nos domínios da governação, dos direitos humanos, do Estado de direito e do desenvolvimento socioeconómico inclusivo.

O BEI ([2]) pode conceder empréstimos adicionais até 1,7 mil milhões de EUR ([3]) e o mandato alargado do BERD ([4]) permite-lhe canalizar um montante adicional de mil milhões de EUR para a região.

Foi criado um mecanismo de financiamento da sociedade civil dotado com 36 milhões de euros para o período 2011-2013, a fim de apoiar a sociedade civil na promoção das reformas, foi lançado um novo programa regional criado pelo Conselho da Europa, para promover a boa governação, a proteção dos direitos do Homem e apoiar a reforma do sistema judicial, o financiamento à Fundação Anna Lindh foi aumentado e a UE está a financiar o recém-criado «Fundo Europeu para a Democracia». Foi concedido financiamento adicional aos programas Erasmus Mundus e Tempus e à Fundação Europeia para a Formação.

Pela primeira vez realizaram-se eleições democráticas em vários países e a UE efetuou missões de observação eleitoral e prestou assistência em processos eleitorais. Contudo, a transição democrática não é um processo linear e levará o seu tempo. Subsistem desafios importantes, tanto a nível interno como externo, nomeadamente com a guerra civil em curso na Síria e o seu impacto sobre os países vizinhos. A UE está determinada a reforçar o seu apoio à transição democrática e económica com base numa abordagem diferenciada e de forma coerente com os seus valores.

([1]) Spring = Programa de apoio à parceria, às reformas e ao crescimento inclusivo.
([2]) BEI = Banco Europeu de Investimento.
([3]) 1,7 mil milhões EUR: Mil milhões de euros para os países de Mediterrâneo e 700 milhões de EUR para as alterações climáticas.
([4]) BERD = Banco Europeu de Reconstrução e Desenvolvimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004055/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Arab Spring — EU financial assistance

In answer to my Question E-000807/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative stated on behalf of the Commission that '[t]he EU from the very first days of the Arab Spring has expressed political commitments and has also reoriented and stepped up its financial assistance to support countries in their democratic and economic transitions.'

1. How has this financial assistance been stepped up in quantitative and qualitative terms?

2. In what areas has EU financial assistance been stepped up?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative able to say what results have been achieved through the support provided in the meantime?

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

In addition to the EUR 3.5 billion programmed for the period 2011-2013, the EU has mobilised over EUR 660 million in new grants for the southern Neighbourhood, in particular through the SPRING ([1]) programme providing additional funding to partners committed to, and showing progress in, democratic reform. The EU has re-focused its support towards democracy and inclusive growth, with assistance to reform in the areas of governance, human rights, the rule of law and inclusive socioeconomic development.

The EIB ([2]) can provide additional loans for up to EUR 1.7 billion ([3]) and the enlarged EBRD ([4]) mandate enables it to channel an extra EUR 1 billion to the region.

A Civil Society Facility was created with EUR 36 million over 2011-2013 to support civil society in promoting reform, a new regional programme implemented by the Council of Europe, aiming at promoting governance, protection of human rights and supporting the reform of the judiciary was launched, funding to the Anna Lindh Foundation was increased and the EU is funding the newly created 'European Endowment for Democracy'. Additional funding was granted to Erasmus Mundus, Tempus and the European Training Foundation.

Democratic elections have been held for the first time in several countries and the EU has conducted electoral observation missions and provided assistance on electoral processes. However, democracy transition is not a linear process and will take time. Important challenges remain both internally and externally, notably with the ongoing civil war in Syria and its impact on neighbouring countries. The EU is determined to enhance its support to the democratic and economic transition based on a differentiated approach and in coherence with its values.

([1]) SPRING = Support to Partnership, Reform and Inclusive Growth.
([2]) EIB = European Investment Bank.
([3]) EUR 1.7 billion: EUR 1 billion for the Mediterranean and EUR 700 million for climate change.
([4]) EBRD = European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004056/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Portal Único — oportunidades de financiamento

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-001596/2013, o senhor Comissário Lewandowski declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a Comissão está atualmente a trabalhar no sentido de melhorar a interface das páginas web que descrevem as oportunidades de financiamento. A Comissão tenciona concluir a médio prazo o desenvolvimento de um portal único com todas as subvenções concedidas pela UE que funcionará como um "balcão único"».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Pode concretizar o que entende por médio prazo? Quando pretende terminar o processo de desenvolvimento do referido portal único?

Resposta dada por Janusz Lewandowski em nome da Comissão
(4 de junho de 2013)

O portal já está em funcionamento para as subvenções financiadas ao abrigo do programa-quadro da UE para a investigação e a inovação. O ritmo de integração dos outros programas da UE dependerá da capacidade dos serviços da Comissão para efetuarem as adaptações necessárias nos seus sistemas informáticos. No entanto, é de esperar que, no início do próximo período de programação, o portal apoiará cerca de 90 % das subvenções concedidas pela Comissão e agências de execução.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004056/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Single portal — funding opportunities

In answer to my Question E-001596/2013, Commissioner Lewandowski stated on behalf of the Commission that 'the Commission is currently working on improving the interface of webpages with funding opportunities. The Commission intends to complete in the medium term the development of a single portal with all EU funded grants serving as "one stop shop".'

Can the Commission be more specific about what it means by 'medium term'? When does it expect this single portal to be ready?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The portal is already in operation for the grants funded under the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. The pace of integration of the other EU programmes will depend on the ability of the Commission services to make the necessary adaptations on their IT systems. It is nevertheless expected that, for the start of the next programming period, the portal will support around 90% of the grants awarded by the Commission and executive agencies.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004057/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Financiamento Europeu: Exemplos de candidaturas bem-sucedidas

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-001596/2013, o Comissário Lewandowski declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «No caso de vários programas (por exemplo, ambiente, investigação, educação e cultura), a informação relativa a projetos de sucesso já está disponível na página web "Europa"». Contudo, a publicação de exemplos de candidaturas bem-sucedidas, juntamente com os documentos comprovativos, não parece ser viável: estes documentos são tratados de forma confidencial uma vez que incluem ideias, métodos e processos que continuam a ser propriedade dos candidatos. Além disso, poderia gerar a duplicação de propostas por parte dos candidatos sem qualquer mais-valia para os programas europeus. Por último, já estão disponíveis, para muitos dos programas, guias que explicam aos candidatos como apresentar uma candidatura.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Não seria possível a apresentação de modelos de candidaturas bem-sucedidas que, evidentemente, omitissem dados confidenciais?

2. Onde podem ser encontrados os referidos guias?

Resposta dada por Janusz Lewandowski em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

1. A publicação das propostas completas, mesmo se determinadas informações forem retiradas antes da divulgação, não acrescenta qualquer valor acrescentado, uma vez que pode simplesmente conduzir à duplicação das mesmas propostas.

Para muitos dos programas da UE, as informações sobre o conteúdo de projetos bem sucedidos já se encontram disponíveis no sítio *Web* Europa, por exemplo:

— relativamente ao Sétimo Programa-Quadro (7.° PQ), está disponível um instrumento de pesquisa especial no sítio:
http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html

— relativamente ao compêndio do Programa de Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida (PALV) com uma descrição sumária dos projetos bem sucedidos, no sítio:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/project_compendia_en.php

— relativamente a partes dos relatórios sobre projetos, no sítio:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/project_reports/project_reports_en.php

A diversidade das propostas e ideias aí apresentados contribuem significativamente para a realização dos objetivos das políticas da UE, respeitando simultaneamente os direitos dos beneficiários sobre os seus projetos e a necessária confidencialidade, por exemplo, no domínio da investigação.

2. Os convites à apresentação de propostas contêm informações pormenorizadas sobre quem pode candidatar-se e o modo de o fazer (geralmente sob a forma de orientações para os candidatos em anexo aos convites). É possível o acesso às informações sobre os convites à apresentação de propostas clicando nas ligações por setor na página de caráter geral sobre subvenções do sítio *Web* Europa: (http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/grants_pt.htm). Podem ser encontrados exemplos de orientações específicas para os candidatos:

— relativamente ao programa LIFE+ (ambiente), como parte do processo de candidatura, no sítio:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus2013/call/index.htm

— relativamente ao PALV (convite geral à apresentação de candidaturas de 2013), no sítio:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/official-documents-on-the-llp_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004057/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: European funding — examples of successful applications

In answer to my Question E-001596/2013, Commissioner Lewandowski stated on behalf of the Commission that '[f]or several programmes (e.g. environment, research, education and culture) information on successful projects is already available on Europa. However, publishing examples of successful applications together with supporting documents does not seem feasible: these documents are treated confidentially since they include ideas, methods or processes which remain the property of applicants. Furthermore, this could lead to a mere duplication of proposals by applicants without added value for European programmes. Finally, guides for applicants explaining how to apply are already available for many programmes.'

1. Could the Commission not provide examples of successful applications with confidential information removed?

2. Where are the aforementioned guides located?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

1. Publication of complete proposals, even if certain information is removed before disclosure, does not have a real added value as it may simply lead to duplication of the same proposals.

For many EU programmes information on the substance of successful projects is already available on Europa, e.g.:

— for the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) a special searching tool on: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html

— for the Life-Long Learning Programme (LLP) compendia with a summary description of successful projects on http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/project_compendia_en.php and parts of project reports on http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/project_reports/project_reports_en.php

The diversity of proposals and ideas presented therein contribute significantly to the achievement of the EU policy objectives while respecting the rights of beneficiaries over their projects and the necessary confidentiality, e.g. in the field of research.

2. Calls for proposals contain detailed information on who can apply and how (usually in the form of guidelines for applicants attached to the calls). Information about calls for proposals could be accessed by following the links per sector on the general Grants page on Europa: http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/grants_en.htm. Examples of specific guidelines for applicants could be found:

— for LIFE+ programme (environment), as part of the application packages, on http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus2013/call/index.htm

— for LLP (general call for proposals 2013) on http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/official-documents-on-the-llp_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004058/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Dia Europeu do Mar — Apoio do Parlamento Europeu

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-000804/2013, a Comissária Maria Damanaki declarou, em nome da Comissão, que, quanto ao dia Europeu do Mar, «O apoio do Parlamento Europeu seria acolhido com agrado para as próximas edições».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Em termos concretos, em que matérias e atividades gostaria de poder contar com o apoio do Parlamento Europeu?

Resposta dada pela Comissária Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2013)

O Dia Europeu do Mar foi criado na sequência de uma declaração assinada pelos Presidentes do Parlamento Europeu, do Conselho e da Comissão, em 20 de maio de 2008, em Estrasburgo, com o objetivo de realçar o papel crucial desempenhado pelos oceanos e mares e contribuir para uma melhor visibilidade dos setores marítimos.

A par do papel do país de acolhimento e da Comissão, que organizam em conjunto o Dia Europeu do Mar, a participação do Parlamento Europeu reflete o apoio à política marítima europeia. Além de contribuir para aumentar a visibilidade do evento, envia um sinal às partes interessadas e às regiões costeiras de que a Europa está preparada para agir a nível da agenda do «crescimento azul».

A um nível mais prático, o Parlamento Europeu poderá também apoiar na organização de seminários em que participarão as partes interessadas para debater o modo de melhorar a respetiva participação no evento, colaborar com os parlamentos nacionais, a fim de sensibilizar a opinião pública nos Estados-Membros e promover o evento através dos seus próprios canais de comunicação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004058/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: European Maritime Day — European Parliament support

In answer to my Question E-000804/2013, Commissioner Damanaki stated on behalf of the Commission that, with regard to European Maritime Day, '[t]he support of the European Parliament would be welcomed for the next editions.'

In what specific matters and activities would the Commission welcome Parliament's support?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

European Maritime Day was set up following a tripartite declaration signed by the Presidents of the Parliament, the Council and the Commission, on 20 May 2008 in Strasbourg, with the objective of highlighting the crucial role played by the oceans and seas and contributing to a better visibility of maritime sectors.

Next to the role of the host country and the Commission, co-organisers of each year's European Maritime Day, participation of the Parliament is an important demonstration of the commitment to the cause of European Maritime Policy. It contributes to raise the profile of the event, and sends the signal to stakeholders and coastal regions that Europe is ready to act on the Blue Growth agenda.

On a more practical level, the Parliament's support could also take the form of organising workshops with stakeholders on how to improve their ownership of the event, working with national parliaments to raise awareness in Member States and promoting the event through its own communication and media tools.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004059/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Carne de porco encontrada em lasanha de alce

Esta semana foi conhecido um novo escândalo alimentar, ao ser tornado público que uma lasanha de alce comercializada por uma conhecida marca continha, afinal, carne de porco. Após testes efetuados por autoridades belgas, as vendas em 18 países da Europa foram suspensas.

Atendendo a que a presença de carne porco não estava devidamente identificada e que esta, para além de ser bastante mais alergénica do que outras carnes, é considerada proibida por algumas religiões;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Está a acompanhar a situação da utilização não identificada de carne de carne de porco em alimentos?

2. Pretende alterar as regras aplicáveis à rotulagem de alimentos processados e transformados, para que seja identificada a sua cabal composição?

3. Atendendo a que, face ao escândalo da carne de cavalo, a UE adotou um plano para despistar a presença desta carne não-declarada misturada em alimentos transformados, pondera fazer o mesmo para despistar a presença de carne de porco ou de outros alimentos ou nutrientes não identificados?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2013)

Ao abrigo das regras vigentes ([1]), a rotulagem dos géneros alimentícios não deve induzir em erro o consumidor, em especial no que se refere às suas características, incluindo a sua verdadeira natureza e conteúdo. Todos os ingredientes alimentares devem ser rotulados. A rotulagem dos géneros alimentícios que contêm carne deve também indicar as espécies animais em causa. Além disso, se um ingrediente é mencionado no nome do género alimentício, a sua quantidade, expressa em percentagem, deve estar mencionada na lista de ingredientes.

Estas regras foram recentemente revistas e reforçadas ([2]). O Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 mantém a exigência da rotulagem de todos os ingredientes alimentares. Além disso, no caso de produtos à base de carne ou preparados de carne que contenham proteínas adicionadas como tal de origem animal diferente, é necessário que o nome do género alimentício contenha uma indicação da presença dessas proteínas e da sua origem.

As práticas de rotulagem fraudulentas e enganosas podem ser eliminadas através do controlo adequado dos requisitos da legislação alimentar da União, que compete às autoridades nacionais competentes. Estas autoridades têm de realizar controlos oficiais apropriados e impor sanções dissuasoras e eficazes. A próxima proposta da Comissão sobre os controlos oficiais procurará reforçar o sistema existente, incluindo no que diz respeito a disposições em matéria de sanções.

Na sequência de constatações recentes e do resultado do plano de controlo coordenado ([3]), os Estados-Membros estão a incluir progressivamente nos seus planos nacionais de controlo testes destinados a verificar a ausência de espécies de carne não declaradas (incluindo carne de porco) em produtos alimentares. Os operadores de empresas do setor alimentar, sobre os quais recai também a responsabilidade principal pelo cumprimento dos requisitos da legislação alimentar, devem ajustar os seus próprios controlos à necessidade de verificar a exatidão e a fiabilidade da rotulagem utilizada.

([1]) Diretiva 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de março de 2000, relativa à aproximação das legislações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes à rotulagem, apresentação e publicidade dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 109 de 6.5.2000, p. 29.

([2]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 relativo à prestação de informação aos consumidores sobre os géneros alimentícios, que altera os Regulamentos (CE) n.° 1924/2006 e (CE) n.° 1925/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho e revoga as Diretivas 87/250/CEE da Comissão, 90/496/CEE do Conselho, 1999/10/CE da Comissão, 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE da Comissão e o Regulamento (CE) n.° 608/2004 da Comissão, JO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 18. O Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 entra em vigor em 13 de dezembro de 2014.

([3]) Recomendação da Comissão, de 19 de fevereiro de 2013, relativa a um plano de controlo coordenado com vista a determinar a prevalência de práticas fraudulentas na comercialização de certos alimentos (2013/99/UE), JO L 48 de 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004059/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Pork found in elk lasagne

A new food scandal erupted this week with the news that elk lasagne sold by a well-known company actually contained pork. Sales have been suspended in 18 European countries after tests by Belgian authorities.

The pork content was not duly indicated and pork, as well as being responsible for more allergies than other meats, is prohibited by some religions.

1. Is the Commission aware that pork is being used in foods without this being indicated?

2. Does it intend to change the applicable labelling rules for processed foodstuffs to make it a requirement that the exact ingredients are indicated?

3. Given that, in the wake of the horsemeat scandal, the EU has adopted a plan to screen for undeclared horsemeat in processed foodstuffs, is it considering screening for undeclared pork or other foods and ingredients in a similar way?

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

Under existing rules ([1]), the labelling of foods must not mislead the consumer, particularly as to the characteristics of the food including its true nature and content. All food ingredients must be labelled. The labelling of foods containing meat must also indicate the animal species concerned. Moreover, if an ingredient is mentioned in the name of the food, its quantity expressed as a percentage has to be provided in the list of ingredients.

These rules have been recently reviewed and strengthened ([2]). Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 maintains the requirement of labelling all food ingredients. Furthermore, in the case of meat products or meat preparations containing added proteins as such of a different animal origin, it requires that the name of the food shall bear an indication of the presence of those proteins and of their origin.

Fraudulent and deceptive labelling practices can be eliminated with appropriate enforcement of Union food law requirements, which lies with the national competent authorities. They must conduct appropriate official controls and impose dissuasive and effective sanctions. The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

In the wake of recent findings, and of the result of the coordinated control plan ([3]), Member States are progressively including in their national control plans tests intended to ascertain the absence of undeclared meat species (including pork) in food products. Food business operators, with whom primary responsibility for compliance with food law requirements lies, should also be expected to adjust their own checks to the need to verify the correctness and reliability of the labelling used.

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

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

([3]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004060/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Resistência a antibióticos

A resistência aos antibióticos é um dos problemas mais preocupantes em matéria de saúde pública sendo, em grande parte, criado pelo uso excessivo de medicamentos antimicrobianos. Portugal continua a ser apontado como um dos países europeus com o maior número de casos de resistência a antibióticos, sobretudo resistência à MRSA (*Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus*), bactéria associada a infeções contraídas em meio hospitalar.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Está a acompanhar a evolução da resistência a antibióticos nos países da UE?

2. Que avaliação faz dos dados relativos a Portugal no que respeita à resistência a antibióticos? Como os justifica?

3. Que medidas tomou, ou pondera tomar, no sentido de diminuir o uso excessivo de antibióticos na UE e, com isso, a resistência antimicrobiana?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(29 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está a acompanhar as tendências da resistência antimicrobiana através da Rede Europeia de Vigilância da Resistência Antimicrobiana coordenada pelo Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças ([1]).

Os dados da rede de vigilância da resistência antimicrobiana indicam que a resistência aos antibióticos em Portugal é elevada, geralmente superior à média da UE e, por vezes, muito elevada, como é o caso para as infeções associadas aos cuidados de saúde causadas por «*Staphylococcus aureus*», resistente à meticilina (MRSA).

Tais situações decorrem de uma indevida e excessiva utilização de antibióticos, combinada com a insuficiência das práticas de higiene hospitalar e um baixo nível de conformidade com as medidas de controlo de infeções para evitar a transmissão cruzada entre doentes de bactérias resistentes aos antibióticos.

O plano de ação contra a ameaça crescente da resistência antimicrobiana, adotado pela Comissão em 2011, identificou sete áreas em que é mais urgente tomar medidas, incluindo através de ações específicas para reduzir a utilização indevida e excessiva de antibióticos. Estas ações incluem garantir a utilização adequada dos agentes antimicrobianos nos seres humanos e nos animais; evitar as infecções microbianas e a sua propagação; desenvolver novos agentes antimicrobianos ou alternativas terapêuticas e melhorar a monitorização e vigilância na medicina humana e animal.

Além disso, os Ministros da Saúde da UE acordaram, através de uma recomendação do Conselho de 2009, um certo número de ações para melhorar a segurança dos doentes, incluindo a redução do número de infeções associadas aos cuidados de saúde. Os Estados-Membros fizeram progressos encorajadores em matéria de segurança dos doentes, conforme demonstrado no relatório da Comissão de novembro último. No entanto, é necessário desenvolver mais esforços, em particular nos domínios da educação e formação dos trabalhadores do setor da saúde.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/surveillance/EARS-net/database/Pages/database.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004060/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Antibiotic resistance

Antibiotic resistance, one of the most worrying public health problems, is largely a result of the overuse of antimicrobial drugs. Portugal continues to stand out as one of the European countries with the highest number of cases of antibiotic resistance, principally involving MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), the bacterium associated with hospital-acquired infections.

1. Is the Commission monitoring the development of antibiotic resistance in EU countries?

2. What is its assessment of the antibiotic resistance data for Portugal? How does it explain the data?

3. What measures has the Commission taken, or will it take, to reduce overuse of antibiotics in the EU and, consequently, antimicrobial resistance?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission is monitoring the trends of Antimicrobial Resistance through the European Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Network coordinated by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. ([1])

Data from the Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Network indicates antibiotic resistance in Portugal is high, generally above the EU average and sometimes very high, as it is the case for the healthcare associated infections caused by meticillin-resistant 'Staphylococcus aureus' (MRSA).

Such situations result from misuse and overuse of antibiotics, combined with suboptimal hospital hygiene practices and a low level of compliance with infection control measures to prevent cross-transmission of antibiotic-resistant bacteria between patients.

The action plan against the rising threats from antimicrobial resistance adopted by the Commission in 2011 has identified seven areas where measures are most necessary, including specific actions to reduce the overuse and misuse of antibiotics. These include making sure antimicrobials are used appropriately in both humans and animals; preventing microbial infections and their spread; developing new antimicrobials or alternatives for treatment; and improving monitoring and surveillance in human and animal medicine.

In addition, EU Health Ministers agreed, through a Council Recommendation of 2009, on a number of actions to increase patient safety including reducing the number of healthcare associated infections. Member States have made encouraging progress on patient safety, as shown by the Commission's report of last November. However, more efforts are needed, in particular in education and training of health workers.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/surveillance/EARS-net/database/Pages/database.aspx.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004061/13
aan de Commissie
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(11 april 2013)

Betreft: Het Belgisch wegenvignet

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de artikelen in de Nederlandse krant „Algemeen Dagblad" (AD) ([1]). Zo nee, waarom niet?

2. Is de Commissie bekend met het voornemen van de Belgische regering om een wegenvignet in te voeren? Zo nee, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie bekend met het voornemen van de Belgische regering om ingezeten van België te compenseren met belastingverlagingen? Zo nee, waarom niet en zo ja, wat is haar mening hierover?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de Belgische regering hiermee een onderscheid maakt op basis van nationaliteit op het vrij verkeer van personen en goederen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat dit plan discriminatoir werkt ten opzicht van Nederlandse vervoerbedrijven, toeristen en woon-werkverkeer tussen de lidstaten? Zo nee, waarom niet?

6. Is de Commissie bereid om de Belgische regering mede te delen dat de voorgestelde regeling in strijd is met het Europees recht ([2]) en haar te verzoeken om de regeling in te trekken? Zo nee, waarom niet?

7. Wil de Commissie deze vragen met spoed beantwoorden? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(14 mei 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van het voornemen van de Belgische autoriteiten om een wegenvignet voor personenauto's in te voeren, zoals wordt bericht in het persartikel waar het geachte Parlementslid naar verwijst.

Daar de EU-wetgeving inzake verkeersheffingen ([3]) alleen van toepassing is op zware vrachtvoertuigen, wil de Commissie de aandacht vestigen op haar recente mededeling over heffingen voor lichte particuliere voertuigen waarin richtsnoeren worden aangereikt om de discriminatie van bepaalde gebruikers te voorkomen ([4]).

De Commissie heeft begrepen dat het Belgische vignet voor personenauto's nog in voorbereiding is. Bijgevolg kan zij niet beoordelen of dit vignet discriminerend is of de beginselen van vrij verkeer van personen en goederen schendt. Indien dit het geval blijkt, zal de Commissie zich erover beraden de in het Verdrag voorziene procedure in te leiden.

Nederlandse vervoerbedrijven, waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid eveneens verwijst, zouden niet onder het aangekondigde vignet vallen. Volgens de informatie waarover de Commissie beschikt, zal voor zware vrachtvoertuigen die in België rijden, een kilometerheffing gelden. Deze heffing zou dezelfde zijn voor alle zware vrachtvoertuigen en zou dus niet discriminerend zijn, mits ook alle andere bepalingen van Richtlijn 1999/62/EG worden nageleefd.

([1]) Woensdag 10 april 2013, blz. 1/2 en donderdag 11 april 2013, blz. 5.
([2]) O.a. het arrest Gravier en latere arresten van het Europees Hof van Justitie, evenals verschillende artikelen in het Verdrag van Lissabon.
([3]) Richtlijn 1999/62/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 17 juni 1999 betreffende het in rekening brengen van het gebruik van bepaalde infrastructuurvoorzieningen aan zware vrachtvoertuigen, PB L 187 van 20.7.1999.
([4]) (COM(2012) 199).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004061/13
to the Commission
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: The Belgian vignette

1. Is the Commission familiar with the articles in the Dutch newspaper, *Algemeen Dagblad* (AD) ([1])? If not, why not?

2. Is the Commission familiar with the Belgian Government's intention to introduce a vignette? If not, why not?

3. Is the Commission familiar with the Belgian Government's intention to compensate Belgian residents with tax reductions? If not, why not, and if so, what is its view on this?

4. Does the Commission agree that the Belgian Government is hereby making a nationality-based distinction with regard to the free movement of persons and goods? If not, why not?

5. Does the Commission agree that this plan discriminates against Dutch transport companies, tourists and commuters between Member States? If not, why not?

6. Is the Commission prepared to inform the Belgian Government that the proposed arrangement is in conflict with European law ([2]) and to request that it withdraw this arrangement? If not, why not?

7. Is the Commission willing to answer these questions promptly? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the intention of the Belgian authorities to introduce a vignette for passenger cars as mentioned in the newspaper article, which the Honourable Member is referring to.

While the EU legislation on road charging ([3]) only applies to heavy goods vehicles, the Commission wishes to draw attention to its recent Communication on charging of light private vehicles providing guidance aiming at preventing discrimination of certain users ([4]).

The Commission understands that the Belgian vignette for passenger cars is still under preparation and therefore cannot assess whether this vignette would be discriminatory or violate the principles of the free movement of people and goods. Should this be the case, the Commission would consider initiating the procedure provided for by the Treaty.

Dutch transport companies, to which the Honourable Member also refers, would not be subject to the planned vignette. As far as the Commission is informed heavy goods vehicles driving in Belgium will be subject to a distance based charge. The latter should be the same for all heavy goods vehicles, thus creating no discrimination, provided that all the other provisions of Directive 1999/62/EC are respected.

([1]) Wednesday, 10 April 2013, p. 1/2 and Thursday, 11 April 2013, p. 5.
([2]) Including the Gravier judgment and subsequent judgments of the European Court of Justice, as well as several articles in the Treaty of Lisbon.
([3]) Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicle for the use of certain infrastructures, OJ L 187, 20.7.1999.
([4]) COM(2012) 199.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004062/13
a la Comisión
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Retrasos en los pagos de la administración pública catalana al sector farmacéutico

En estos momentos existe un problema en el sector farmacéutico catalán debido a unos retrasos en el pago por parte de la administración pública catalana a las farmacias que ascienden a unos 300 millones de euros.

La administración pública catalana está incumpliendo, en referencia a los plazos de pago, el marco contractual que ha firmado con las oficinas de farmacia, así como la Directiva Europea sobre morosidad (2011/7/UE) y su trasposición al Reino de España (RDL 4/2013).

Estos retrasos reiterados y acumulados están afectando a la ocupación y la inversión del sector. Algunas farmacias han cerrado.

Asimismo, la cadena del medicamento se financia a través de los recursos que entran a través de las farmacias. Por ello, los retrasos ponen también en una situación financiera delicada a la distribución farmacéutica y a la propia industria.

De hecho, la propia Comisión Europea ha elaborado informes donde demuestra el impacto económico negativo de la morosidad de las administraciones públicas sobre la economía de los Estados y su crecimiento económico. En rueda de prensa de 8 de abril de 2009, Günter Verheugen, Vicepresidente de la Comisión Europea, dijo: «El retraso en el pago de las administraciones públicas no será tolerado por más tiempo».

Teniendo en cuenta que un fallo financiero sectorial sería negativo tanto desde la vertiente social como la económica dentro de la Unión Europea:

— ¿Puede la Comisión exigir al Reino de España que haga cumplir la legislación vigente de tal forma que la administración catalana pague a las oficinas de farmacia en el plazo establecido?

— ¿Dispone la Comisión de líneas de financiación que aporten recursos para las oficinas de farmacia catalanas? En caso negativo, ¿puede solicitar la Comisión Europea la utilización o creación de líneas de crédito del Banco Europeo de Inversiones para financiar estas facturas pendientes de cobro?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de que la morosidad tiene un impacto negativo sobre el empleo y el crecimiento, razón por la cual se adoptó la Directiva 2011/7/UE.

El 24 de febrero de 2013 España transpuso la Directiva 2011/7/UE mediante el Real Decreto-ley 4/2013. Por lo general, una vez que se han adoptado medidas nacionales de transposición satisfactorias, las infracciones de la legislación nacional suelen resolverse ante los tribunales nacionales. La Comisión también conoce el mecanismo de financiación español para hacer frente a los atrasos ([1]).

La Comisión supervisará de cerca la correcta transposición y aplicación de la Directiva a nivel nacional a través del grupo de expertos sobre morosidad, el cual será convocado a su tercera reunión en los próximos meses. La Comisión también apoya la correcta aplicación de la Directiva mediante la campaña de información sobre la morosidad en los pagos ([2]), que está en marcha desde octubre de 2012 en todos los países de la UE. La Comisión asistió al acto que se celebró en Barcelona el 28 de febrero de 2013 ([3]).

([1]) El plan de pago a proveedores de 2012 fue un primer pago a los proveedores, que permitió restituir 28 000 millones de euros adeudados por las autoridades públicas a sus proveedores. Con esa inyección de liquidez, el empleo y las empresas se salvaron. El Gobierno español ha anunciado recientemente un segundo pago a los proveedores en 2013 para cubrir las deudas pendientes.

([2]) La campaña europea de información sobre la morosidad en los pagos está dirigida a incrementar la sensibilización entre las partes interesadas europeas —en particular las PYME— y entre las autoridades públicas en lo que respecta a los nuevos derechos que confiere la Directiva 2011/7/UE, así como a informar sobre la forma de aplicar sus disposiciones en las situaciones de la vida real. Esta campaña se llevará a cabo en todos los Estados miembros y en Croacia.

([3]) Por lo que se refiere a España, recientemente se han celebrado tres actos: además del acto realizado en Barcelona en febrero, se han celebrado otros dos: uno también en Barcelona en marzo y otro en Madrid en el mes de abril.

La UE no tiene una financiación específica para los productos farmacéuticos que van directamente a las farmacias. No obstante, en el marco del PIC ([4]) 2007-2013, la Comisión apoya a las empresas de la UE mediante instrumentos facilitados por el Fondo Europeo de Inversiones a través de intermediarios financieros. Puede consultarse la lista completa de los intermediarios financieros que trabajan con los programas de la UE en el sitio web http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu

El Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI) no dispone de un programa específico para financiar las deudas pendientes a las farmacias. Sin embargo, sí concede préstamos a bancos comerciales que apoyan a las PYME a través de financiación bancaria. La lista de esos bancos españoles puede consultarse en la siguiente página web: http://www.eib.europa.eu/attachments/lending/inter_es.pdf

([4]) Programa Marco para la Innovación y la Competitividad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004062/13
to the Commission
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Late payments by the Catalan Government to the pharmacy industry

The Catalan pharmaceutical sector is currently facing difficulties due to the Catalan Government being late in paying some EUR 300 million to the pharmacies.

In relation to its payment deadlines, the Catalan Government is failing to comply with the contractual framework that it signed with the pharmacies and with the European Directive on late payments (2011/7/EU) and its transposition to the Kingdom of Spain (RDL 4/2013).

These repeated and accumulated late payments are affecting jobs and investment in the industry. Some pharmacies have closed down.

In addition, the drug chain is financed through resources that come through the pharmacies. Late payments therefore jeopardise the financial situation of pharmaceutical distribution and the industry itself.

In fact, the European Commission itself has issued reports showing the negative economic impact of government default on Member States' economies and on their economic growth. At a press conference on 8 April 2009, Günter Verheugen, the Vice-President of the European Commission, said: 'Late payment by public administrations should be no longer tolerated'.

Given that financial failure in the industry would have a negative impact in both social and economic terms on the European Union:

— Can the Commission demand that the Kingdom of Spain enforces the existing legislation so that the Catalan Government pays pharmacies on time?

— Does the Commission have lines of funding that can provide resources for Catalan pharmacies? If not, can the Commission call for the use or creation of European Investment Bank loans to fund these outstanding invoices?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission is aware that late payment has a negative impact on employment and growth and this is why Directive 2011/7/EU has been adopted.

Spain transposed Directive 2011/7/EU on 24 February 2013 by means of R.D.L 4/2013. As a general rule, once satisfactory national transposition measures have been adopted, infringements of the national legislation ought normally to be resolved before the national courts. The Commission is also aware of the Spanish financing mechanism to cope with the arrears ([1]).

The Commission will closely monitor the correct transposition and implementation of the directive at national level through the late payment expert group that will be called for its third meeting in the following months. The Commission also supports correct implementation through the Late Payment Information Campaign ([2]) that has been running since October 2012 and this in all EU countries. The Commission attended the event that took place in Barcelona on 28 February 2013 ([3]).

([1]) Plan de pago a proveedores 2012 was a first instalment to suppliers and was able to restore 28,000 million euros owed by public authorities to their suppliers. Thanks to this injection of liquidity, jobs and companies were saved. The Spanish Government recently announced a second instalment to suppliers in 2013 to pay outstanding debts.

([2]) The European Late Payment Information Campaign aims to increase awareness amongst European stakeholders, in particular SMEs, and within public authorities on the new rights conferred by Directive 2011/7/EU and also how to apply its provisions in real life situations. This campaign will be implemented in all Member States and Croatia.

([3]) As Regards Spain, three events took place recently: besides the event in Barcelona in February, two other events took place: one again in Barcelona in March and one in Madrid in April.

The EU does not have specific funding for pharmaceuticals going directly to pharmacies. However, within the CIP ([4]) 2007-2013, the Commission supports EU companies with instruments provided by the European Investment Fund through financial intermediaries. A complete list of financial intermediaries working with EU programmes can be found on this website: http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu

The European Investment Bank (EIB) does not have a specific programme to fund outstanding debts for pharmacies. However, the EIB provides loans to commercial banks, which support SMEs through bank financing. The list of these Spanish banks can be found at the following link: http://www.eib.europa.eu/attachments/lending/inter_es.pdf

([4]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004063/13
an die Kommission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Fördergelder für CCS-Kohleprojekt in Jänschwalde an die Firma Vattenfall oder Dritte

In welcher Höhe sind bisher öffentliche Fördermittel von der EU (NER 300, EEPR, …) für das CCS-Projekt Jänschwalde (Brandenburg/Deutschland) an die Firma Vattenfall oder Dritte gezahlt wurden und wann müssen bzw. wurden welche Mittel (unter Angabe der Höhe der einzelnen Beträge) davon zurückgezahlt angesichts der Vattenfall-Entscheidung, die Planungen für das CCS-Demonstrationsprojekt Jänschwalde einzustellen ([1])?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2013)

Der EU-Beitrag im Rahmen des europäischen Energieprogramms zur Konjunkturbelebung (EEPR) betrug insgesamt 15 150 279 EUR. Dabei sind die nach der Einstellung des Projekts am 5. Februar 2012 zurückgezahlten Beträge bereits berücksichtigt. Es können sich jedoch noch Änderungen an diesem Endbetrag ergeben, da bis 5 Jahre nach dem Ende des Projekts noch Prüfungen durchgeführt werden können. Das CCS-Demonstrationsprojekt Jänschwalde wurde nicht für eine Förderung im Rahmen der ersten Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen für das Programm NER300 ([2]) in Erwägung gezogen.

([1]) Siehe Vattenfall-PM vom 5.12.2011 unter: http://corporate.vattenfall.de/de/pressemitteilungen-detailseite.htm?newsid=E3B4752A90F9447FA1B1D95CA6860B77&WT.ac=search_success

([2]) Siehe die Arbeitsunterlage der Kommissionsdienststellen „NER300 — Moving towards a low carbon economy and boosting innovation, growth and employment across the EU", Brüssel, 12.7.2012, SWD(2012)224 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004063/13
to the Commission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Subsidies granted to Vattenfall or third parties for the Jänschwalde CCS project

How much has the EU paid to date in subsidies (under NER 300, the EEPR etc.) to Vattenfall or third parties for the Jänschwalde CCS project, and how much of this money will need to be or already has been paid back (stating the individual amounts) in view of Vattenfall's decision to abandon its plans for the Jänschwalde CCS demonstration project ([1])?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The overall EU contribution the project received under the European Energy Programme for Recovery (EEPR) was EUR 15,150,279. This figure already takes into account money recovered following the termination of the project with effect on 5 February 2012. However, this final amount may change due to the results of possible audits which can take place up to a period of 5 years after the end of the project. The Jänschwalde CCS demonstration project was not a candidate for an award decision under the 1st call of the NER300 programme ([2]).

([1]) See Vattenfall's press release of 5.12.2011 at http://corporate.vattenfall.de/de/pressemitteilungen-detailseite.htm?newsid=E3B4752A90F9447FA1B1D95CA6860B77&WT.ac=search_success.

([2]) Cf. Commission Staff Working Document. NER300 — Moving towards a low carbon economic and boosting innovation, growth and employment across the EU. Brussels,12.7.2012. SWD(2012)224 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004064/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Wiedereinziehung von EU-Fördermittel — Bereich der Kohäsion

Im Bereich der Kohäsion liegt die Zuständigkeit zur Wiedereinziehung von zu Unrecht gezahlter Beträge in erster Linie bei den Mitgliedstaaten. Die Kommission schreitet erst dann ein, wenn die Mitgliedstaaten ihrer Verpflichtung zur finanziellen Berichtigung nicht nachkommen oder die Verwaltungs- und Kontrollsysteme der Mitgliedstaaten einen schwerwiegenden Mangel aufweisen.

1. Wie viele Fördermittel im Bereich der Kohäsionspolitik haben die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten von den Endbegünstigten jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 sowie 2012 zurückverlangt?

2. Wie viele Fördermittel im Bereich der Kohäsionspolitik hat die Kommission von den betreffenden Mitgliedstaaten, jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 sowie 2012 zurückverlangt?

3. Wie viele Fördermittel wurden jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 20120, 2011 sowie 2012 tatsächlich von den Begünstigten wieder eingezogen und in den EU-Haushalt zurückgeführt?

4. Wie hoch waren die Wiedereinziehungsraten der einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 sowie 2012?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(14. Juni 2013)

1./2. Die Kommission übermittelt die seit 2008 jedes Jahr mitgeteilte Beträge direkt an den Herrn Abgeordneten und an das Sekretariat des Parlaments.

3. Die Wiedereinziehung von den Begünstigten fällt in die ausschließliche Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten. Deshalb gibt es keine Rückführung in den EU-Haushalt, es sei denn, der Mitgliedstaat hat seine Verpflichtungen gemäß den kohäsionspolitischen Verordnungen nicht erfüllt und es versäumt, die erforderlichen Korrekturen vorzunehmen. Dann kann die Kommission Finanzkorrekturen vornehmen, indem sie den EU-Beitrag zu einem Programm mittels eines Finanzkorrekturbeschlusses streicht oder kürzt. In einem solchen Fall würde die Finanzkorrektur zu einer Nettoverringerung der EU-Unterstützung führen. Für die Programme des laufenden Programmplanungszeitraums (2007-2013) hat die Kommission bislang noch keinen förmlichen Finanzkorrekturbeschluss erlassen.

4. Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen darüber vor, welchen Anteil der insgesamt von den Begünstigten zurückgeforderten Beträge die Mitgliedstaaten tatsächlich wieder einziehen. Der Abschluss der Wiedereinziehungsverfahren unterliegt der nationalen Zuständigkeit, da der EU-Haushalt geschützt wird und nicht betroffen ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004064/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Recovery of EU funds — cohesion policy

The responsibility for recovering amounts unduly paid under cohesion policy lies mainly with the Member States. The Commission only intervenes if the Member States fail in their duty to apply financial corrections, or if a severe shortcoming is identified in the administrative and control systems of the Member States.

1. How much cohesion policy funding did the individual Member States reclaim from final beneficiaries in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. How much cohesion policy funding did the Commission reclaim from the Member States in question in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

3. How much funding was actually recovered from the beneficiaries and transferred back to the EU budget in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

4. What were the recovery rates for the individual Member States in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission is sending the amounts reported each year since 2008 directly to the Honourable Member and to the Parliament's Secretariat.

3. The recovery from beneficiaries falls under the exclusive competence of the Member States. Therefore there is no transfer back of funds to the EU budget, unless the Member State has not complied with its obligations under cohesion policy regulations and failed to make the required corrections. The Commission may then make financial corrections by cancelling all or part of the EU contribution to a programme by adopting a financial correction decision. In this case, the financial correction would lead to a net reduction of EU funding. For 2007-2013 programmes, no formal Commission financial correction decision has been taken so far.

4. The Commission does not have information on the share of the total amounts reclaimed from the beneficiaries and effectively recovered by Member States. The conclusion of the recovery procedures is a national competence, since the EU budget is safeguarded and not affected.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004065/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Wiedereinziehung von EU-Fördergeldern — ELER

Im Agrarbereich liegt die Zuständigkeit für die Wiedereinziehung zu Unrecht gezahlter Beträge in erster Linie bei den Mitgliedstaaten. Gemäß der 50/50 Regel gehen 50 % aller zu Unrecht erhaltenen Zahlungen zulasten der nationalen Haushalte, wenn die Mitgliedstaaten sie nicht innerhalb von vier Jahren (bzw. bei Gerichtsverfahren binnen 8 Jahren) wiedereingezogen haben.

1. Wie viel an Fördergeldern im Rahmen des Europäischen Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums (ELER) haben die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten von den Endbegünstigten jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 zurückverlangt?

2. Wie viel an Fördergeldern im Rahmen des Europäischen Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums (ELER) hat die Kommission von den jeweiligen Mitgliedstaaten jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 zurückverlangt?

3. Wie viel an Fördergeldern im Rahmen des ELER wurde jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 tatsächlich von den Begünstigten wieder eingezogen und in den EU-Haushalt zurückgeführt?

4. Wie hoch waren die Wiedereinziehungsraten der einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten im Rahmen des ELER jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004066/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Wiedereinziehung von EU-Fördergeldern — EGFL

Im Agrarbereich liegt die Zuständigkeit für die Wiedereinziehung zu Unrecht gezahlter Beträge in erster Linie bei den Mitgliedstaaten. Gemäß der 50/50-Regel gehen 50 % aller zu Unrecht erhaltenen Zahlungen zulasten der nationalen Haushalte, wenn die Mitgliedstaaten sie nicht innerhalb von vier Jahren (bzw. bei Gerichtsverfahren binnen 8 Jahren) wiedereingezogen haben.

1. Wie viel an Fördergeldern im Rahmen des Europäischen Garantiefonds für die Landwirtschaft (EGFL) haben die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten von den Endbegünstigten jeweils in den Jahren 2011 und 2012 zurückverlangt?

2. Wie viel an Fördergeldern im Rahmen des Europäischen Garantiefonds für die Landwirtschaft (EGFL) hat die Kommission von den jeweiligen Mitgliedstaaten jeweils in den Jahren 2011 und 2012 zurückverlangt?

3. Wie viel an Fördergeldern im Rahmen des EGFL wurde jeweils in den Jahren 2011 und 2012 tatsächlich von den Begünstigten wieder eingezogen und in den EU-Haushalt zurückgeführt?

4. Wie hoch waren die Wiedereinziehungsraten der einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten im Rahmen des EGFL jeweils in den Jahren 2011 und 2012?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission wird die erbetenen Informationen direkt an den Herrn Abgeordneten und das Sekretariat des Parlaments senden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004065/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Recovery of EU funds — EAFRD

The responsibility for recovering amounts unduly paid in the field of agriculture lies mainly with the Member States. The 50/50 rule means that 50% of all irregular payments are charged to national budgets if the Member States have not recovered them within four years (or eight years if a legal case is pending).

1. How much EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) funding did the individual Member States reclaim from final beneficiaries in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. How much EAFRD funding did the Commission reclaim from the individual Member States in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

3. How much EAFRD funding was actually recovered from the beneficiaries and transferred back to the EU budget in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

4. What were the recovery rates under the EAFRD for the individual Member States in each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Question for written answer E-004066/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Recovery of EU funds — EAGF

The responsibility for recovering amounts unduly paid in the field of agriculture lies mainly with the Member States. The 50/50 rule means that 50% of all irregular payments are charged to the national budgets if the Member States have not recovered them within four years (or eight years if a legal case is pending).

1. How much EAGF (European Agricultural Guarantee Fund) funding did the individual Member States reclaim from final beneficiaries in each of the years 2011 and 2012?

2. How much EAGF funding did the Commission reclaim from the individual Member States in each of the years 2011 and 2012?

3. How much EAGF funding was actually recovered from the beneficiaries and transferred back to the EU budget in each of the years 2011 and 2012?

4. What were the recovery rates under the EAGF for the individual Member States in each of the years 2011 and 2012?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission is sending the requested information directly to the Honourable Member and to the secretariat of the Parliament.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004067/13
an die Kommission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Passentzug in Mazedonien

Am 20. März veröffentlichte die Schweizer Flüchtlingshilfe (SFH) einen Bericht zum Thema Passentzug in Mazedonien. Nach diesem Bericht werden Personen, die nach Mazedonien abgeschoben werden, systematisch der Pass entzogen. Grundlage hierfür ist eine Änderung des Gesetzes über Reisedokumente, in denen vorgesehen ist, dass Personen, die gegen die Einreise- und Aufenthaltsbestimmungen eines Schengener Mitgliedstaates verstoßen und abgeschoben werden, der Pass für die Dauer von bis zu einem Jahr entzogen werden kann. Laut SFH wurde dieser Zeitraum inzwischen ausgeweitet. Außerdem berichtet die SFH, dass Personen, denen der Pass erst einmal entzogen wurden, kaum Chancen haben, ihren Pass zurückzuerhalten.

Am 27. November vergangenen Jahres urteilte der Europäische Menschenrechtsgerichtshof in Straßburg, dass der Entzug des Reisepasses eines bulgarischen Staatsbürgers, der im Oktober 2003 aus den USA abgeschoben wurde, weil er gegen die Aufenthaltsbestimmungen verstoßen hatte, einen Verstoß gegen Artikel 2 von Protokoll Nr. 4 zur Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention darstellt (Stamose v. Bulgaria, Anrufung 29713/05). Die Richter bezeichneten die Vorgehensweise des bulgarischen Staates als drakonisch, da sie den Betroffenen, der bereits durch seine Abschiebung aus den USA bestraft war, von jeglicher Reisemöglichkeit ins Ausland ausschloss. In ihrem Schreiben vom 10. Januar 2013 wies das Meijers-Komitee auf die Bedeutung dieses Urteils für die Verhandlungen über die Visaliberalisierung hin. Unter Bezugnahme auf die Politik des Passentzugs in Mazedonien und ähnliche Maßnahmen in Mazedonien und Serbien heißt es, dass diese Maßnahmen sehr zweifelhaft seien und dem Grundsatz der Verhältnismäßigkeit u.U. widersprechen würden.

— War die Kommission im Vorfeld der Änderung des mazedonischen Passgesetzes in irgendeiner Form beteiligt und hat sie diesen Änderungen zugestimmt?

— Hat die Kommission Kenntnis von den Verfahren, die zum Passentzug führen, und kann sie sie diese Verfahren beschreiben?

— Hat die Kommission Kenntnis von der Zahl der Personen, deren Pass seit dieser Gesetzesänderung entzogen oder ungültig gemacht wurde?

— Welches sind die Widerspruchsmöglichkeiten, und inwieweit werden sie gebraucht?

— Wie bewertet die Kommission den Passentzug und ähnliche Maßnahmen, die darauf abzielen, potenzielle Asylbewerber/innen oder abgeschobene Personen an der Ausreise zu hindern, vor dem Hintergrund der EMGH-Entscheidung? Sind sie mit dem gemeinschaftlichen Besitzstand im Bereich Menschenrechte vereinbar?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission war in keiner Weise im Vorfeld an den Änderungen des mazedonischen Gesetzes über Reisedokumente vom Oktober 2011 beteiligt. Vielmehr hat die Kommission stets betont, dass die Maßnahmen zur Eindämmung des Asylmissbrauchs so umgesetzt werden sollten, dass die Grundrechte der Bürgerinnen und Bürger geachtet werden.

Der Kommission sind die Grundzüge des Verfahrens für den Passentzug bekannt, sie hat dessen praktische Umsetzung vor Ort jedoch nicht im Einzelnen überprüft. Nach der Befragung von abgeschobenen oder zwangsweise rückgeführten Personen durch die nationale Grenzpolizei stellt der zuständige Polizeibeamte eine Bescheinigung über die vorübergehende Einziehung des Passes aus und übermittelt die Akte dem Innenministerium. Die regionale Abteilung des Innenministeriums trifft die endgültige Entscheidung über die Einziehung auf der Grundlage aller einschlägigen Unterlagen, einschließlich der Unterlagen der übergebenden Behörde. Gegen diese Entscheidung kann bei der staatlichen Kommission Einspruch eingelegt werden, gegen deren Entscheidung kann wiederum beim Verwaltungsgericht und in letzter Instanz beim Obersten Verwaltungsgericht Einspruch eingelegt werden.

Die Kommission wurde von den nationalen Behörden darüber unterrichtet, dass zwischen Oktober 2011 und Mitte Mai 2013 insgesamt 1 673 Reisedokumente von aus anderen Ländern zwangsrückgeführten Personen wegen Verstößen gegen die geltenden Einreise- und Aufenthaltsbestimmungen, einschließlich aufgrund abgelehnter Asylanträge, eingezogen wurden. Bei der staatlichen Kommission wurden 74 Beschwerden eingelegt, und drei Verfahren wurden vor das Verwaltungsgericht gebracht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004067/13
to the Commission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Seizure of passports in Macedonia

On 20 March, Swiss Refugee Aid (SFH) published a report on the seizure of passports in Macedonia, according to which the Macedonian state systematically seizes passports from persons deported to Macedonia. The basis for this is an amendment to the Law on Travel Documents which provides for passports to be seized for a period of up to one year in cases where their holders have violated the entry and residence requirements of a Schengen member state and have been deported. According to the SFH, this period has now been extended. The SFH also reported that holders of passports have barely any hope of recovering them once they have been seized.

On 27 November 2012, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg ruled that the seizure of the passport of a Bulgarian citizen who had been deported from the USA in October 2003 because he had violated residency laws was an infringement of Article 2 of Protocol No 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Stamose v. Bulgaria, application no 29713/05). The judges called the procedures followed by the Bulgarian State draconian because they prevented the applicant from travelling to any other foreign country, even though he had already suffered punishment by being deported from the USA. In its letter of 10 January 2013, the Meijers Committee noted the significance of this ruling for visa liberalisation negotiations. It also said that Macedonia's policy of seizing passports, and similar measures in Macedonia and Serbia, were highly questionable and could in some circumstances be disproportionate.

— Did the Commission have any kind of advance involvement in the amendments to the Macedonian Law on Travel Documents, and did it agree to these amendments?

— Is the Commission aware of the procedures which precede the seizure of passports, and can it describe them?

— Does the Commission know how many people have had passports seized or invalidated since this amendment to the law?

— What avenues of appeal are there, and what use is made of them?

— What is the Commission's assessment of the seizure of passports and similar measures aimed at preventing potential asylum-seekers or deported persons from leaving the country in the context of the ECtHR's decision? Are such measures compatible with the *acquis communautaire* in the field of human rights?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

The Commission did not have any advance involvement in the amendments to the Law on Travel Documents of October 2011. Nevertheless, the Commission has always underlined that measures introduced to curb the phenomenon of asylum abuse should be implemented in a manner that respects citizens' fundamental rights.

The Commission is aware in general terms of the procedure for seizure of passports without having verified its practical implementation in the field. Following the interview of deported or forcibly returned persons by the national border police, the police officer issues a certificate of temporary repossession and transfers the file to the Ministry of Interior. The Regional Unit of the Ministry of Interior makes a final decision on whether or not to repossess, based on all relevant documentation, including documents received from the returning authority. The decision is subject to appeal before the State Commission, whose decision is subject to appeal before the Administrative Court and ultimately the High Administrative Court.

The Commission has received information from the national authorities that 1673 travel documents were repossessed from persons forcibly returned from other countries for infringing their rules of entry and stay between October 2011 and mid-May 2013, including on the grounds of refused asylum requests. 74 complaints have been made to the State Commission and three proceedings raised before the Administrative Court.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004068/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Monetary sanctions against foreign transport companies for infringements of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

Article 25 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport obliges Member States to lay down rules for penalties applicable to infringements of the provisions of the regulation and to take all necessary measures to ensure that they are implemented. Moreover, according to the article, penalties provided for must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive.

However, the enforcement of this Article does not seem to work. As animals are very often transported between two or more Member States, national inspection authorities are faced with fining foreign transport companies for infringements of the rules of the regulation. In such cases where authorities are not allowed to collect fines on the spot, fines remain unpaid due to bureaucratic difficulties or the impossibility of forcing foreign transport companies to pay afterwards. Penalties are, therefore, neither effective nor dissuasive, as the article requires.

1. Is the Commission aware of which Member States allow their inspection authorities to collect fines on the spot?

2. Does the Commission have data on the number of fines imposed on foreign transport companies in Member States in 2010 and on the number of fines which have been effectively paid? If not, does the Commission intend to request this information from Member States in order to evaluate enforcement?

3. Does the Commission agree that shortening transport times, as requested by 1.1 million European citizens and the European Parliament, would make enforcement easier, as there would be reduced levels of transport between Member States and thus, fewer sanctions applied to foreign transport companies?

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

1 and 2. According to Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]) 'Member States shall lay down the rules on penalties applicable to infringements of the provisions of this regulation and […] notify those provisions […] to the Commission'. All Member States have provided this information to the Commission. They are however not obliged to provide precise information on how, where, or to whom, an infringement or offence is sanctioned. Nor are they obliged to inform on whether fines are paid. As a consequence, the requested information concerning fines imposed on and paid by foreign drivers cannot be provided by the Commission.

However, information on the number of penalties imposed in accordance with Article 25 is relevant in order for the Commission to have a better view of the situation at EU level. Therefore, according to Article 2(1)(d) of the recently adopted Commission Decision on Member States' annual reports on controls of animal transports ([2]), these numbers are to be reported to the Commission on an annual basis.

It should be noted that fines on the spot are not the only means to correct infringements found on transports, irrespective of their country of origin. Article 23 of Regulation 1/2005 sets out emergency measures to be taken as necessary to safeguard the welfare of the animals, and Article 26 sets out specific measures to be taken in case of any infringements of the regulation ([3]). Information on how often these measures are taken is also to be included in the annual reports referred to above.

3. Without a proper assessment, it is not possible to know whether a shortening of the transport times would make the legislation easier or more difficult to enforce.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations. OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.

([2]) Commission implementing Decision of 18 April 2013 on annual reports on non-discriminatory inspections carried out pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, 2013/188/EU. OJ L 111, 23.4.2013, p. 107.

([3]) This includes temporarily prohibiting a transporter from transporting animals on the territory of a Member State. Article 26 also requires that competent authorities communicate notifications on infringements to other competent authorities, also in different Member States, so that they can take necessary actions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004069/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Chinese fur exports

At present China is one of the largest exporters of fur worldwide. However, a recent undercover investigation by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment Of Animals) revealed how the animals are beaten, butchered, and even skinned alive.

Can the Commission ensure that all fur imported into Europe is fully traced so that any cruelty to animals cannot be rewarded?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

There is currently no EU animal welfare based labelling or traceability legislation for fur products, whether EU produced or imported. The Commission does not plan to develop initiatives in this area at this time.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004070/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: EU economy

It was recently predicted that the EU economy is to shrink by a further 0.3% this year, in contrast to a November 2012 prediction of growth of 0.1%.

What active measures is the Commission taking in order to stabilise the eurozone economy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission assesses the economic situation in the EU in its European Economic Forecasts three times a year. The Commission's assessment of the situation and views on the appropriate actions to stimulate growth and job creation are set out in its Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2013 ([1]). The AGS calls for pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation, restoring normal lending to the economy, promoting growth and competitiveness, tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis and modernising public administration. Country-specific recommendations for reforms are proposed annually by the Commission in the framework of the European Semester, other type of support is also provided through Low Risk investments. For example the increase of the EIB's capital by EUR 10 billion agreed in June 2012 will ultimately help finance a total investment volume of around EUR 180 billion. The Commission has also proposed dedicated financial instruments to unlock greater amounts of private financing, e.g. the project bonds initiative. In its recent Green paper on financing long term growth, the Commission also looks at new ways to improve long-term investment ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013DC0150:EN:NOT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004071/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Arthritis and acute pain medication

On 30 September 2004, drug manufacturer Merck & Co announced that it would withdraw its arthritis and acute pain medication drug Vioxx from the market worldwide. Many people who were prescribed the drug developed health problems related to it, and Merck & Co have agreed to pay USD 950 million in compensation (to American citizens only).

Is there any case for European Union citizens to be entitled to a similar payout for damage caused through taking this drug?

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

In the EU, medicinal products containing Rofecoxib were nationally authorised by the Member States under different brand names including Vioxx. The products were withdrawn from the market due to safety concerns by the marketing authorisation holder.

Damage caused by medicinal products is covered by the scope of Directive 85/374/EEC ([1]) on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning liability for defective products. According to Article 1, the producer shall be liable for damage caused by a defect in his product. The victim has to prove the damage, the defect and the causal relationship between defect and damage.

In addition, national provisions governing contractual or non-contractual liability may apply.

European citizens who intend to pursue a liability action for defective products would have to take legal advice on the means of redress available at national level. In view of the differences in the legal framework the situation in the USA is not directly comparable with the situation in the EU.

([1]) OJ L 210, 7.8.1985.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004072/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(11 april 2013)

Angående: Åtskillnad mellan immateriella rättigheter och industriell äganderätt

I sitt svar på skriftlig fråga E-001610/2013 uppger kommissionen följande: ”Direktiv 2004/48/EG är i princip tillämpligt på alla intrång i sådana immateriella rättigheter (däribland industriell äganderätt) […].”

— Kan kommission redogöra för uppdelningen mellan immateriella rättigheter och industriell äganderätt för de rättigheter som tas upp på förteckningen i uttalande 2005/295/EG?

Mot bakgrund av formuleringen i artikel 1 i direktivet ombes kommissionen att svara på följande fråga:

— Kan kommissionen ange exempel, som inte behöver vara uttömmande, där den inte anser att begreppet immateriella rättigheter inbegriper industriell äganderätt?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(7 juni 2013)

I kommissionens förslag fastställdes räckvidden för direktiv 2004/48/EG om säkerställande av skyddet för immateriella rättigheter *(direktivet)* när det gäller immateriell äganderätt. Vissa medlemsstater ansåg det oklart om industriell äganderätt omfattades av direktivet, och därför har EU:s lagstiftare klargjort att immateriella rättigheter omfattar industriell äganderätt inom ramen för direktivet. EU:s lagstiftare definierade dock inte dessa begrepp. Kommissionen kunde visserligen tillhandahålla en ej uttömmande förteckning över de immateriella rättigheter som den anser omfattas av direktivet, men kan inte göra en exakt uppdelning mellan immateriella rättigheter och industriell äganderätt när det gäller de rättigheter som tas upp i förteckningen.

Kommissionen kan inte uppge ett antal exempel på fall där den anser att begreppet immateriella rättigheter inte innefattar ”industriell äganderätt”. Enligt gällande internationella konventioner ([1]) indelas immateriella rättigheter vanligtvis i två delar, nämligen industriell äganderätt och upphovsrätt. I vissa fall används dock begreppet immateriella rättigheter även för att definiera upphovsrätt och liknande rättigheter.

I kommissionens förslag till Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning om tullens kontroll av att immateriella rättigheter efterlevs ([2]), som godkändes av rådet i första behandlingen i mars 2013, görs inte heller någon åtskillnad, och under begreppet immateriella rättigheter förtecknas tolv rättigheter ([3]).

([1]) Framför allt: Pariskonventionen för skydd av den industriella äganderätten av den 20 mars 1883, Bernkonventionen av den 9 september 1886 och Romkonventionen av den 26 oktober 1961.

([2]) KOM(2011) 285 slutlig.

([3]) Artikel 2: I förordningen avser en ”immateriell rättighet”: (a) ett varumärke, (b) en formgivning, (c) en upphovsrätt eller närstående rättighet enligt lagstiftningen i en medlemsstat, (d) en geografisk beteckning, (e) ett patent enligt lagstiftningen i en medlemsstat, (f) ett tilläggsskydd för läkemedel enligt Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EG) nr 469/2009, (g) ett tilläggsskydd för växtskyddsmedel enligt Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EG) nr 1610/96[17], (h) en rättighet enligt gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt, i enlighet med rådets förordning (EG) nr 2100/94, (i) en rättighet enligt växtförädlarrätten i en medlemsstat, (j) ett kretsmönster i halvledarprodukter enligt lagstiftningen i en medlemsstat, (k) ett bruksmönster enligt lagstiftningen i en medlemsstat, (l) ett handelsnamn i den utsträckning det skyddas som en exklusiv immateriell rättighet enligt lagstiftningen i en medlemsstat, (m) varje annan rätt som fastställs som en exklusiv immateriell rättighet i unionslagstiftningen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004072/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Difference between intellectual property rights and industrial rights

In its reply to Written Question E-001610/2013, the Commission states that 'Directive 2004/48/EC applies in principle to any infringement of intellectual property rights (which, for the purposes of the directive, include industrial property rights)'.

— Could the Commission provide a breakdown into 'intellectual property rights' and 'industrial property rights' of the rights listed in Statement 2005/295/EC?

In view of the wording of Article 1 of the directive, the Commission is also asked:

— Could it specify a set of instances, which need not be exhaustive, in which it does not consider the term 'intellectual property rights' to include industrial property rights?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

In the proposal from the Commission, the scope of Directive 2004/48/EC on the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (the directive) was defined with a reference to intellectual property rights (IPR). However, since it was not clear for some Member States whether industrial property rights would fall within the scope of the directive, the EU legislator has clarified that IPR included industrial property rights for the purpose of the directive. However, the EU legislator did not provide for any definition of these notions. If the Commission was able to provide a non-exhaustive list of IPR that it considered were covered by the scope of the directive, it is not in a position to provide a precise breakdown into IPR and industrial property rights of the rights listed.

The Commission cannot specify a set of instances in which it does not consider the term IPR to include 'industrial property rights'. According to existing International Conventions ([1]) Intellectual property is usually divided into two branches, namely industrial property and copyright. However, in some instances the notion of intellectual property is also used to define copyright and related rights.

In its proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning customs enforcement of IPR ([2]) for which a political agreement was reached in the Council at first reading in March 2013, the Commission has not made any distinction either and included under the notion of IPR a list of twelve rights ([3]).

([1]) Mainly: Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property of 20 March 1883, Berne Convention of 9 September 1886 and Rome Convention of 26 October 1961.

([2]) COM(2011)285 final.

([3]) Article 2: For the purpose of the regulation: 'intellectual property rights' means (a) a trade mark; (b) a design; (c) a copyright or any related right as provided for by national or Union law; (d) a geographical indication; (e) a patent as provided for by national or Union law ; (f) a supplementary protection certificate for medicinal products as provided for in Regulation (EC) No 469/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council; (g) a supplementary protection certificate for plant protection products as provided for in Regulation (EC) No 1610/96 of the European Parliament and of the Council; (h) a Community plant variety right as provided for in Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94; (i) a plant variety right as provided for by national law; (j) a topography of semiconductor product as provided for by national or Union law; (k) a utility model in so far as it is protected as an intellectual property right by national or Union law; (l) a trade name in so far as it is protected as an exclusive intellectual property right by national or Union law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004073/13
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(11 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Ristrutturazione della Nova Ljubljanska banka

Alla fine del 2012 la Repubblica di Slovenia ha predisposto e inviato alla Commissione europea un piano industriale per la ristrutturazione della Nova Ljubljanska banka, il maggiore istituto bancario sloveno.

La predisposizione del piano di ristrutturazione si è resa necessaria in quanto la Repubblica di Slovenia, in qualità di azionista di maggioranza, ha provveduto negli ultimi anni a due ricapitalizzazioni (243 milioni di euro nel 2011 e 380 milioni di euro nel 2012), che però la Commissione ha equiparato ad aiuto di stato.

La bozza del piano di ristrutturazione dovrebbe prevedere la dismissione delle società di leasing e di factoring in Slovenia e all'estero, la vendita e/o la chiusura delle banche sussidiarie in alcuni mercati esteri ritenuti non strategici e il divieto di nuovi finanziamenti nel settore delle costruzioni, dei trasporti, delle holding finanziarie e delle società con sede all'estero.

Il piano di ristrutturazione non è stato ancora approvato e sarà oggetto di negoziazione tra la Commissione e la Repubblica di Slovenia.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

— se il piano di ristrutturazione è pervenuto alla Commissione e/o se è stato recepito;

— se nel piano è effettivamente prevista la dismissione della Filiale di Trieste della Nova Ljubljanska banka d.d., Ljubljana?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

La Nova Ljubljanska Banka (NLB) ha ricevuto aiuti pubblici sotto forma di due misure consecutive di ricapitalizzazione. La prima iniezione di capitale, di 250 milioni di euro, è stata approvata dalla Commissione in via temporanea il 7 marzo 2011, mentre la seconda, di 383 milioni di euro, è stata approvata dalla Commissione il 2 luglio 2012. In linea con la decisione della Commissione del 2 luglio 2012, la Slovenia ha presentato un piano di ristrutturazione per la NLB nel gennaio 2013.

I servizi della Commissione stanno attualmente valutando tale piano.

La Commissione non è autorizzata a comunicare informazioni riservate relative al contenuto di un'indagine in corso in materia di aiuti di Stato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004073/13
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Restructuring of Nova Ljubljanska banka

At the end of 2012 the Republic of Slovenia drafted and sent to the Commission an industrial plan to restructure Nova Ljubljanska banka, the country's largest bank.

The restructuring plan had to be drafted because the Republic of Slovenia, as the majority shareholder, has recapitalised the bank twice in recent years (EUR 243 million in 2011 and EUR 380 million in 2012), although the Commission equated this to state aid.

The draft restructuring plan should provide for the divestment of leasing and factoring companies in Slovenia and abroad, for the sale and/or closure of subsidiary banks in certain foreign markets that are considered non-strategic, and for a ban on new investment in the construction sector, the transport sector, financial holding companies and companies headquartered abroad.

The restructuring plan has not yet been approved and will be the subject of negotiations between the Commission and the Republic of Slovenia.

Can the Commission say:

— whether the restructuring plan has been received by the Commission and/or whether it has been acknowledged;

— whether the plan actually provides for the closure of the Trieste branch of Nova Ljubljanska banka d.d., Ljubljana?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Nova Ljubljanska Banka (NLB) received public support in the form of two consecutive State recapitalisation measures. The first capital injection of EUR 250 million in 2011 was temporarily approved by the Commission on 7 March 2011, while the second capital injection in the amount of EUR 383 million was approved by the Commission on 2 July 2012. In line with the Commission decision of 2 July 2012, Slovenia presented a restructuring plan for NLB in January 2013.

The Commission's services are currently assessing the plan.

The Commission cannot disclose confidential information related to the substance of an ongoing state aid investigation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004074/13
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(11 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Energie rinnovabili in Romania

In Romania gli investimenti nel settore delle energie rinnovabili, in particolare per quanto riguarda gli impianti fotovoltaici, sono potenzialmente profittevoli. Sembra però che il ministro per l'energia abbia rilasciato una dichiarazione in cui annuncia che è in fase di definizione un provvedimento che, a partire dal 1° luglio prossimo, ridurrebbe drasticamente gli incentivi (per il fotovoltaico da 6 a 3,5 CV per unità di energia prodotta). Questo provvedimento inoltre comporterebbe una serie di altri interventi, quali la riduzione del prezzo massimo di certificati verdi e l'introduzione di un registro degli impianti che limita il numero annuale di installazioni, che sostanzialmente bloccherebbero il settore. Non solo, ma chi ha investito economicamente nel settore, ora rischierebbe di perdere tutto.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione riferire:

— se è stata informata di questo nuovo provvedimento;

— quali sono i suoi orientamenti su quanto dichiarato dal ministro rumeno;

— se il provvedimento è in linea con gli obiettivi e le misure nazionali generali obbligatori per l'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili nonché con i piani d'azione nazionali per le energie rinnovabili, cosi come stabilito dalla direttiva 2009/28/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 23 aprile 2009 sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili, recante modifica e successiva abrogazione delle direttive 2001/77/CE e 2003/30/CE?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2013)

Con la direttiva 28/2009 sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili, l'Unione europea ha stabilito obiettivi nazionali giuridicamente vincolanti che equivalgono ad una quota del 20 % nell'insieme dell'UE. L'obiettivo della Romania prevede il 24 % di energie rinnovabili nel consumo di energia entro il 2020 e nel 2011 la Romania ha raggiunto una quota pari al 21,4 %.

La competenza per l'attuazione di regimi di incentivazione diretti a conseguire i rispettivi obiettivi nazionali e per l'eventuale revisione di tali regimi spetta agli Stati membri. La Commissione non ha ricevuto alcuna notifica ufficiale da parte delle autorità romene dell'intenzione di rivedere il proprio regime di incentivazione. Il regime romeno di incentivazione, basato su certificati verdi, è stato approvato dalla Commissione nel 2011 (caso di aiuti di Stato SA.33134). Di recente è stata segnalata in maniera informale alla Commissione l'intenzione del governo romeno di modificare il suddetto regime di incentivazione. La Commissione ha quindi invitato le autorità romene a notificare in via preliminare le modifiche previste e fornire tutte le informazioni necessarie per la valutazione dell'aiuto di Stato.

La Commissione non può che sottolineare che qualsiasi modifica di un regime di incentivazione dovrebbe avvenire in modo trasparente, coerente e prevedibile, in modo da evitare distorsioni di mercato e dopo aver consultato i soggetti interessati. Le modifiche che si prevede di apportare ad un regime di incentivazione dovrebbero inoltre essere valutate alla luce del potenziale impatto che possono avere sul conseguimento degli obiettivi in materia di energie rinnovabili dello Stato membro in questione. È attualmente in fase di elaborazione presso la Commissione un documento di orientamento destinato agli Stati membri concernente la riforma dei regimi di incentivazione che sottolinea la necessità di garantire un quadro normativo stabile e prevedibile per gli investimenti pur continuando il processo di riforma dei regimi di incentivazione secondo modalità orientate al mercato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004074/13
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Renewable energy in Romania

In Romania investment in the renewable energy sector, in particular with regard to photovoltaic installations, is potentially profitable. It seems, however, that the country's energy minister has released a statement announcing the drafting of a measure that, from 1 July 2013, would drastically reduce the incentives offered (from 6 green certificates to 3.5 green certificates per unit of energy produced in the case of solar power). This measure would also lead to a series of other measures, such as a reduction in the maximum price of green certificates and the introduction of a register of equipment limiting the annual number of installations, which would basically cripple the sector. That is not all: anyone who invested money in the sector now stands to lose everything as well.

Can the Commission therefore say:

— whether it has been informed of this new measure;

— what its position is on the Romanian minister's statement;

— whether the measure is in line with the mandatory general national objectives and measures relating to the use of energy from renewable sources and with the national renewable energy action plans, as laid down by Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Through Directive 28/2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, the European Union has established legally binding national targets adding up to a share of 20% in the EU as a whole. Romania's target is set at a 24% share of renewables in its energy consumption by 2020. In 2011, Romania had achieved a share of 21.4%.

Member States are competent for implementing support schemes to achieve their national targets, and for reviewing these schemes, if needed. There has been no official notification to the Commission of the intention to revise the support scheme by the Romanian authorities. The Romanian support scheme based on Green Certificates has been approved by the Commission in 2011 (State aid case SA.33134). Recently, the intention of the Romanian Government to modify this support scheme was mentioned informally to the Commission, and the Commission has invited the Romanian authorities to pre-notify the planned changes and to provide all the necessary information for the state aid assessment.

The Commission can only emphasise that any adjustment of a support scheme should be done in a transparent, coherent and predictable way, so as to avoid a distortion of the market, and following consultation with relevant stakeholders. Envisaged changes to a support scheme should also be assessed in light of the potential impact on achieving the respective Member State's renewable energy target. The Commission is in the process of drafting a guidance document for Member States on support scheme reform that will stress the need to ensure a stable and predictable investment framework while continuing the process of reforming support schemes in a market-oriented manner.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004075/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 april 2013)

Betreft: Toelatingsnormen treinen op Europees spoor

Al geruime tijd kent de Europese Unie bepaalde normen voor vrachtvervoer over de wegen. Deze normen maken het mogelijk om oude, zeer vervuilende en onveilige vrachtwagens te weren van de Europese wegen en in te zetten op veilig en duurzaam vrachtvervoer. Voor het vervoer over spoor geldt dit echter vrijwel niet. Hierdoor kunnen vervoerders nog altijd gebruik maken van verouderd spoormaterieel, wat kan leiden tot onveilige situaties en overlast. Oud materiaal produceert veel meer geluid en trillingen dan gewone personentreinen of nieuwe goederentreinen. De normen die er op dit moment zijn, gelden alleen voor nieuw geproduceerde treinen, de oude treinen kunnen gewoon blijven rijden zonder aanpassingen.

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat onveilig vervoer over spoor, dat tot overlast zorgt in Europa, onwenselijk is?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat, gezien de toenemende urbanisatie, juist in stedelijke regio's dit tot gezondheidsproblemen kan leiden?

3. Is de Commissie voornemens te gaan kijken op welke manier normen opgesteld kunnen worden voor het spoorvervoer in Europa?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(3 juni 2013)

1. & 2. De negatieve effecten op het milieu van vervoer per spoor zijn relatief beperkt en vormen het voorwerp van verschillende EU-maatregelen.

Wat de vervuiling betreft, gelden de technische specificaties inzake interoperabiliteit (TSI's) van de EU doorgaans voor nieuw of vernieuwd rollend materieel. Een retroactieve toepassing van TSI's op al het bestaande rollend materieel zou gezien de hoge kosten en de gemiddelde levensduur van rollend materieel economisch niet haalbaar zijn.

Maatregelen om de geluidsoverlast te verbeteren, ook in stedelijke gebieden, zijn reeds behandeld in het antwoord van de Commissie op vraag E-003917/2013.

Veiligheidskwesties worden geregeld bij Richtlijn 2004/49/EG betreffende de spoorwegveiligheid ([1]), die eveneens geldt voor spoorwegmaatschappijen die „oud" rollend materieel gebruiken. De voorbije jaren is het algemene veiligheidsniveau in de EU gestegen.

Richtlijn 97/68/EG ([2]) is gericht op de onderlinge aanpassing van de wetgevingen van de lidstaten met betrekking tot emissienormen voor motoren die worden gemonteerd in niet voor de weg bestemde mobiele machines (met inbegrip van motoren voor spoorwegverkeer). Buitensporige eisen voor spoorwegverkeer in dit verband zouden leiden tot een ongewenste verschuiving naar meer vervuilende vervoerswijzen.

3. Gezien het netwerkkarakter van het spoorwegsysteem in Europa, werkt de Commissie sinds 1996 aan bindende specificaties inzake veiligheid, interoperabiliteit en milieukwesties die aan het spoorvervoer in Europa zijn verbonden.

([1]) Richtlijn 2004/49/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 29 april 2004 inzake de veiligheid op de communautaire spoorwegen en tot wijziging van Richtlijn 95/18/EG van de Raad betreffende de verlening van vergunningen aan spoorwegondernemingen, en van Richtlijn 2001/14/EG van de Raad inzake de toewijzing van spoorweginfrastructuurcapaciteit en de heffing van rechten voor het gebruik van spoorweginfrastructuur alsmede inzake veiligheidscertificering (spoorwegveiligheidsrichtlijn), PB L 164 van 30.4.2004, blz. 44.

([2]) Richtlijn 97/68/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 16 december 1997 betreffende de onderlinge aanpassing van de wetgevingen van de lidstaten inzake maatregelen tegen de uitstoot van verontreinigende gassen en deeltjes door inwendige verbrandingsmotoren die worden gemonteerd in niet voor de weg bestemde mobiele machines, PB L 59 van 27.2.1998, blz. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004075/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Certification standards for trains using European railways

Certain standards have been in force in the European Union for road freight traffic for quite some time now. These standards make it possible to keep old, highly polluting and unsafe trucks off of European roads and to promote safe and sustainable freight transport. This, however, has almost no validity for rail transport. This allows hauliers to continue using outdated rolling stock, which can lead to unsafe situations and pollution. Old rolling stock produces more noise and vibration than ordinary passenger trains or new freight trains. The current standards are valid only for newly built trains. Old trains can just continue running without adjustments.

1. Does the Commission consider it undesirable to have unsafe rail transport which causes pollution in Europe?

2. Does the Commission believe that, given increasing urbanisation, it is precisely in urban areas that this can lead to health problems?

3. Does the Commission intend to investigate how standards can be established for rail transport in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

1 & 2. The negative environmental impacts of rail transport are relatively limited and subject to a number of EU actions.

Concerning pollution, the EU technical specifications for interoperability (TSIs) generally apply to new or renewed rolling stock. A retroactive application of TSIs to all existing rolling stock would not be economically viable because of its very high cost and the average lifetime of rolling stock.

Regarding noise, the measures that can improve the situation, including in urban areas, have been addressed in the Commission reply to Question E-003917/2013.

Safety issues are addressed in Directive 2004/49/EC on rail safety ([1]) which applies also to railway undertaking using 'old' rolling stock. In recent years the overall level of safety has been rising in the EU.

Directive 97/68/EC ([2]) aims at approximating the laws of the Member States relating to emission standards for engines to be installed on non-road mobile machinery (including rail engines). Excessive requirements imposed on rail in this field would lead to an undesirable modal shift towards more polluting transport modes.

3. Given the network nature of the railway system in Europe, the Commission has been developing since 1996 mandatory specifications covering safety, interoperability and environmental issues linked to rail transport in Europe.

([1]) Directive 2004/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on safety on the Community's railways and amending Council Directive 95/18/EC on the licensing of railway undertakings and Directive 2001/14/EC on the allocation of railway infrastructure capacity and the levying of charges for the use of railway infrastructure and safety certification (Railway Safety Directive), OJ L 164, 30.4.2004, p. 44-113.

([2]) Directive 97/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1997 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to measures against the emission of gaseous and particulate pollutants from internal combustion engines to be installed in non-road mobile machinery, OJ L 59, 27.2.1998, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004076/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Το μέλλον της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης

Ο κίνδυνος κατάρρευσης του ευρωπαϊκού οικοδομήματος παραμένει ορατός. Οι αυταρχικές πολιτικές του παρελθόντος αλλά και τα σημερινά αυστηρά μέτρα λιτότητας, αντί ανάπτυξης, πιθανώς να οδηγήσουν κάποιες χώρες εκτός Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και Ευρωζώνης.

Ήδη η ΕΕ τριχοτομείται α) στο γερμανικό άξονα που συμπαρασύρει τις χώρες του Βορρά και της Κεντρικής Ευρώπης, β) στον Ευρωπαϊκό Νότο και γ) στη Μεγάλη Βρετανία με το δικό της νομισματικό μονόδρομο. Πώς αντιμετωπίζει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή έμπρακτα ένα τέτοιο ορατό ενδεχόμενο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Μαΐου 2013)

Έχουν επιτευχθεί σημαντικά αποτελέσματα από την εφαρμογή των μέτρων που εγκρίθηκαν σε εθνικό και ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο για την περιστολή της κρίσης. Όλα τα κράτη μέλη, όπως και τα θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, εργάστηκαν από κοινού για να διασωθούν και ενισχυθούν η ζώνη του ευρώ και η ΕΕ. Αυτό είχε ως αποτέλεσμα να ηρεμήσουν οι χρηματαγορές και να εξασθενίσουν οι κύκλοι αρνητικής ανάδρασης μεταξύ επισφαλών δημόσιων οικονομικών, ευάλωτων τραπεζών και αδύναμων μακροοικονομικών προοπτικών. Χρειάζεται όμως περαιτέρω προσπάθεια και προβλέπεται ότι η οικονομική ανάκαμψη θα παραμείνει αργή και η ανεργία θα κινηθεί σε απαράδεκτα υψηλά επίπεδα.

Η αξιολόγηση της κατάστασης από την Επιτροπή και οι απόψεις για την ανάληψη ενδεδειγμένων δράσεων ώστε να τονωθούν η οικονομική μεγέθυνση και η δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας διατυπώνονται στην Ετήσια Επισκόπηση της Ανάπτυξης (ΕΕΑ) 2013. Στην ΕΕΑ γίνεται έκκληση να επιδιωχθούν διαφοροποιημένη, ευνοϊκή για την ανάπτυξη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση, αποκατάσταση της κανονικής δανειακής ροής στην οικονομία, προώθηση της ανάπτυξης και της ανταγωνιστικότητας, αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας και των κοινωνικών συνεπειών της κρίσης και εκσυγχρονισμός της δημόσιας διοίκησης.

Επιπλέον, η περαιτέρω οικονομική και πολιτική ολοκλήρωση είναι αναγκαία για τη διασφάλιση της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής ευημερίας των πολιτών της ΕΕ για το μέλλον. Αυτό προβλέπεται στο «Σχέδιο στρατηγικής για μια βαθιά και ουσιαστική Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση» της Επιτροπής. Βάσει του εν λόγω σχεδίου, πρέπει να καταβληθούν προσπάθειες για την προσεκτική εξισορρόπηση της αυξημένης ευθύνης με την ενίσχυση της αλληλεγγύης εντός της ζώνης του ευρώ, και να δοθεί σαφής προτεραιότητα, όπου είναι δυνατόν, στη θέσπιση μέσων και για τα 27 κράτη μέλη. Η ακεραιότητα της ΕΕ και της ενιαίας αγοράς πρέπει να διαφυλαχθεί.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004076/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: The future of the European Union

The risk of collapse of the European construct is still a visible risk. Instead of promoting growth, the autocratic policies of the past and today's strict austerity measures will most likely squeeze certain countries out of the European Union and the euro area.

The EU is already trisected into (a) the German axis, which is dragging the northern and Central European countries with it; (b) southern Europe; and (c) Great Britain, which is pursuing its own monetary policy from which there is no turning back. What is the European Commission doing to address this very likely possibility?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

Much has been achieved as a result of the implementation of measures adopted at both national and European levels to contain the crisis. All Member States, and EU institutions, including the European Parliament, have worked together towards preserving and strengthening the euro area and the EU. As a result, financial markets have calmed and the negative feedback loops between fragile public finances, vulnerable banks and a weak macro-economy have weakened. However, more still needs to be done and the economic recovery is set to remain slow and unemployment unacceptably high.

The Commission's assessment of the situation and views on the appropriate actions to stimulate growth and job creation are set out in its Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2013. The AGS calls for pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation, restoring normal lending to the economy, promoting growth and competitiveness, tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis and modernising public administration.

In addition, further economic and political integration is needed to ensure economic and social welfare for EU citizens for the future. This is set out in the Commission's 'Blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union'. The blueprint carefully balances both increased responsibility and increased solidarity within the euro area, and it also shows a clear preference, where possible, to move ahead with instruments for all 27 Member States. The integrity of the EU and of the Single Market must be preserved.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004077/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οι ψυχοκοινωνικοί κίνδυνοι στην εργασία ως απότοκο της κρίσης

Ανάμεσα στα τόσα δεινά που μαστίζουν την Κυπριακή κοινωνία τόσο στον εργασιακό τομέα όσο και τον κοινωνικό, έρχεται να προστεθεί και ο αόρατος, αλλά τρομερά μεγάλος κίνδυνος των ψυχοκοινωνικών κινδύνων στην εργασία, ως απότοκο της κρίσης, με άμεσες επιπτώσεις στην κοινωνία και στην οικογένεια.

Είναι αντιληπτό ότι σχεδόν το σύνολο των εργαζομένων θα βιώσει το άγχος από στρεσσογόνες αποφάσεις όσον αφορά απολύσεις, αναδιοργάνωση του τρόπου εργασίας, αλλαγή δομών στις επιχειρήσεις και ότι άλλο μπορεί να συνεπάγεται από μια αναδόμηση, συγχώνευση ή εξαγορά. Οι μνημονιακοί νόμοι που έχουν ψηφιστεί έχουν επιδεινώσει την ήδη βεβαρημένη κατάσταση στους χώρους εργασίας.

Οι συνεχείς ανακοινώσεις, π.χ. των τραπεζών, ημικρατικών οργανισμών για συρρίκνωση και αναδιάρθρωση, διασαλεύουν τις εργασιακές σχέσεις σε παραδοσιακά θεωρούμενους ασφαλείς χώρους. Η προσπάθεια των εργαζομένων να αντεπεξέλθουν στις πιεστικές ανάγκες της σύγχρονης ζωής και η προσπάθεια για συμφιλίωση επαγγελματικών και οικογενειακών υποχρεώσεων ανατρέπεται από το συνεχώς διαμορφούμενο περιβάλλον, εσωτερικό, εξωτερικό ή και τα δύο, το οποίο επιδρά αρνητικά στην υγεία τους. Ο εκφοβισμός και η πίεση για υποβαθμίσεις σε δικαιώματα θα κορυφώνεται με την αύξηση της ανεργίας και της συνεπακόλουθης ανέχειας των εργαζομένων. Η σημερινή πραγματικότητα, δυστυχώς θα επιδεινώνεται συνεχώς.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή και ο αρμόδιος Επίτροπος *απασχόλησης*, κοινωνικών υποθέσεων και κοινωνικής ένταξης:

1. Έχει συνυπολογίσει τους ψυχοκοινωνικούς κινδύνους στην εργασία ανάμεσα στις αρνητικές συνέπειες της κρίσης και του κουρέματος που επέβαλε το Eurogroup;

2. Με ποιες στρατηγικές, προγράμματα στήριξης, χρηματοδοτικούς πόρους και κονδύλια θα στηρίξει τους εργαζόμενους προστατεύοντας τους από αυτούς τους ψυχοκοινωνικούς κινδύνους στις χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου και στην προκειμένη περίπτωση, της Κύπρου;

3. Τι έκανε σε παρόμοιες περιπτώσεις σε Ελλάδα, Πορτογαλία, Ιρλανδία;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση του ενδεχόμενου αρνητικού αντίκτυπου της σημερινής οικονομικής και χρηματοπιστωτικής συγκυρίας στην υγεία και την ευεξία των εργαζομένων και στο πλαίσιο αυτό θεωρεί ότι είναι ουσιαστική η αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή της εθνικής νομοθεσίας για τη μεταφορά της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ σχετικά με την υγεία και την ασφάλεια στην εργασία.

2. και 3. Η Επιτροπή έχει υποστηρίξει και συγχρηματοδοτήσει [1] τις επονομαζόμενες δραστηριότητες PRIMA-EF [2] («Psychosocial Risk Management Excellence Framework» (Πλαίσιο αριστείας για τη διαχείριση κινδύνων ψυχοκοινωνικού χαρακτήρα). Τα αποτελέσματα αυτών των δραστηριοτήτων θα είναι χρήσιμα στις χώρες που αναφέρει ο κ. βουλευτής.

Το έβδομο Πρόγραμμα Πλαίσιο για την Έρευνα και την Τεχνολογική Ανάπτυξη για την έρευνα στον τομέα της υγείας χρηματοδοτεί διάφορα σχέδια σχετικά με την ψυχική υγεία και το κοινωνικοοικονομικό πλαίσιο στην εργασία. Το σχέδιο «HEALTHatWork» [3] αποσκοπούσε στη βελτίωση της υγείας και της ασφάλειας στην εργασία σε μια μεταβαλλόμενη αγορά εργασίας την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και συνέστησε μελλοντικές ενέργειες στους υπεύθυνους για τη λήψη πολιτικών αποφάσεων. Το σχέδιο ECOSH [4] είχε στόχο να προωθήσει τις επαφές μεταξύ των ερευνητών και των ενδιαφερομένων μερών, ώστε να διασαφηνιστούν περαιτέρω οι οικονομικές πτυχές της ασφάλειας και υγείας στην εργασία. Το σχέδιο πραγματοποίησε ανάλυση των οικονομικών οφελών από την επαγγελματική ασφάλεια και υγεία, την εκτίμηση του κόστους και των οφελών καθώς και τα οικονομικά κίνητρα.

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[1] Έκτο πρόγραμμα πλαίσιο για την έρευνα: πρόγραμμα για την υγεία και πρόγραμμα διά βίου μάθησης Leonardo Da Vinci.
[2] www.prima-ef.org
http://www.prima-ef.org/prima-ef-guide.html
http://www.prima-ef.org/prima-ef-guidance-sheets.html
http://www.prima-ef.org/primaet.html
[3] 200716 — An Inquiry into the Health and Safety at Work; a European Union Perspective — http://www.abdn.ac.uk/haw
[4] 200549 — Economics of Occupational Safety and Health — www.ecosh.eu

Η Επιτροπή, εκτός από την ανοικτή πρόσκληση υποβολής προσφορών, ανέθεσε επίσης πρόσφατα μια μελέτη σχετικά με την ψυχική υγεία στον χώρο εργασίας με στόχο την αξιολόγηση από νομική άποψη της κατάστασης της υγείας και της ασφάλειας, την σκιαγράφηση σεναρίων για την ανάληψη δράσης και την εκπόνηση εγγράφου καθοδήγησης για εργαζόμενους και εργοδότες. Επίσης, αναμένουμε ότι τα ευρήματα της μελέτης θα βοηθήσουν στην εξακρίβωση της κατάστασης στην Ελλάδα, την Πορτογαλία και την Ιρλανδία. Τα ευρήματα αυτής της μελέτης που αναμένεται να δημοσιοποιηθούν μέχρι τα μέσα του 2014, θα συμβάλλουν στην καλύτερη συνεκτίμηση του αντίκτυπου των κινδύνων ψυχοκοινωνικού χαρακτήρα στο χώρο εργασίας στην ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004077/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Psychosocial risks at work as a result of the crisis

The many hardships which Cypriot society is suffering in both the work and social sectors have now been compounded by the vague but very serious risk of psychosocial risks at work as a result of the crisis and this is having a direct impact on society and the family.

Almost every worker will certainly experience the stress induced by decisions on redundancies, the reorganisation of work methods and changes to corporate structures and everything that restructurings, mergers or takeovers bring in their wake. The laws passed under the memorandum have exacerbated the already difficult situation in the workplace.

Successive announcements, for example by banks and quasi-governmental organisations about cutbacks and restructuring are undermining labour relations in what have traditionally been seen as safe sectors. Efforts by workers to withstand the pressures of modern life and efforts to reconcile professional and family commitments are being undermined by the constantly changing internal or external environment, or both, and this is having a detrimental effect on their health. Fear and the pressure to scale down rights will be crowned by rising unemployment, followed by poverty among workers. Unfortunately, things are only going to get worse.

In view of this, will the Commission and the Commissioner responsible for employment, social affairs and social integration say:

1. Have they included psychosocial risks at work in the adverse effects of the crisis and the haircut imposed by the Eurogroup?

2. What strategies, support programmes, financial resources and funds will be used to support workers, by protecting them from these psychosocial risks in the countries in southern Europe and, in this particular instance, Cyprus?

3. What did they do in similar circumstances in Greece, Portugal and Ireland?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the potential negative impact of the current economic and financial context on worker's health and wellbeing and in this respect considers that an effective application of the national legislation transposing EU legislation on health and safety at work is essential.

2, 3. The Commission has supported and co-funded ([1]) the so-called PRIMA-EF activities ([2]) (Psychosocial Risk Management Excellence Framework). The deliverables of these activities should be useful to the countries mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development for Health Research is funding various projects related to mental health and socioeconomic context at work. The project HEALTHatWork ([3]) aimed to improve health and safety at work in a changing labour market environment in the European Union and recommended future actions for policy-makers. The project ECOSH ([4]) intended to bring researchers and stakeholders together to further elucidate the economics of safety and health at work. The project analysed the business case for occupational safety and health, the measurement of costs and benefits and on economic incentives

([1]) 6th Framework Programme for Research Health Programme and Lifelong Learning Leonardo Da Vinci Programme.
([2]) www.prima-ef.org
http://www.prima-ef.org/prima-ef-guide.html
http://www.prima-ef.org/prima-ef-guidance-sheets.html
http://www.prima-ef.org/primaet.html
([3]) 200716 — An Inquiry into the Health and Safety at Work; a European Union Perspective — http://www.abdn.ac.uk/haw
([4]) 200549 — Economics of Occupational Safety and Health — www.ecosh.eu

The Commission has also, further to an open call for tenders, recently ordered a study on mental health in the workplace with a view to evaluating the situation from a health and safety at work legal standpoint, outlining scenarios for action and drafting a guidance document for workers and employers. We also expect that the findings of the study will help identify the situation in GR, PT and IRL. The findings of this study, expected to be available by mid-2014, will contribute to a better assessment of the impact of psychosocial risks on mental health at the workplace in the EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004078/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κούρεμα των τραπεζικών καταθέσεων στην Κύπρο

Έκθεση της Barclays ανεβάζει σε 15 δισ. ευρώ ετησίως το κόστος για τον ευρωπαϊκό τραπεζικό κλάδο από το κούρεμα των τραπεζικών καταθέσεων στην Κύπρο, λόγω αναμενόμενης μείωσης των κερδών των ευρωπαϊκών τραπεζών:

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς προτίθεται η Ευρωζώνη να αντισταθμίσει αυτόν τον κίνδυνο στις ευρωπαϊκές τράπεζες;

2. Προτίθεται να αυξήσει τα επιτόκια καταθέσεων;

3. Είχε προβλέψει τον συστημικό κίνδυνο από το κυπριακό κούρεμα και έχει ετοιμάσει σχέδιο δράσης;

4. Ποιες ευρωπαϊκές τράπεζες θα πληγούν περισσότερο;

5. Πώς θα αντιμετωπίσει ένα πιθανό κύμα φυγής των καταθετών από τις τράπεζες της ΕΕ;

6. Πώς σχολιάζει τις εκ διαμέτρου αντίθετες απόψεις που διατυπώθηκαν από τον κ. Γιούνκερ (πρώην Πρόεδρο του Eurogroup) «ότι το Eurogroup συμπεριφέρθηκε στους Κυπρίους ως να ήταν όλοι γκάγκστερς», ενώ ο νέος Πρόεδρος του Eurogroup, κ. Ντάουζενμπλουμ θεώρησε «το κούρεμα ως επιτυχή συνταγή για συρρίκνωση του τραπεζικού μεγέθους της Κύπρου» υποβαθμίζοντας το συστημικό κίνδυνο του κουρέματος στην Ευρωζώνη;

7. Ποιος θα πληρώσει τα εμφανή λάθη των αποφάσεων του Eurogroup και την οικονομική και ανθρωπιστική κρίση που προκαλούν;

8. Ποιο ήταν τελικά το μεγαλύτερο κόστος; Η παροχή δανείου 5,8 δισ. που χρειαζόταν για ανακεφαλαίωση των κυπριακών τραπεζών ή το κόστος που καταβλήθηκε και συνεχίζει να καταβάλλεται για καθησύχαση των αγορών ως τερματισμό του συστημικού κινδύνου;

9. Πόσα δαπάνησε η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα για στήριξη του ευρώ, λόγω της αναταραχής που προκάλεσε στις αγορές η απόφαση του Eurogroup για κούρεμα των κυπριακών καταθέσεων;

10. Θεωρεί ότι η απόφαση της ΕΚΤ να παραχωρήσει πέραν των 9 δισ. Έκτακτης Ενίσχυσης Ρευστότητας (Emergency Liquidity Assistance) σε μια προφανώς αφερέγγυα Κυπριακή τράπεζα ήταν σωστή πολιτική; Και γιατί θα πρέπει οι Κύπριοι καταθέτες να πληρώσουν τη ζημιά από μια λανθασμένη απόφαση της ΕΚΤ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η εκτός Κύπρου κατάσταση παρακολουθείται στενά και δεν έχουν υλοποιηθεί κίνδυνοι σημαντικής απώλειας της εμπιστοσύνης. Επίσης, δεν έχει παρατηρηθεί φυγή κεφαλαίων από τις τράπεζες της ΕΕ. Το κόστος χρηματοδότησης των τραπεζών δεν έχει εξελιχθεί σημαντικά αφότου ελήφθη η απόφαση των κυπριακών αρχών σχετικά με τα μέτρα εξυγίανσης των τραπεζών.

Οι αποδόσεις των καταθέσεων δεν καθορίζονται από την ΕΕ, αλλά από τις ίδιες τις τράπεζες, υπό την εποπτεία της ρυθμιστικής αρχής τους.

Η κατάσταση στην Κύπρο είναι έκτακτη. Τα μέτρα που ελήφθησαν για την αντιμετώπισή της δεν συνιστούν πρότυπο για μελλοντικές δράσεις. Στην πραγματικότητα, δεν υπάρχουν τέτοια πρότυπα. Ενώ τα προγράμματα μπορεί να έχουν ομοιότητες, το καθένα από αυτά είναι προσαρμοσμένο στην κατάσταση της συγκεκριμένης χώρας.

Αν και τα κίνητρα για τις τράπεζες της ευρωζώνης όσον αφορά την αξιοποίηση της ρευστότητας του Ευρωσυστήματος είναι πολλαπλά — και κατ' επέκταση το ενδεχόμενο δανεισμού «λόγω Κύπρου» δεν μπορεί να απομονωθεί — ο συνολικός δανεισμός των τραπεζών από το Ευρωσύστημα έχει μειωθεί σημαντικά τους τελευταίους μήνες.

Η Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει τις αποφάσεις νομισματικής πολιτικής που λαμβάνονται από την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα, σεβόμενη την ανεξαρτησία της, όπως κατοχυρώνεται στη Συνθήκη.

Η ΕΕ έχει δεσμευθεί να οικοδομηθεί μια τραπεζική ένωση που θα ενισχύσει τη σταθερότητα και ανθεκτικότητα του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα, με τη βελτίωση του πλαισίου εποπτείας και εξυγίανσης των τραπεζών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004078/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Haircut to bank deposits in Cyprus

A report by Barclays has increased the cost to the European banking sector of the haircut to bank deposits in Cyprus to EUR 15 billion due to the anticipated drop in the profits of European banks.

1. How does the euro area intend to counterbalance this risk to European banks?

2. Does it intend to increase interest rates on deposits?

3. Did it provide for the systemic risk from the Cypriot haircut and has it prepared an action plan?

4. Which European banks will fare worst?

5. How will it deal with a possible capital flight from EU banks?

6. What are its comments on the diametrically opposed views expressed by Mr Juncker (former president of the Eurogroup), who said that the Eurogroup had treated all Cypriots like gangsters, and those expressed by the new president of the Eurogroup, Mr Dijsselbloem, who considers the haircut to be a template for shrinking the size of the banking sector in Cyprus, thereby underestimating the systemic risk of the haircut to the euro area?

7. Who will pay for the obvious mistakes made by the Eurogroup in its decisions and for the economic and humanitarian crisis which they are causing?

8. Which will ultimately cost more? The EUR 5.8 billion loan needed in order to recapitalise the Cypriot banks or the cost which has been paid and is still being paid to reassure the markets and thus end the systemic risk?

9. How much did the European Central Bank lend in order to support the euro, due to the disruption caused to the markets by the Eurogroup decision to apply a haircut to deposits in Cyprus?

10. Does it consider that the ECB decision to grant over EUR 9 billion in Emergency Liquidity Assistance to what was obviously an insolvent Cypriot bank was the right policy? Why should Cypriot savers pay for the damage caused by the erroneous decision taken by the ECB?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2013)

The situation outside Cyprus is monitored closely and no risks related to major loss of confidence have been observed to have materialised. Also no capital flight from the EU banks has been observed. Bank funding costs have not evolved significantly since the decision of the Cypriot authorities on the bank resolution measures.

The remunerations of deposits is not determined by the EU, but by the bank themselves, under the supervision of their regulator.

The Cypriot situation is exceptional. The measures that were taken to address it are not a template for future actions. Indeed, there are no templates as such. While programmes may have their similarities, each is tailored to the situation of the country in question.

While the motives for euro-area banks to tap Eurosystem liquidity are manifold — and hence lending 'due to Cyprus' cannot be isolated — banks' overall borrowing from the Eurosystem has declined significantly over the last months.

The Commission does not comment on monetary policy decisions taken by the European Central Bank, in full respect of its independence as enshrined in the Treaty.

The EU is committed to build a banking union that will help reinforcing the stability and resilience of the financial sector by improving the framework for supervising and resolving banks.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004079/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η επιδείνωση της ανεργίας στην ΕΕ

Η απόφαση του Eurogroup οδηγεί την Κύπρο με ανυπολόγιστη ταχύτητα σε φτωχοποίηση και τους νέους της χώρας στην απογοήτευση και την ανεργία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Δεν είναι οξύμωρο το γεγονός ότι, ενώ η ΕΕ έχει θέσει ως στόχο την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας ανάμεσα στους νέους, την ίδια στιγμή μέσω της απόφασης του Eurogroup για την Κύπρο και των πολιτικών λιτότητας που επιβάλει, οδηγεί τους νέους της Κύπρου στην ανεργία με όλες τις ψυχοκοινωνικές επιπτώσεις, οδηγώντας τους στην αναγκαστική μετανάστευση για εξεύρεση εργασίας;

Δεν θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι με αυτήν της την πολιτική επιδεινώνει, παρά συντελεί, στην καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας στην ΕΕ, απομακρύνοντας ακόμα περισσότερο από τους στόχους της στρατηγικής Ευρώπη 2020;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν υποτιμά τις δύσκολες προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα και θα καταβάλει κάθε δυνατή προσπάθεια για να συνδράμει την Κύπρο στις προσπάθειες που καταβάλλει για να αναπτύξει ένα πιο διαφοροποιημένο και βιώσιμο οικονομικό μοντέλο, να αμβλύνει τις κοινωνικές συνέπειες του οικονομικού κλονισμού και να μετριάσει τις επιπτώσεις στα πλέον ευάλωτα άτομα, μεταξύ άλλων με τη σύσταση της ομάδας στήριξης για την Κύπρο.

Η ομάδα στήριξης θα βοηθήσει τις κυπριακές αρχές να έχουν ταχεία πρόσβαση στους σχετικούς πόρους χρηματοδότησης στο πλαίσιο των προγραμμάτων πολιτικής συνοχής και διαρθρωτικής πολιτικής. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος στήριξης, η Κύπρο θα μπορεί να ζητά υψηλότερα ποσοστά προχρηματοδότησης για μελλοντικές αιτήσεις χρηματοδότησης σε διάφορα ταμεία και «συμπληρωματικό» ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης 10% για την πολιτική συνοχής και την αγροτική ανάπτυξη. Τα προγράμματα που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΕ θα βοηθήσουν στην αναβάθμιση των δεξιοτήτων και στην εκ νέου επιμόρφωση για να διευκολύνουν την προσαρμογή στις μεταβολές της αγοράς εργασίας.

Η αλληλεγγύη βρισκόταν πάντα στο επίκεντρο των δράσεων της Επιτροπής και θα σφραγίσει τη μελλοντική συνεργασία με την Κύπρο για να βοηθήσει στη δημιουργία βιώσιμου οικονομικού και κοινωνικού προτύπου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004079/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Rising unemployment in the EU

The Eurogroup decision is pushing Cyprus into poverty and its young people into disappointment and unemployment at an unprecedented rate.

Is it not paradoxical that the EU has adopted the objective of combating youth unemployment while, at the same time, the decision taken by the Eurogroup on Cyprus and the austerity policies which it imposes are pushing young people in Cyprus into unemployment and its psychosocial consequences, thereby forcing them to migrate in search of work?

Does the Commission not think that its policy is exacerbating rather than helping to combat unemployment in the EU and is pushing it even further away from the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The Commission does not underestimate the difficult challenges facing the country, and it will do everything possible to assist Cyprus in its efforts to develop a more diversified and sustainable economic model, alleviate the social consequences of the economic shock and mitigate the impact on the most vulnerable people, including with the establishment of the Support Group of Cyprus.

The Support Group will help the Cypriot authorities to rapidly access the relevant sources of funding available under the cohesion/structural policy programmes. Under the assistance programme, Cyprus will be able to request higher pre-financing rates for future applications to various Fund allocations and a 10% 'top-up' co-financing rate for cohesion policy and rural development. EU co-funded programmes will help provide skill upgrades and re-training to ease labour market transitions.

Solidarity has always been central to the Commission's actions and it will be the hallmark of future work with Cyprus to help the emergence of a sustainable economic and social model.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004080/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής για την εξεύρεση πρόσθετων τρόπων χρηματοδότησης για την Κύπρο

Ο Πρόεδρος της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, José Manuel Barroso, έχει πει ότι η Επιτροπή αναζητεί πρόσθετους τρόπους χρηματοδότησης και αναμένεται να απευθύνει έκκληση στα κράτη μέλη για να επιδείξουν την αλληλεγγύη τους προς την Κύπρο.

1. Για ποιο λόγο τηρεί η Επιτροπή σιγή ιχθύος σχετικά με τις πιθανότητες επιτυχίας μιας τέτοιας πρωτοβουλίας;

2. Γιατί δεν ζήτησε ο κ. Barroso αυτού του είδους την αλληλεγγύη της ΕΕ προς την Κύπρο πριν την απόφαση της Ευρωομάδας της 15ης Μαρτίου 2013;

3. Γιατί απομονώθηκε η Κύπρος και αντιμετωπίστηκε σαν πειραματική περίπτωση διάσωσης αντί να της δοθεί το μικρό ποσό των 5,8 δισ. ευρώ που χρειαζόταν επειγόντως; Μήπως δεν είναι αλήθεια, εξάλλου, ότι το πραγματικό κόστος για την ΕΕ της προσπάθειας να αποτραπούν οι συστημικοί κίνδυνοι που δημιουργεί για τις υπόλοιπες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες η διάσωση της Κύπρου είναι μεγαλύτερο από 5,8 δισ. ευρώ; Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να εξηγήσει την λογική που κρύβεται πίσω από την συγκατάθεσή της σε μία τέτοια, άνευ προηγουμένου κακομεταχείριση ενός κράτους μέλους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το αξιότιμο μέλος τους Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου στη δήλωση του προέδρου Barroso στην επιστολή του προς τον πρόεδρο της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας κ. Αναστασιάδη: «η Επιτροπή εξασφάλισε κατά τη διάρκεια των διαπραγματεύσεων για το προσεχές πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο ότι οι αποφάσεις του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου λαμβάνουν υπόψη τις ιδιαίτερες ανάγκες της Κύπρου στο συνολικό πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων. Όπως γνωρίζετε, αυτό οδήγησε στην συμπληρωματική διάθεση 150 εκατομ. ευρώ προς την Κύπρο δυνάμει της πολιτικής συνοχής για την αναγνώριση των προκλήσεων που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα ως νησιωτικό κράτος μέλος της ΕΕ και λόγω του απομακρυσμένου χαρακτήρα της σε σχέση με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη, και 7 εκατομ. ευρώ δυνάμει του προγράμματος αγροτικής ανάπτυξης. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή εξασφάλισε ότι οι διατάξεις οι οποίες εφαρμόζονται στην τρέχουσα περίοδο σε χώρες του προγράμματος θα εφαρμόζονται επίσης στο μέλλον στην Κύπρο. Συνεπώς, για τα μελλοντικά κονδύλια στο πλαίσιο των ΕΤΠΑ, ΕΚΤ, Ταμείου Συνοχής, ΕΓΤΑΑ και ΕΤΘΑ, η Κύπρος θα μπορεί να ζητήσει συμπληρωματικό ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης 10%.» ([1])

Από την αίτηση χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας που υπέβαλε η Κύπρος στην Ευρωομάδα τον Ιούνιο του 2012, η Επιτροπή έκανε το παν για να στηρίξει την Κύπρο και συνεργάστηκε στενά με τις κυπριακές αρχές προκειμένου να καταλήξουν σε μια εποικοδομητική και βιώσιμη λύση των προβλημάτων.

Ο στόχος της Επιτροπής κατά τη διάρκεια της όλης διαδικασίας επίτευξης συμφωνίας για ένα πρόγραμμα στήριξης της Κύπρου ήταν τριπλός: να βοηθηθεί η Κύπρος να εισέλθει σε πορεία βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης, να διατηρηθεί η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα στην Κύπρο και τη ζώνη του ευρώ και να προστατευθεί η ακεραιότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ και της ενιαίας αγοράς.

Η Επιτροπή θα συμβάλει στην εξεύρεση πόρων από τα χρηματοδοτικά μέσα της ΕΕ και θα βρίσκεται σε ετοιμότητα για περαιτέρω τεχνική βοήθεια, μεταξύ άλλων, μέσω της ομάδας στήριξης για την Κύπρο.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/cyprus/news/speeches/archives/20130416_letterbarroso_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004080/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Commission's initiative in finding additional means of funding for Cyprus

Commission President, José Manuel Barroso, has said that the Commission is seeking additional means of funding for Cyprus, and is expected to call on the Member States to demonstrate their solidarity with Cyprus.

1. Why is the Commission keeping a low profile on the possibility of success of such an initiative?

2. Why did Mr Barroso fail to call for EU solidarity with Cyprus ahead of the Eurogroup decision of 15 March 2013?

3. Why was Cyprus isolated and treated as an experimental bailout case, rather than being granted the small amount of EUR 5.8 billion that is urgently needed? After all, is it not the case that the actual cost to the EU of preventing the systemic risks arising for other Member States from the Cyprus bailout is higher than EUR 5.8 billion? Could the Commission explain the logic behind its consent to such unique mistreatment of a Member State?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the statement by President Barroso in his letter to the President of the Republic of Cyprus Mr Anastasiadis, 'the Commission ensured during the negotiations for the next EU multi annual financial framework that the decisions reached by the European Council took account of the particular needs of Cyprus in the overall context of the negotiations. As you know, this resulted in Cyprus receiving an additional allocation of EUR 150 million under cohesion policy to recognise the challenges posed by the situation of island MS and the remoteness of certain parts of the EU; and EUR 7 million under rural development programme. Moreover, the Commission ensured that the provisions which apply in the current period to programme countries will also apply in the future to Cyprus. Thus, for its future ERDF, ESF, Cohesion fund, EARDF and EMFF allocations Cyprus will be able to request a 10% top-up co-financing rate' ([1]).

Since Cyprus' application to the Eurogroup for financial assistance in June 2012, the Commission has done its utmost to assist Cyprus and has worked closely with the Cypriot authorities to reach a constructive and sustainable solution to the challenges.

The Commission's goal during the whole process of agreeing a support programme for Cyprus has been three-fold: help Cyprus to the path of sustainable growth, preserve financial stability in Cyprus and in the Eurozone and protect the integrity of the Eurozone and Single Market.

The Commission will help mobilising funds from EU instruments and will also stand ready for further technical assistance, not least through the Support Group for Cyprus.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/cyprus/news/speeches/archives/20130416_letterbarroso_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004081/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας

Ποια είναι η βραχυπρόθεσμη, μεσοπρόθεσμη και μακροπρόθεσμη στρατηγική της Ευρώπης για την οικονομική μεγέθυνση και την ανάπτυξη προκειμένου να διασφαλιστούν θέσεις εργασίας για τους ανέργους και πλούτος για όλους;

Ποιες πρακτικές λύσεις και σταθερές απαντήσεις μπορεί να δώσει η Επιτροπή στους χιλιάδες άνεργους στη νότια Ευρώπη και στις ευπαθείς ομάδες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων αυτών της χώρας μου, της Κύπρου, που έχουν υποστεί την τραυματική δοκιμασία να αντιμετωπίζονται ως πείραμα «κουρέματος» από την ευρωζώνη;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Στην ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης (ΕΕΑ) για το 2013, την οποία δημοσίευσε η Επιτροπή τον περασμένο Νοέμβριο, διατυπώνονται οι κύριες πολιτικές προτεραιότητες για τις οικονομίες της ΕΕ, τόσο σε μεσοπρόθεσμο όσο και σε μακροπρόθεσμο επίπεδο. Προσδιορίζονται οι προϋποθέσεις για την αποκατάσταση της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των μέτρων «για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας και των κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων της κρίσης». Τα μέτρα αυτά — τα οποία εμπνέονται από τη δέσμη για την απασχόληση για το 2012 ([1]) — κυμαίνονται από τις διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις (εκσυγχρονισμός των αγορών εργασίας, των συστημάτων καθορισμού των αποδοχών κ.λπ.) έως τη βελτίωση της απασχολησιμότητας του εργατικού δυναμικού και από την εξάλειψη της φτώχειας έως την προώθηση της κοινωνικής ένταξης. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει την ανασφάλεια που πλήττει την αγορά εργασίας σε πολλά κράτη μέλη και έχει επιδείξει την ετοιμότητά της να αναλάβει ενέργειες, όταν αυτό κρίνεται σκόπιμο. Η πρωτοβουλία για την απασχόληση των νέων, η οποία εγκρίθηκε πρόσφατα, στηρίζεται σε κονδύλια ύψους 6 δισ. ευρώ και αποσκοπεί στη βελτίωση της αγοράς εργασίας για τους νέους. Η πρωτοβουλία αυτή αποτελεί ένα καλό παράδειγμα της ετοιμότητας της Επιτροπής ([2]).

Ειδικότερα, όσον αφορά την Κύπρο και την Ελλάδα, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) διαδραματίζει μείζονα ρόλο. Στην Κύπρο το επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα, το οποίο χρηματοδοτείται από το ΕΚΤ για την περίοδο 2007-2013, διαθέτει προϋπολογισμό ύψους 119 εκατ. ευρώ και η χώρα αυτή, μέσω του εν λόγω προγράμματος, ανέπτυξε και εφάρμοσε συνδυασμό μέτρων ενεργητικής πολιτικής για την αγορά εργασίας και εισοδηματικής στήριξης, έτσι ώστε να αμβλυνθούν οι δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις της οικονομικής κρίσης στην αγορά εργασίας. Στην Ελλάδα το ΕΚΤ διαθέτει κονδύλια ύψους σχεδόν 4,4 δισ. ευρώ για την περίοδο 2007-13 και παρέχει σημαντική βοήθεια σε ευάλωτες ομάδες διευκολύνοντας την κοινωνική και εργασιακή τους ένταξη.

([1]) COM(2012)173.
([2]) COM(2013)0144.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004081/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Combating unemployment

What is Europe's short-term, medium-term and long-term strategy for growth and development in order to ensure jobs for the unemployed and wealth for everyone?

What practical solutions and solid answers can the Commission give to the thousands of unemployed people in the south of Europe and to vulnerable groups, including those in my country of Cyprus, that have undergone the trauma of being treated as an experiment for a 'haircut' by the eurozone?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Commission's Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2013 which was published November last year contains the main policy priorities for the EU economies, both in the short and the longer term. It sets out the conditions for restoring economic growth, including measures aimed at 'tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis'. These measures — inspired by the 2012 Employment Package ([1]) — range from structural reforms (modernising labour markets, wage-setting systems etc.) to improving the employability of the workforce, tackling poverty and promoting social inclusion. The Commission is well aware of the precarious labour market situation in many Member States and has proven ready to respond quickly if needed. The recently adopted Youth Employment Initiative supported by EUR 6 billion, which aims at improving the situation on the labour market for youth, is a good example of this ([2]).

Specifically with respect to Cyprus and Greece, the European Social Fund (ESF) plays an important role. In Cyprus, the Operational Programme financed by the ESF for 2007-2013 has a budget of EUR 119 million and Cyprus, through this Operational Programme, has developed and implemented a mix of active labour market and income-support measures to mitigate the adverse effects of the economic crisis on the labour market. In Greece, the ESF with an overall budget of almost EUR 4.4 billion for 2007-13 provides significant assistance to vulnerable groups by facilitating their social and labour market integration.

([1]) COM(2012) 173.
([2]) COM(2013) 0144.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004082/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συμμετοχή του ΔΝΤ στη διάσωση της κυπριακής οικονομίας

Η συμμετοχή του ΔΝΤ στη διάσωση της κυπριακής οικονομίας αναμένεται να ανέλθει περίπου στο 10% της συνολικής βοήθειας.

Αναγνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι μια τόσο περιορισμένη συμμετοχή σηματοδοτεί στην πραγματικότητα μια μεταβολή στην πολιτική του ΔΝΤ όσον αφορά τις διασώσεις στην ευρωζώνη, καθώς η συμμετοχή του σε άλλου είδους προγράμματα ανέρχεται στο 33%;

Πώς εξηγείται αυτή η αλλαγή πολιτικής;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουνίου 2013)

Το Εκτελεστικό Συμβούλιο του ΔΝΤ αποφάσισε στις 15 Μαΐου 2013 τη συμμετοχή του Ταμείου στο πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Κύπρο ([1]).

Το ΔΝΤ παρέχει χρηματοπιστωτική στήριξη στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας της «συνήθους πρόσβασης». Εν προκειμένω, ως ανώτατο όριο για τη χρηματοπιστωτική στήριξη του Ταμείου σε προγράμματα βοήθειας καθορίζεται ποσοστό 600% του μεριδίου συμμετοχής του μέλους στο ΔΝΤ, που στην περίπτωση της Κύπρου ανέρχεται σε περίπου 1 δισεκατομμύριο ευρώ.

Η απόφαση όσον αφορά την έκταση και τις λεπτομέρειες της χρηματοπιστωτικής βοήθειας που χορηγεί σε μέλη του είναι θέμα αποκλειστικής αρμοδιότητας του ΔΝΤ, όπου η Επιτροπή δεν έχει δυνατότητα παρέμβασης.

([1]) http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2013/pr13175.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004082/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: IMF participation in the rescue of the Cyprus economy

The IMF's participation in the rescue of the Cyprus economy is expected to amount to approximately 10% of the total assistance.

Does the Commission recognise that such limited participation does in fact signify a shift in IMF policy regarding eurozone bailouts, as its participation in other programmes is as high as 33%?

What is the explanation for such a policy change?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The IMF Executive Board decided on 15 May 2013 on the Fund's participation in the macroeconomic adjustment programme for Cyprus ([1]).

The IMF grants financial support under the 'normal access' procedure. This sets a ceiling for the fund's financial contribution in assistance programmes at 600% of an IMF member's quota share, which amounts to about EUR 1 billion in the case of Cyprus.

The decision on the size and modalities of financial assistance granted to one of its members is the exclusive competence of the IMF, with which the Commission cannot interfere.

([1]) http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2013/pr13175.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004083/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υποστήριξη του κυπριακού λαού

Ο Ευρωπαίος Επίτροπος Οικονομικών και Νομισματικών Υποθέσεων, Olli Rehn, και η Διευθύντρια του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου (ΔΝΤ), Christine Lagarde, εξέδωσαν κοινή δήλωση υποστηρίζοντας το πολυετές πρόγραμμα μεταρρυθμίσεων που έχει επιβληθεί από τις κυπριακές αρχές για την αντιμετώπιση των οικονομικών προκλήσεων που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα, με στόχο τη διατήρηση μιας μακροπρόθεσμης ευημερίας του πληθυσμού. Με λίγα λόγια, σύμφωνα με τη δήλωση, η Επιτροπή και το ΔΝΤ στέκονται στο πλευρό της Κύπρου και του κυπριακού λαού σε μια προσπάθεια αποκατάστασης της χρηματοοικονομικής σταθερότητας, της δημοσιονομικής βιωσιμότητας και της ανάπτυξης για την χώρα και το λαό της.

Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να διευκρινίσει αντιστοίχως τις λύσεις που προτείνει προκειμένου να στηρίξει πρακτικά:

1. τους χιλιάδες ευπαθείς Κυπρίους που ήδη βιώνουν τις καταστροφικές συνέπειες της διάσωσης της οικονομίας,

2. τους χιλιάδες υπαλλήλους που απολύονται ως αποτέλεσμα της ολικής εκκαθάρισης της δεύτερης μεγαλύτερης τράπεζας του νησιού, καθώς και τις οικογένειές τους, που θα αντιμετωπίσουν σοβαρή δυσπραγία λόγω των συνταρακτικών συνεπειών της πρωτοφανούς απόφασης του Eurogroup να καταστρέψει το οικονομικό μοντέλο ενός κράτους μέλους, μη παρέχοντας κάποιο χρόνο στην νεοεκλεγείσα κυβέρνηση να αντιδράσει,

3. τον χρηματοοικονομικό τομέα, ώστε να καταστεί βιώσιμος και πάλι μετά την απόφαση του Eurogroup να καταστρέψει την Κύπρο ως ένα χρηματοοικονομικό κέντρο;

4. Τέλος, τι προγράμματα, κεφάλαια και υπηρεσίες σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να παρέχει προκειμένου να στηρίξει ειδικά την Κύπρο και τον κυπριακό λαό σε βραχυπρόθεσμο, μεσοπρόθεσμο και μακροπρόθεσμο χρονικό ορίζοντα και να καταπολεμήσει τις καταστροφικές συνέπειες της διάσωσης που τους επιβλήθηκε προκειμένου να σωθούν οι τράπεζες;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Είναι σαφές ότι το βάθος της οικονομικής κρίσης στην Κύπρο φανερώνει ότι το εγγύς μέλλον θα είναι δύσκολο για την κυπριακή οικονομία και για τον κυπριακό λαό. Η Επιτροπή θα κάνει ό, τι είναι δυνατόν για να αμβλυνθούν οι κοινωνικές συνέπειες της οικονομικής κρίσης και να μετριαστούν οι επιπτώσεις της στα πλέον ευάλωτα άτομα. Με τη σύσταση της ομάδας στήριξης για την Κύπρο, η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη αρχίσει να κινητοποιεί όλους τους πόρους που έχει στη διάθεσή της για να βοηθήσει τον κυπριακό λαό να αντιμετωπίσει τις οικονομικές και κοινωνικές προκλήσεις.

Όσον αφορά το προσωπικό της Λαϊκής Τράπεζας, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στη δήλωση σχετικά με τα μέτρα εξυγίανσης που εισηγείται Κεντρική Τράπεζα της Κύπρου ([1]) για την Τράπεζα Κύπρου και τη Λαϊκή Τράπεζα.

Υπογραμμίζω ότι δεν ελήφθη κανένα μέτρο για την καταστροφή του οικονομικού μοντέλου της Κύπρου. Τα μέτρα αυτά προέκυψαν μάλλον από την άμεση ανάγκη να αποφευχθεί ο κίνδυνος της ανεξέλεγκτης χρεοκοπίας των τραπεζών, η οποία θα μπορούσε να έχει οδηγήσει σε ανεξέλεγκτη χρεοκοπία του κράτους με πολύ χειρότερες συνέπειες.

([1]) http://www.centralbank.gov.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=12631&lang=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004083/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Supporting the people of Cyprus

The EU's Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Olli Rehn, and the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Christine Lagarde, have issued a joint statement in support of the multiannual reform programme put forth by the Cypriot authorities to address the economic challenges facing the country, with the aim of preserving the long-term prosperity of the population. The statement says in conclusion that the Commission and the IMF stand by Cyprus and the Cypriot people in the effort to restore financial stability, fiscal sustainability and growth to the country and its people.

Can the Commission accordingly specify what solutions it proposes in order to practically support:

1. the thousands of vulnerable Cypriot people who are already suffering the detrimental effects of the bailout;

2. the thousands of employees made redundant as a result of the complete winding-down of the second biggest bank on the island, as well as their families, who will face severe hardship due to the shocking consequences of the Eurogroup's unprecedented decision to destroy the economic model of a Member State, allowing no time for the newly elected government to react;

3. the financial sector, so that it can once again become viable in the wake of the Eurogroup's decision to destroy Cyprus as a financial centre?

4. Finally, what programmes, funds and assistance does the Commission intend to provide in order to specifically support Cyprus and its people in the short, medium and long term and combat the detrimental effects of the bailout imposed on them to save the banks?

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

It is clear that the depth of the financial crisis in Cyprus means that the near future will be a difficult one for the economy and its people. The Commission will do everything possible to alleviate the social consequences of the economic shock and to mitigate the impact on the most vulnerable people in society. With the establishment of the Support Group for Cyprus, the Commission is already mobilising all the resources at its disposal to help the Cypriot people face the economic and social challenges.

Regarding the staff issue in the Laiki Bank,the Commission refers the Honourable Member the statement on the resolution measures implemented at the Bank of Cyprus and Laiki Bank issued by the Central Bank of Cyprus ([1]).

Emphasising, no actions were taken to destroy the economic model of Cyprus. Rather, these actions were driven by the immediate need to avoid a disorderly default of banks, which could have led to a disorderly default of the state with much worse consequences.

([1]) http://www.centralbank.gov.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=12631&lang=en.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004084/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ομάδα δράσης για την Κύπρο

Ο εκπρόσωπος της Επιτροπής, Olivier Bailly παραδέχτηκε ότι ορισμένα από τα συμπεφωνημένα μέτρα του Μνημονίου για την ενίσχυση της κυπριακής οικονομίας είναι σκληρά: Επεσήμανε ότι το έργο της ομάδας δράσης που έχει ορίσει η Επιτροπή, συνίσταται στον περιορισμό του αντίκτυπου των εν λόγω μέτρων στην κοινωνία και ότι η ΕΕ θα παράσχει κάθε δυνατή υποστήριξη στον κυπριακό λαό. Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παραθέσει στοιχεία για τα ακόλουθα:

1. τη θητεία της εν λόγω ομάδας δράσης.

2. το έργο, τη διάρκεια της θητείας, τη δράση και το ποσοστό επιτυχίας (εφόσον υφίσταται) παρόμοιων ομάδων δράσης που ορίστηκαν σε άλλα κράτη μέλη της νότιας Ευρώπης.

3. το προτεινόμενο χρονοδιάγραμμα για την υλοποίηση του Μνημονίου.

4. τις συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις που περιλαμβάνονται στο Μνημόνιο αναφορικά με:

— την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα στην Κύπρο.

— την αποκατάσταση της δημοσιονομικής σταθερότητας.

— την ενίσχυση της ανάπτυξης και των επενδύσεων.

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Ομάδα Υποστήριξης στοχεύει στην (1) συμβολή στην άμβλυνση των κοινωνικών συνεπειών του οικονομικού σοκ, με την κινητοποίηση πόρων από μέσα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και με την στήριξη των προσπαθειών των κυπριακών αρχών για την αποκατάσταση της σταθερότητας, και (2) συνεισφορά περαιτέρω τεχνογνωσίας ώστε να διευκολυνθεί η εμφάνιση νέων πηγών οικονομικής δραστηριότητας. Αυτό θα βοηθήσει στην ταχεία πρόσβαση στην σχετική πηγή χρηματοδότησης και θα παράσχει επιτόπια τεχνογνωσία. Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται με την Κύπρο για τον εντοπισμό των τομέων όπου η τεχνική βοήθεια θα μπορούσε να αποδειχθεί πιο χρήσιμη.

Για λεπτομέρειες του προγράμματος, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του μνημονίου συμφωνίας, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου στην οικονομική προσαρμογή για την Κύπρο ([1]) ([2]).

([1]) http://cdn.cyprus-property-buyers.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/cyprus-troika-memorandum.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004084/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Task force for Cyprus

Commission spokesman, Olivier Bailly, admitted that some of the measures agreed as part of a Memorandum to support the Cyprus economy will be difficult: He said that the work of the Commission task force is to limit the impact of these measures on society, and that the EU will provide every assistance possible to support the Cypriot people. Can the Commission provide details on:

1. the mandate of such a task force;

2. the experience, length of mandate, actions and success (if any) of similar task forces established in other southern European Member States;

3. the proposed time schedule for the implementation of the Memorandum;

4. the specific proposals contained in the Memorandum on:

— making the financial sector in Cyprus viable;

— restoring fiscal stability;

— boosting growth and investment?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Support Group aims to (1) help alleviating the social consequences of the economic shock by mobilising funds from European Union instruments and by supporting the Cypriot authorities' efforts to restore stability; and to (2) bring in further expertise to facilitate the emergence of new sources of economic activity. It will help in rapidly accessing the relevant source of funding and it will provide technical expertise on the ground. The Commission is working with Cyprus to identify the areas where technical assistance could prove most useful.

For details of the programme, including the memorandum of understanding, the Commission refers the Honourable Member of the European Parliament to the Economic Adjustment for Cyprus ([1]) ([2]).

([1]) http://cdn.cyprus-property-buyers.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/cyprus-troika-memorandum.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004085/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συνέπειες της απόφασης της Ευρωομάδας για την Κύπρο και την ευρωζώνη

Διάφορες αμερικανικές και ευρωπαϊκές χρηματοπιστωτικές εταιρείες επιδιώκουν να εκμεταλλευτούν την ιδιάζουσα επιλογή της Ευρωομάδας για επιβολή «κουρέματος» των κυπριακών καταθέσεων στις προβληματικές τράπεζες της χώρας, προκειμένου να προσελκύσουν κεφάλαια και να προσανατολίσουν τους επενδυτές στις δικές τους διαδικτυακές δραστηριότητες, οι οποίες υπόσχονται ασφαλέστερες δυνατότητες αποταμίευσης.

1. Αντιλαμβάνεται άραγε η Επιτροπή, και δη ο Επίτροπος για τις οικονομικές και νομισματικές υποθέσεις και ο Επίτροπος για την εσωτερική αγορά και τις υπηρεσίες, τούτο τον αρνητικό αντίκτυπο που προκάλεσε η αδοκίμαστη και άνευ προηγουμένου απόφαση της Ευρωομάδας για επιβολή κουρέματος στο πλαίσιο του πακέτου διάσωσης της Κύπρου;

2. Για ποιο λόγο εφαρμόστηκε ένα τέτοιο πειραματικό μέτρο πριν επιτευχθεί επίσημη συμφωνία για ένα ολοκληρωμένο κοινό ευρωπαϊκό πλαίσιο εξυγίανσης προσανατολισμένο προς μία πλέον εύρυθμη τραπεζική ένωση;

3. Αντιλαμβάνεται άραγε η Επιτροπή τις νομικές επιπτώσεις που μπορεί να έχει ένα τέτοιο πείραμα κουρέματος στην ευρωζώνη;

4. Για ποιον λόγο δεν δόθηκε στην Κύπρο επαρκής χρόνος για να αναδιαρθρώσει τον τραπεζικό της τομέα; Για ποιο λόγο έπρεπε η χώρα να πέσει θύμα τέτοιας μεταχείρισης και να αντιμετωπιστεί ως μεμονωμένη περίπτωση;

5. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η αρχή της μη εισαγωγής διακρίσεων έχει τηρηθεί πλήρως στην περίπτωση της Κύπρου;

6. Θεωρεί άραγε η Επιτροπή ότι η αλληλεγγύη μεταξύ των κρατών μελών, ως αξία της ΕΕ, εφαρμόστηκε στην πράξη;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Κύπρος συνιστά μοναδική περίπτωση, λόγω του μεγέθους του τραπεζικού της τομέα (7 έως 8 φορές το ΑΕΠ), σε συνδυασμό με τη δομή, το επίπεδο της ανάληψης κινδύνων και της ανεπαρκούς εποπτείας. Έτσι, τα μέτρα είναι «κομμέναραμμένα» για τις εξαιρετικές περιστάσεις στην Κύπρο, προκειμένου να αποκατασταθεί η βιωσιμότητα ενός μικρότερου τραπεζικού τομέα, προστατεύοντας ταυτόχρονα όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει ολόπλευρα τον κυπριακό λαό ώστε να αντιμετωπίσει τα επικείμενα προβλήματα· στο πλαίσιο αυτό αποφάσισε να συστήσει ομάδα στήριξης για την παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας προς τις κυπριακές αρχές.

Με τη δημιουργία της ομάδας στήριξης για την Κύπρο, η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη κινητοποιήσει όλα τα μέσα που έχει στη διάθεσή της για να βοηθήσει τον κυπριακό λαό να αντιμετωπίσει τα οικονομικά και κοινωνικά προβλήματα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004085/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Consequences of the Eurogroup decision on Cyprus and the eurozone

Various American and European financial companies are seeking to exploit the ad hoc imposition of the Eurogroup's haircut on Cypriot deposits in the country's failing banks, so as to attract capital and steer investors towards their online activities which promise safer saving options.

1. Is the Commission and, in particular, the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Commissioner for Internal Market and Services aware of the abovementioned negative repercussions of the Eurogroup's ad hoc and experimental imposition of a haircut, in the context of Cyprus' rescue package?

2. Why was such an experimental measure applied before reaching a formal agreement on a comprehensive common EU resolution framework, so as to work towards a better- functioning banking union?

3. Is the Commission aware of the legal repercussions of such an experimental haircut in the eurozone?

4. Why was Cyprus not given sufficient time to restructure its banking sector? Why was the country victimised in such a way as to treat it as an isolated case?

5. Does the Commission believe that the principle of non-discrimination has been fully respected in the case of Cyprus?

6. Does the Commission think that the EU value of solidarity among Member States has been implemented in practice?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector (7 to 8 times GDP), combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. So measures are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles .

The Commission stands fully behind the Cypriot people in rising to the challenges ahead and thus has decided to set up a Support Group to provide technical assistance to the Cypriot authorities.

With the establishment of the Support Group for Cyprus, the Commission is already mobilising all the resources at its disposal to help the Cypriot people face the economic and social challenges.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004086/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κρίση στην Ευρώπη

Ο Πρόεδρος της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής και άλλοι ευρωπαίοι αξιωματούχοι αναφέρουν ότι η κρίση στην Ευρώπη φτάνει στο τέλος της. Δεδομένης της περαιτέρω επιδείνωσης της οικονομικής κατάστασης στην Ευρώπη, και ιδίως στην ευρωζώνη, πώς τεκμηριώνουν μια τέτοια δήλωση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Μαΐου 2013)

Η άποψη της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την τρέχουσα οικονομική κατάσταση παρουσιάζεται στις εαρινές προβλέψεις που δημοσιεύθηκαν στις 3 Μαΐου 2013. Οι εαρινές προβλέψεις κάνουν λόγο για σταδιακή σταθεροποίηση της οικονομίας της ΕΕ κατά το πρώτο εξάμηνο του έτους και έναρξη της ανάκαμψης κατά το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2013. Με βάση την υπόθεση ότι οι συνεχείς προσπάθειες εφαρμογής των πολιτικών θα υποστηρίξουν τις βελτιώσεις στην οικονομική ικανότητα προσαρμογής και στις χρηματοπιστωτικές αγορές, η οικονομία της ΕΕ αναμένεται να εξέλθει σιγά-σιγά από την ύφεση κατά το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2013. Οι εξαγωγές ενδέχεται να επωφεληθούν από την προβλεπόμενη σταδιακή αναθέρμανση της εξωτερικής ζήτησης και επίσης αναμένεται να έχουν ορισμένες θετικές επιδράσεις στις ιδιωτικές επενδύσεις. Σύμφωνα επίσης με τις προβλέψεις, μολονότι οι βελτιώσεις στις χρηματοπιστωτικές αγορές είναι ήδη ορατές, δεν έχουν ακόμη αντίκτυπο στην πραγματική οικονομία. Η δανειοδότηση προς τον ιδιωτικό τομέα στα ευάλωτα κράτη μέλη εμφανίζεται ιδιαίτερα περιορισμένη. Ως εκ τούτου, η χαλάρωση των όρων δανεισμού σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη, υποβοηθούμενη από τα χαμηλά κατά μέσο όρο επιτόκια, την πρόοδο των ανακεφαλαιοποιήσεων των τραπεζών και τη λήψη αποφασιστικών μέτρων προς την κατεύθυνση της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης, εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί βασική προϋπόθεση για να καταστεί η εγχώρια ζήτηση αυτάρκης παράγοντας που θα συμβάλει στην αύξηση του ΑΕΠ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004086/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Economic crisis in Europe

The President of the European Commission and other EU officials state that the crisis in Europe is at an end. Given the further deterioration of the economic situation in Europe, and in the eurozone in particular, how do they substantiate such a statement?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission's view on the current economic situation is presented in the Spring forecast published on the 3 May 2013. The Spring forecast points to a gradual stabilisation of the EU economy in the first half of this year and a beginning of the recovery in the second half of 2013. Based on the assumption that continued policy effort will sustain improvements in the economic adjustment capacity and in financial markets, the EU economy is expected to move slowly out of recession in the first half of 2013. Exports are likely to benefit from the projected gradual pick-up in external demand and should also have some positive effects on private investment. The forecast also shows that while improvements in financial markets are visible, they have not yet fed through to the real economy. Lending to the private sector in vulnerable Member States appears to be particularly constrained. Therefore, the easing of credit conditions across Member States, helped by on average low interest rates, progressing bank recapitalisations and decisive steps towards banking union, remains a crucial prerequisite for domestic demand to become a self-sustained contributor to GDP growth.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004087/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έκθεση των κυπριακών τραπεζών στην ελληνική κρίση χρέους

Τον περασμένο Ιούνιο η Κύπρος υποχρεώθηκε να ενταχθεί στον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας κυρίως λόγω των αρνητικών επιπτώσεων της υπερέκθεσης του τραπεζικού της τομέα σε ελληνικά ομόλογα και ιδιωτικά δάνεια. Η απόφαση της συνόδου κορυφής της ευρωζώνης τον Οκτώβριο του 2011 σχετικά με την απομείωση του ελληνικού χρέους κόστισε στην Κύπρο 4,5 δισεκατομμύρια, ή γύρω στο 25% του ΑΕΠ της χώρας. Στην πραγματικότητα, η Κύπρος υπέστη ζημιά πολύ μεγαλύτερη από οποιοδήποτε άλλο κράτος μέλος, λόγω της ετοιμότητάς της να συμμορφωθεί προς μια ευρωπαϊκή απόφαση στη βάση της αλληλεγγύης και στήριξής της προς ένα άλλο κράτος μέλος.

Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα εξής ερωτήματα:

1. Τα παραπάνω γεγονότα λήφθηκαν υπόψη από το Eurogroup στις αποφάσεις του της 15ης και 22ης Μαρτίου 2013 σχετικά με την Κύπρο;

2. Δεν είναι η απόφαση του Eurogroup ουσιαστικά μια τιμωρία για την Κύπρο παρά μια δίκαιη ανταμοιβή για τη θετική της αντίδραση στην ελληνική κρίση;

3. Τι σκοπεύει να κάνει η Επιτροπή προκειμένου να αντιστρέψει αυτή την ξεκάθαρα άδικη κατάσταση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Κύπρος αποτελεί μοναδική περίπτωση λόγω του μεγέθους του τραπεζικού της τομέα σε συνδυασμό με τη δομή του, τον βαθμό ανάληψης κινδύνων και τη μη επαρκή εποπτεία. Τα ληφθέντα μέτρα είναι προσαρμοσμένα στην πολύ ιδιαίτερη κατάσταση της Κύπρου, αποσκοπούν στην αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας ενός μικρότερου τραπεζικού τομέα, και προστατεύουν όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004087/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Cypriot banks' exposure to the Greek debt crisis

Last June, Cyprus was obliged to apply to the European Stability Mechanism, mainly owing to the negative repercussions from its banking sector's overexposure to Greek bonds and private loans. The decision of the euro summit of October 2011 on the impairment of Greek debt cost Cyprus EUR 4.5 billion, or approximately 25% of the country's GDP. In effect, Cyprus has sustained a loss much higher than that of any other Member State, due to its readiness to comply with an EU decision on solidarity with and support for another Member State.

Could the Commission answer the following:

1. Were the above facts taken into consideration by the Eurogroup in its decisions of 15 and 22 March 2013 concerning Cyprus?

2. Is the Eurogroup's decision not, in effect, a punishment for Cyprus instead of a much- deserved reward for its positive response to the Greek crisis?

3. What does the Commission intend to do in order to reverse this obviously unfair situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures taken are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with the EU principles.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004088/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οι συνέπειες των αποφάσεων του Eurogroup για την Κύπρο

Ο Πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής κ. Jose Manuel Barroso δήλωσε ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, μέσω των ενεργειών της, έθεσε τέλος στην αβεβαιότητα που επικρατούσε στην Κύπρο, ενώ εξέφρασε τη συγκρατημένη αισιοδοξία του πως το συμπεφωνημένο σχέδιο διάσωσης θα καταστήσει την οικονομία της νήσου βιώσιμη. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις επιζήμιες συνέπειες που επιφέρει το σχέδιο διάσωσης στη μικρής κλίμακας οικονομία της Κύπρου, τη διάλυση του οικονομικού μοντέλου της νήσου, τα σκληρά μέτρα που της επιβλήθηκαν και τα οποία θα επιδεινώσουν τις ζωές των πολιτών της, τα ποσοστά της ανεργία και της φτώχειας, ο Πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής ερωτάται:

1. Σε ποιες πρακτικές δράσεις (προγράμματα, ταμεία, ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια) προτίθεται να προβεί άμεσα, προκειμένου να παράσχει την απαραίτητη ενίσχυση για την υποστήριξη του Κυπριακού λαού και τον περιορισμό των επιζήμιων συνεπειών των σχεδίων διάσωσης που επιβάλλονται σε ένα κράτος μέλος;

2. Οι αποφάσεις του Eurogroup στις 15ης και στις 24 Μαρτίου 2013 έθεσαν πράγματι τέλος στην αβεβαιότητα της ευρωζώνης;

3. Οι αποφάσεις του Eurogroup έθεσαν τέλος στην αβεβαιότητα που βίωσε ο Κυπριακός λαός, στις κοινωνικές αναταραχές που προκλήθηκαν από το σχέδιο διάσωσης και στη δυσπιστία απέναντι στην αλληλεγγύη εντός της ΕΕ;

4. Πιστεύει η Επιτροπή ότι ο τρόπος με τον οποίο χειρίστηκε το Eurogroup την κατάσταση στην Κύπρο και ο τρόπος με τον οποίο μεταχειρίστηκε τον Κυπριακό λαό θα αποκαταστήσει την πίστη στο Ευρωπαϊκό ιδεώδες και θα επαναφέρει την ευημερία στη ζωή των Κυπρίων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Ύστερα από τη σύναψη συμφωνίας σχετικά με τις βασικές συνιστώσες ενός προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Κύπρο στη σύσκεψη της Ευρωομάδας στις 24-25 Μαρτίου 2013, ο Πρόεδρος Barroso αποφάσισε να συγκροτήσει ομάδα στήριξης για την Κύπρο, η οποία θα παρέχει τεχνική βοήθεια στις κυπριακές αρχές. Η σύσταση της ειδικής αυτής ομάδας εγκρίθηκε στη συνεδρίαση του σώματος των επιτρόπων της 27ης Μαρτίου 2013.

Αν και η Κύπρος παρουσιάζει ήδη καλές επιδόσεις στον τομέα της απορρόφησης των διαθέσιμων πόρων στο πλαίσιο των προγραμμάτων συνοχής/διαρθρωτικής πολιτικής (συμπεριλαμβανομένων του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου, του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης και του Ταμείου Συνοχής), η ομάδα στήριξης θα αποσαφηνίσει τις σχετικές πηγές χρηματοδότησης και θα βοηθήσει τις κυπριακές αρχές να αποκτήσουν ταχεία πρόσβαση σε αυτές προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν τις τρέχουσες προκλήσεις.

Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί με το Αξιότιμο Μέλος ότι η εμπιστοσύνη στο ευρωπαϊκό ιδεώδες είναι σημαντική, και κατανοεί τις τεράστιες προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει ο κυπριακός λαός όσον αφορά την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας και την αντιμετώπιση των κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων της σημερινής κατάστασης. Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει απόλυτα τον κυπριακό λαό στην αντιμετώπιση αυτών των προκλήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004088/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Consequences of Eurogroup decisions on Cyprus

The President of the Commission, José Manuel Barroso, has said that the EU's action has put an end to uncertainty in Cyprus, expressing reserved optimism that the agreed rescue plan will make the island's economy viable. Considering the detrimental effects of the bailout on Cyprus' small economy, the destruction of the island's economic model and the stringent measures imposed on the Cypriot people which will damage their lives and result in a rise in unemployment figures and poverty, could the Commission answer the following:

1. What practical measures (programmes, funds, EU budget allocations) does the Commission intend to introduce immediately, in order to provide desperately needed assistance to the people of Cyprus and thus limit the detrimental effects of the bailout imposed?

2. Did the Eurogroup's decisions of 15 and 24 March 2013 actually put an end to uncertainty in the eurozone?

3. Did the Eurogroup's decisions put an end to the uncertainty caused to the Cypriot people, or to the social unrest and mistrust for EU solidarity caused by the bailout?

4. Does the Commission believe that the way in which Cyprus and its people were treated by the Eurogroup will restore trust in the European ideal and return prosperity to the lives of Cypriots?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

Following the agreement on the key elements of a macroeconomic adjustment programme for Cyprus at the Eurogroup of 24-25 March 2013, President Barroso decided to set up a Support Group for Cyprus to provide technical assistance to the Cypriot authorities. The creation of this task force was adopted at the College meeting of 27 March 2013.

Although Cyprus already has a good record in terms of absorption of funding available under the cohesion/structural policy programmes (including the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund), the Support Group will clarify and help the Cypriot authorities to rapidly access the relevant sources of funding to face the current challenges

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the trust in the European ideal is important and understands the enormous challenges facing the Cypriot people, in terms of re-establishing financial stability and responding to the social consequences of the current situation. The Commission stands fully behind the Cypriot people in rising to these challenges.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-004089/13
a la Comisión
Antonio López-Istúriz White (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Declaración de estado de guerra por parte de Corea del Norte

El 30 de marzo, tras una prueba nuclear realizada en el mes de febrero, Corea del Norte declaró el estado de guerra a Corea del Sur, a la vez que anunciaba que había puesto sus misiles y unidades de artillería en posición de combate, con el punto de mira no sólo en objetivos de Corea del Sur, sino también de los EE.UU.

Ante estos hechos, ¿cómo puede contribuir el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior a aliviar la tensión? ¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión ante esta situación?

Estos actos amenazan al mantenimiento de una paz duradera en la Península de Corea, así como la seguridad regional e internacional y la estabilidad del noroeste de Asia. ¿Cómo puede influir la Unión Europea en el «Six Party Talks» para intentar que se desbloqueen las negociaciones?

Dada la existencia de varios acuerdos vigentes con Corea del Sur como, por ejemplo, el «Tratado de libre comercio» (FTA 2011), ¿de qué manera piensa la Comisión que esta crisis puede afectar a los intereses europeos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de mayo de 2013)

La paz, la estabilidad y la desnuclearización de la Península de Corea son favorables a los intereses de la UE, especialmente por su importante participación económica en la región y su compromiso con el régimen internacional de no proliferación. Por tanto, la UE ha exhortado a la República Popular Democrática de Corea (RPDC), en particular, a través de los canales diplomáticos de la UE con las autoridades de Corea del Norte, a que vuelvan a mantener contactos con la comunidad internacional y, en concreto, con los socios de las conversaciones a seis bandas (*Six-Party Talks*). La UE apoya firmemente el actual consenso internacional existente en el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas en relación con la República Popular Democrática de Corea, consenso que señala de forma inequívoca la obligación de que este país respete el régimen mundial de no proliferación y las resoluciones pertinentes de las Naciones Unidas.

La retórica de Corea del Norte no ha tenido ningún impacto en las empresas europeas que actúan en Corea del Sur.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004089/13
to the Commission
Antonio López-Istúriz White (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: North Korea's 'state of war' declaration

On 30 March, following a nuclear test in February, North Korea declared a state of war with South Korea, announcing that it had moved its missiles and artillery units into combat position, targeting not only South Korea, but also the United States.

Given these facts, how can the European External Action Service help ease tensions? What measures is the Commission considering in this situation?

These acts threaten the maintenance of lasting peace in the Korean Peninsula as well as regional and international security and stability in Northeast Asia. How can the EU influence the 'Six Party Talks' and endeavour to break the deadlock in negotiations?

Given that there are several agreements in place with South Korea, for example, the 'Free Trade Agreement' (FTA 2011), how does the Commission think that this crisis may affect European interests?

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

Peace, stability and the denuclerisation of the Korean peninsula are in the EU's interest particularly given its substantial economic stake in the region and its commitment to the international non-proliferation regime. The EU has, therefore, called upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), including via the EU's diplomatic channels with the North Korean authorities, to re-engage with the international community and in particular the Six-Party Talks partners. The EU strongly supports the current international consensus embodied in the UN Security Council's policy towards the DPRK which unequivocally underlines that country's obligation to respect the global non-proliferation regime and relevant UN Resolutions.

The North Korean rhetoric has not had any impact on European businesses operating in South Korea.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-004090/13
Komisi
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(11. dubna 2013)

Předmět: Možné porušení evropského energetického rámce – náhrada škody

V návaznosti na mou otázku P-001906/2013 považuje Komise za dostatečné pro ochranu vnitřního trhu a ochranu investic zahájení řízení pro porušení liberalizačních předpisů v oblasti energetiky proti Bulharsku v situaci, kdy dotčené společnosti, které jsou předmětem porušování legislativy ze strany Bulharska, jsou předmětem řízení o odebrání licence, podaly stížnost k Evropské komisi a žádají po ní přijetí předběžných opatření, aby bylo zabráněno další škodě na jejich majetku v Bulharsku?

Neměla by Komise těchto předběžných opatření využívat v situacích, jako je tato? Bude-li v rámci infringementu vydán proti Bulharsku odsuzující rozsudek, který prokáže nesprávnou aplikaci energetické legislativy ze strany státu, budou se moci společnosti, které podaly stížnost ke Komisi, domáhat náhrady škody nejen proti Bulharsku, ale v případě nevydání předběžných opatření ze strany Komise i na Komisi?

Odpověď pana Oettingera jménem Komise
(16. května 2013)

1. Komise dosud nedokončila posuzování stížností na možné porušení právních předpisů EU odebráním licencí v bulharském odvětví energetiky.

V případě, že by při tomto posuzování Komise došla k závěru, že existuje důkaz o porušení práva EU, kontaktovala by bulharské orgány prostřednictvím tzv. „projektu EU Pilot" za účelem objasnění skutečností a argumentace.

Obecně platí, že dospěje-li Komise k závěru, že členský stát porušil právo EU, může zahájit řízení o nesplnění povinnosti, a to zasláním výzvy, po které může v závislosti na odpovědi členského státu následovat odůvodněné stanovisko a případně předložení věci Soudnímu dvoru Evropské unie.

2. Podle smluv EU může „předběžná opatření" ukládat pouze Soudní dvůr Evropské unie, a to až poté, co mu Komise danou věc předloží. Tato opatření lze uplatnit pouze za výjimečných a naléhavých okolností, aby se zamezilo dalšímu zhoršení situace.

3. Právní předpisy EU neumožňují ani Soudnímu dvoru Evropské unie ani Komisi v případě porušení práva EU přiznávat náhradu škody. Nároky na náhradu škody by se mohly uplatňovat v souladu s občanským právem v rámci příslušné jurisdikce dotčeného členského státu (členských států).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004090/13
to the Commission
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Possible breach of the European energy framework — compensation for damages

In connection with my Question P-001906/2013, does the Commission consider the launch of a procedure against Bulgaria for a breach of liberalisation rules in the energy sector sufficient for the protection of the single market and the protection of investments in a situation where the companies affected, which are the subject of Bulgaria's breach of the legislation, and are the subject of a licence revocation procedure, have submitted a complaint to the European Commission and asked it to adopt provisional measures to prevent further damage to their assets in Bulgaria?

In situations such as this, should the Commission not make use of these provisional measures? If the judgment goes against Bulgaria in the infringement framework, proving that the state applied energy legislation incorrectly, and if the Commission fails to issue provisional measures, will the companies that submitted the complaint to the Commission be able to claim damages not only from Bulgaria, but also from the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

1. The Commission has not yet completed its assessment of complaints on the possible violation of EC law by the revocation of licences in the Bulgarian energy sector.

In case this assessment concludes that there is evidence for a violation of EC law, the Commission would establish contact with the Bulgarian authorities via the so-called 'EU Pilot Project' to clarify facts and arguments.

In general terms, in case the Commission concludes that a Member State has violated EC law, it can open an infringement procedure, by sending a letter of formal notice, which can, depending on the response of the Member State, be followed by a reasoned opinion and, eventually, a referral to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

2. Pursuant to the EU Treaties, 'interim measures' could be imposed only by the Court of Justice of the European Union and only after the Commission has referred a case to the Court. Such measures can be invoked only in exceptional circumstances of urgency to avoid further deterioration of the situation.

3. EC law does not foresee the possibility for the Court of Justice of the European Union or for the Commission to award compensation for damages in case of breach of EC law. Damage claims could be pursued in accordance with the civil law provisions in the national jurisdiction(s) concerned.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-004091/13
à la Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(11 avril 2013)

Objet: Accord PNR et données personnelles

Le gouvernement américain vient d'être attaqué en justice sur l'accord sur les données personnelles des passagers des compagnies aériennes (PNR), qui lie l'Union européenne et les États-Unis depuis 2012.

Alors que l'accord PNR prévoit de limiter l'utilisation des données par les États-Unis, le Département de la sécurité intérieure (DHS) serait en mesure de le contourner facilement puisqu'il accède largement aux bases de données des compagnies aériennes qui compilent les informations sur les déplacements de tout le secteur du voyage. Le DHS pourrait ainsi tirer des données d'offices américains de sociétés européennes, comme Amadeus, qui stockent leurs données et gardent des traces des déplacements intracommunautaires des Européens.

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que, en autorisant cela, les tour-opérateurs sont en violation permanente de la directive 95/46/CE sur la protection des données à caractère personnel?

Par ailleurs, il n'y aurait pas de registre indiquant qui a eu accès et à quoi. Il serait donc impossible de vérifier les activités du DHS, et ce d'autant plus que celui-ci n'est pas légalement tenu en la matière par la loi américaine sur la vie privée.

Si ce problème est avéré, quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour le régler?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(14 mai 2013)

Les questions soulevées semblent faire référence, en ce qui concerne l'accord entre l'UE et les États-Unis sur les données des dossiers passagers (données PNR), aux dispositions relatives à la fréquence et au mode de transfert des dossiers passagers (mode «*push*» ou «*pull*», c'est-à-dire à l'initiative du serveur ou à l'initiative du client), ainsi qu'à la sécurité des données.

Les transporteurs aériens doivent transférer les dossiers passagers une première fois 96 heures avant le départ prévu du vol. Il peut ensuite leur être demandé de transférer les données en temps réel pour garantir qu'elles sont à jour et correctes. En ce qui concerne le mode de transfert, les transporteurs aériens doivent utiliser le mode *push*, mais l'accord permet aux États-Unis de recourir au mode *pull*, dans les cas très limités où les transporteurs aériens sont dans l'incapacité, pour des raisons techniques, de répondre en temps utile à une demande de données, ou dans des circonstances exceptionnelles et pour faire face à une menace spécifique, urgente et grave. En ce qui concerne la sécurité des données, en vertu de l'accord, tous les accès aux dossiers passagers doivent être journalisés ou faire l'objet d'une trace documentaire.

Lors du réexamen, en 2010, du précédent accord entre l'UE et les États-Unis sur les données des dossiers passagers, qui autorisait déjà les requêtes *ad hoc* en mode *pull*, l'UE avait exprimé dans son rapport ses préoccupations quant au nombre de ces requêtes et à leur exécution en mode *pull* par le ministère américain de la sécurité intérieure (DHS). Elle y recommandait que i) le nombre de requêtes *ad hoc* soit substantiellement réduit, que ii) le DHS réexamine ses modalités de recours aux requêtes *ad hoc* et que iii) le DHS privilégie le mode *push* au mode *pull*. En outre, le DHS était invité à enregistrer de façon plus détaillée ses activités, notamment en matière d'accès aux données et de requêtes *ad hoc* en mode *pull*.

La Commission a fait part au DHS des préoccupations soulevées dans la question, et examinera de près la mise en œuvre de l'accord de 2012 lors du premier réexamen conjoint de celui-ci, prévu pour cette année.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004091/13
to the Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: PNR agreement and personal data

The US Government has just been prosecuted over the agreement on the Passenger Name Record (PNR) of airlines, which has been in place between the EU and the US since 2012.

Although the PNR agreement was supposed to limit the US Government's use of data, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would be able to easily bypass the agreement because of the extensive access the DHS has to databases of companies which aggregate travel records from across the travel industry. The DHS could thus retrieve data from the US offices of Europe-based companies like Amadeus, which store their data and keep records of European travellers' intra-EU movements.

Does the Commission not consider that, in allowing this, travel companies are constantly violating Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of personal data?

Moreover, there would be no log to show who accessed what data and from where. It would therefore be impossible to audit the DHS, especially as the DHS legally is not bound by the US Privacy Act on the issue.

If this poses a problem, what measures does the Commission intend to take to solve it?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The questions raised seem to refer to the provisions in the EU-US PNR Agreement on the frequency, and method of transmission (push/pull) of PNR data and on data security.

Air carriers are obliged to transmit PNR data initially 96 hours before the scheduled flight departure and additionally may be requested to transfer the data in real time to ensure that they are up-to-date and accurate. On the method of transmission, air carriers are required to push the data, but the Agreement allows the US to pull data in very limited cases where air carriers are unable for technical reasons to respond in a timely way to a request for data, or in exceptional circumstances in order to respond to a specific, urgent and serious threat. On data security, the Agreement requires to log or document all access to PNR data.

During the review of the previous EU-US PNR Agreement in 2010, which also allowed ad hoc pulls, the EU report raised concerns as regards the number of ad hoc requests and the fact that DHS executed such requests by pulling the data. The report recommended that (i) the ad hoc requests be substantially reduced, (ii) DHS should reassess its way of using the ad hoc requests functionality, and (iii) DHS should use the push rather than the pull method. In addition, the report recommended that DHS should keep better record of its activities, such as its access to the data and its ad hoc pulls.

The Commission has raised the issues mentioned in this question with DHS, and will fully assess the implementation of the Agreement during the first joint review of the 2012 Agreement planned for this year.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004092/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación del BEI para el programa «Crea Escola» en la Comunidad Valenciana (España)

En el año 2006, el Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI) aprobó la financiación de la construcción y reparación de infraestructuras educativas en la Comunidad Valenciana. Esta institución financió el programa de la Generalitat «Crea Escola», que desde 2006 debería haber financiado 435 construcciones escolares en la comunidad.

La financiación del BEI afectaba a la planificación, construcción, rehabilitación y extensión de diferentes centros escolares a lo largo de toda la Comunidad Autónoma. Desde el año 2006 este programa ha financiado diferentes proyectos relacionados con los equipamientos educativos de la Comunidad, como «Valencia Centros Escolares II-2» en 2008 y «Valencia Centros Escolares III» en 2010.

Existen numerosas quejas por parte de asociaciones de padres y madres, así como de profesores de las escuelas objetivo de este programa, que denuncian la falta de realización de las obras, llegándose a producir el derrumbe del techo en dos centros escolares y del suelo en otro diferente en el plazo de escasos meses. El BEI realizó una visita a la Comunidad Valenciana durante el mes de julio del pasado año para valorar el impacto y la implementación de los fondos empleados en dicha Comunidad, entre ellos los dedicados al citado programa.

A la espera de dicha auditoría, los padres y madres de alumnos valencianos han sufrido una clara situación de discriminación ante un gobierno autonómico que no ejecutaba las obligaciones contraídas con la citada institución. Han tenido que pasar 6 años para que el BEI haya dado un primer paso para controlar sus inversiones. Aún sabiendo que el proceso de auditoría de las inversiones lleva su tiempo, considero que 6 años es un plazo demasiado amplio para suponer un control efectivo de las inversiones realizadas en Valencia.

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-000546/2013, la Comisión comunica que no se realizó ninguna auditoría de la 1ª y 2ª fase del proyecto. ¿Considera la Comisión que el BEI se ha ajustado a un control responsable de sus inversiones? ¿Ejercitará las acciones que tenga en su mano para esclarecer las responsabilidades del BEI por su escaso control de dicha inversión? ¿Se ha ajustado dicho control a las Normas Internacionales de Contabilidad y a las Normas Internacionales de Información Financiera? ¿Se han aprobado nuevas fases de proyectos sin comprobar la ejecución de las anteriores?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de junio de 2013)

El BEI es la única autoridad responsable de efectuar los controles y seguimiento de los proyectos que financie, bajo la autoridad y la supervisión de sus órganos de dirección, con arreglo a sus estatutos. La supervisión del BEI se ejerce durante todo el ciclo de vida del proyecto, hasta que se reembolse el préstamo. Los proyectos deben ejecutarse conforme a lo dispuesto en los contratos de financiación. Esto es independiente de las obligaciones de los prestatarios ligadas al cumplimiento de la legislación y los procedimientos contables aplicables, incluida cualquier norma NIC/NIIF adoptada de conformidad con los Reglamentos de la UE.

En cuanto al caso concreto del programa «Crea Escola», cuya ejecución es responsabilidad de la Comunidad Valenciana, el BEI ha supervisado sus préstamos con arreglo a sus procedimientos estrictos. Tanto el promotor como el BEI han elaborado varios informes de aplicación y seguimiento desde 2007 y ha habido varias visitas de equipos técnicos del BEI a fin de de evaluar sobre el terreno la ejecución del programa.

Por lo tanto, el BEI está perfectamente al tanto del hecho de que la ejecución de algunos de los subproyectos del programa «Crea Escola» está sufriendo modificaciones o retrasos lamentables a la hora de la renovación de las infraestructuras necesitadas de reparaciones muy urgentes. Para solucionar estos problemas, el BEI ha intensificado su control del proyecto y ha solicitado a la Comunidad Valenciana que formule un plan de acción para completar «Valencia centros escolares II-2».

El mecanismo de reclamaciones independiente del BEI realizó una investigación sobre el proyecto. Esta finalizó en febrero de 2013 y el informe con las conclusiones se remitió al denunciante al respecto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004092/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: European Investment Bank financing for the 'Crea Escola' programme in Valencia (Spain)

In 2006, the European Investment Bank (EIB) approved financing for the construction and repair of educational infrastructure in Valencia. This institution financed the Generalitat's 'Crea Escola' programme which, since 2006, must have financed 435 educational buildings in the community.

The EIB's financing involved the design, construction, repair and extension of various schools across the entire Autonomous Community. Since 2006, this programme has financed various projects related to the community's educational facilities, such as 'Valencia Centros Escolares II-2' in 2008 and 'Valencia Centros Escolares III' in 2010.

Parents' associations and teachers at the schools have made numerous complaints about this programme, condemning delays to the works. Within months, the roofs have collapsed in two schools and the floor in another. The EIB visited Valencia in July 2012 to evaluate the impact and implementation of the funds used in the community, including those earmarked for the programme.

While waiting for this audit, the parents of Valencian pupils have clearly suffered discrimination at the hands of an autonomous government which did not comply with its contractual obligations to the EIB. Six years passed before the EIB took a first step towards controlling its investment. While I understand that the investment audit process takes some time, I believe six years is long enough to effectively control the investments made in Valencia.

In its answer to Question E-000546/2013, the Commission stated that no audit had been carried out on the 1st and 2nd phases of the project. Does the Commission believe that the EIB has undertaken responsible controls of its investments? Will it do all it can to clarify the EIB's responsibilities for its inadequate controls on this investment? Do these controls comply with International Accounting Standards and International Financial Reporting Standards? Have new project phases been approved before previous phases have been checked?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The EIB is solely responsible to exercise controls and monitor the project it finances, under the authority and supervision of its governing bodies in line with its Statutes. The EIB monitoring takes place throughout the project lifecycle until the loan is paid back. The implementation of the projects is required to be made in line with the provisions set forth in the finance contracts. This is independent of the borrowers' obligations to comply with the applicable accounting laws and procedures, including any IAS/IFRS adopted under the EU Regulations.

As regards the specific case of the 'Crea Escola' programme, the implementation of which is under the responsibility of the Comunidad Valenciana, the EIB has been monitoring its loans in line with its stringent procedures. A number of implementation and monitoring reports have been produced both by the Promoter and by the EIB since 2007, and several visits from EIB's technical teams have taken place to evaluate on site the status of implementation of the programme.

The EIB is therefore fully aware that the implementation of some of the sub-projects of the 'Crea Escola' programme are suffering from some modifications or regrettable delays, in refurbishing infrastructure sometimes in very urgent need of repair. In order to address these issues, the EIB had reinforced its monitoring of the project and has requested the Comunidad Valenciana to produce an Action Plan for the completion for 'Valencia Centros Escolares II-2'.

In addition, an inquiry related to this project was carried out by the EIB's independent Complaints Mechanism. The inquiry was finalised in February 2013, and a Conclusions Report was submitted to the complainant in this respect.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004093/13
a la Comisión
Antonio López-Istúriz White (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Relaciones Unión Europea-Venezuela tras las elecciones electorales

El próximo 14 de abril tienen lugar las elecciones en Venezuela. Estas elecciones se convocan con motivo de la muerte del Presidente Hugo Chávez.

En el marco de las relaciones bilaterales entre la Unión Europea y Venezuela, en concreto en materia de cooperación al Desarrollo, dada la actual negociación del Reglamento que regula el Instrumento de Cooperación al Desarrollo (ICD), y teniendo en cuenta las propuestas de la Comisión, el Consejo y el Parlamento Europeo referentes a la cooperación bilateral con Venezuela, ¿cómo afectarán los resultados electorales a esta nueva negociación?

Por otro lado, en el ámbito regional, las relaciones entre Venezuela y la Unión Europea están basadas en el diálogo institucional de los organismos regionales y de carácter subregional como Mercosur. En concreto, en el marco de Mercosur, tras el acceso efectivo como miembro el pasado 31 de julio de 2012, ¿cómo afectará el resultado de las elecciones a Mercosur?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de junio de 2013)

El 18 de abril de 2013, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta emitió una declaración formal consiguiente a las elecciones del 14 de abril de 2013.

La propuesta de la Comisión para el próximo marco financiero plurianual prevé el posible acceso de Venezuela a los fondos correspondientes a la dotación regional. Además, en principio podrá recurrirse a otros instrumentos financieros para las actividades de cooperación con, por ejemplo, las organizaciones de la sociedad civil y los agentes económicos.

La UE está negociando un Acuerdo de Asociación con Mercosur y, desde su adhesión a Mercosur, Venezuela es parte en las negociaciones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004093/13
to the Commission
Antonio López-Istúriz White (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Relations between the EU and Venezuela after the elections

Elections will take place in Venezuela on 14 April 2013. These elections have been called as a result of the death of President Hugo Chávez.

Within the framework of bilateral relations between the EU and Venezuela, specifically with regard to development cooperation, given the current negotiation on the legislation governing the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and taking into account the proposals made by the Commission, the Council and Parliament on bilateral cooperation with Venezuela, how will the election results affect this new negotiation?

In addition, in a more regional sphere, relations between Venezuela and the European Union are based on the institutional dialogue of regional and sub-regional bodies such as Mercosur. Specifically, in the case of Mercosur, having admitted Venezuela as a member on 31 July 2012, how will the election results affect Mercosur?

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

Following the 14 April 2013 elections, the HR/VP issued a formal statement on 18 April 2013.

In the Commission proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework, it is foreseen that Venezuela will be eligible for funding under the regional envelope. Other financial instruments should remain available for cooperation activities e.g. with civil society organisations and economic operators.

The EU is negotiating an Association Agreement with Mercosur as a block, and since its accession to Mercosur, Venezuela is part of the negotiations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004094/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Verringerung der EU-Stickoxid-Grenzwerte

Die seit 2010 EU-weit geltenden strengen Grenzwerte für Stickoxide können dem Vernehmen nach trotz massiver Anstrengungen zur Reduktion der Stickoxid-Belastung von kaum einem Mitgliedstaat eingehalten werden. Der Ausstoß von Stickoxiden erfolgt vor allem durch Dieselfahrzeuge. Bislang konzentriert sich die Verbesserung der Dieselmotoren vor allem auf eine Verringerung der Feinstaub-Emissionen. Die Plakettenpflicht, die einige Städte eingeführt haben, hat in den vergangenen Jahren hauptsächlich dazu geführt, dass alte Dieselfahrzeuge nachgerüstet wurden aber auch Fahrzeugflotten verjüngt wurden.

1. Ist in diesem Zusammenhang die Einführung von Emissionsgrenzwerten für Baumaschinen (Bagger, Planierraupen etc.) geplant, die ja bis dato keine Abgasgrenzwerte einhalten müssen?

2. Gibt es sog. Best-Practice-Vergleiche aus jenen Städten bzw. Regionen, denen die Reduktion der Stickoxid-Belastung fristgerecht gelungen ist?

3. Welche Förderprogramme zur Reduktion der Stickoxid-Belastung gibt es auf EU-Ebene?

4. In welchem Ausmaß geht die EU hinsichtlich ihrer eigenen Fahrzeugflotten etc. diesbezüglich mit gutem Vorbild voran?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(20. Juni 2013)

1. Die Emissionen von Baumaschinen (z. B. Bagger und Planierraupen) sind in der Richtlinie 97/68/EG über die Emission von gasförmigen Schadstoffen und luftverunreinigenden Partikeln aus Verbrennungsmotoren für mobile Maschinen und Geräte geregelt. Diese Richtlinie, die seit 1997 mehrmals geändert wurde, wird derzeit zur Anpassung ihres Geltungsbereichs und der Normen überarbeitet.

2. Solche Vergleiche liegen nicht vor.

3. Die Luftqualität ist eines der Themen des LIFE-Programms 2007-2013 und dürfte auch Teil des LIFE+-Programms 2014-2020 sein. Auch bei den laufenden Verhandlungen mit den Mitgliedstaaten über die Verwendung der Strukturfondsmittel im Zeitraum 2014-2020 sowie im Forschungsprogramm „Horizont 2020“ spielt die Luftqualität eine Rolle.

4. Die Fahrzeugflotte der Kommission ist Teil des Umweltmanagementsystems (EMAS) der Kommission, bei dem letztere seit 2005 registriert ist. Bei der Auswahl von Fahrzeugen werden Umweltaspekte berücksichtigt, und Dieselfahrzeuge müssen mit einem Partikelfilter ausgerüstet sein und höchste Umweltstandards erfüllen. Alte Dieselfahrzeuge werden immer nachgerüstet: Die Fahrzeuge für die Mitglieder der Kommission werden alle zwei Jahre und die übrigen Fahrzeuge alle vier Jahre ausgetauscht. Die Fahrer der Fahrzeugflotte nehmen jährlich an Kursen für kraftstoffeffizientes Fahren teil. Das Ergebnis dieser Maßnahmen war ein Rückgang der CO_2-Emissionen zwischen 2005 und 2012 um rund 34 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004094/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Reduction in EU nitric oxide limits

According to reports, despite massive efforts, hardly a single Member State has been able to adhere to the stringent nitric oxide limits that have been in place throughout the EU since 2010. Nitric oxide emissions are mainly produced by diesel vehicles. So far, improvements in diesel engines have focused on reducing particulate matter emissions. The system of mandatory plates that some towns have introduced has mainly meant that in recent years old diesel vehicles have been upgraded and vehicle fleets have been replaced.

1. With this in mind, are there plans to introduce emissions limits for civil engineering machinery (excavators, bulldozers, etc.), which have been exempt from such limits to date?

2. Are there best practice comparisons available from towns and regions that have succeeded in reducing nitric oxide levels in good time?

3. What support programmes are available at EU level to help reduce nitric oxide levels?

4. To what extent is the EU itself providing a good example in this regard with its own vehicle fleets?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2013)

1. The emissions of civil engineering machinery (such as excavators and bulldozers) are regulated by Directive 97/68/EC on the emission of gaseous and particulate pollutants from internal combustion engines to be installed in non-road mobile machinery. This directive, which has been amended several times since 1997, is currently under revision with a view to adapting its scope and standards.

2. No such comparisons are available.

3. Air quality has been one of the issues addressed in the LIFE programme running from 2007 till 2013 and is likely to be part of the LIFE+ programme from 2014 till 2020. Air quality is also included in the current negotiations with Member States for the use of the Structural Funds from 2014 till 2020, and in the Challenges of the upcoming Horizon 2020 research program.

4. Commission vehicle fleet is part of the environmental management system (EMAS) of the Commission, for which the Commission is registered since 2005. Vehicles choice integrates environmental aspects and the diesel engines must be fitted with a particle filter and meet the highest environmental standards in force. Old diesel vehicles are always upgraded: the fleet of vehicles for Members of the Commission are replaced every 2 years and other cars are replaced every 4 years. The drivers of the fleet vehicles follow fuel efficient driving courses on an annual basis. As a result of these actions, the CO2 emissions decreased about 34% from 2005 until 2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004095/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Saatgutverordnung — Artenvielfalt

Im Sinne einer Wiederbelebung der Artenvielfalt wird versucht, alte Gemüse-, Obst- und Getreidesorten wieder vermehrt auszusäen, damit diese nicht aussterben.

Medienberichten zufolge wird in Brüssel an einer neuen Saatgutverordnung gearbeitet. Zentraler Bestandteil soll ein Zulassungsverfahren für Nutzpflanzen sein, nach dem jede Sorte getestet, registriert und zugelassen werden muss, damit sie legal in der EU verkauft werden darf, wobei das Hauptzulassungskriterium die Uniformität sein soll.

Der Aufwand und die Kosten für ein solches Registrierungsverfahren würden sich angesichts des Nischendaseins für alte und seltene Sorten nicht lohnen. Diese basieren zudem nicht auf Einheitlichkeit, sondern auf genetischer Vielfalt, und der Großteil dieser fast ausgestorbenen Sorten könnte diesen Test aus biologischen Gründen daher wohl nicht schaffen. Wenn ein Landwirt künftig Saatgut oder Pflanzgut einer nicht zugelassenen alten und seltenen Sorte weitergäbe, würde ihm damit eine Strafe drohen.

1. Die EU hat sich dem Schutz der Artenvielfalt verschrieben. Welche Projekte werden in diesem Zusammenhang auf EU-Ebene gefördert?

2. In welchem Ausmaß wird die Problematik der genetischen Vielfalt alter Gemüse-, Obst- und Getreidesorten im Rahmen der anstehenden Saatgutverordnung hinsichtlich Saatguttausch berücksichtigt, um das Aussterben dieser Sorten nicht über die EU-Hintertür voranzutreiben?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2013)

1. Das Engagement der EU zur Bewahrung der genetischen Vielfalt findet ihren Ausdruck in der Mitteilung über eine Biodiversitätsstrategie der EU für das Jahr 2020 ([1]), u. a. in Maßnahme 10 zur Erhaltung der genetischen Vielfalt der europäischen Landwirtschaft. Umgesetzt wird die Bewahrung der genetischen Ressourcen in der Landwirtschaft mit den Gemeinschaftsprogrammen zur Erhaltung, Charakterisierung, Sammlung und Nutzung der genetischen Ressourcen in der Landwirtschaft ([2]). Zahlreiche Projekte zur Bewahrung der genetischen Vielfalt wurden aus dem LIFE-Programm und dem Forschungsrahmenprogramm der EU gefördert.

2. Die Kommission engagiert sich für die Bewahrung und die Optimierung der Biodiversität. Daher ist ihr Vorschlag betreffend die Erzeugung von Pflanzenvermehrungsmaterial und dessen Bereitstellung auf dem Markt ([3]) so beschaffen, dass er die Bewahrung und die nachhaltige Nutzung der genetischen Vielfalt fördert, indem bei den Anforderungen je nach Art des Vermehrungsmaterials unterschieden wird:

a) Registrierung neuer Sorten auf der Grundlage amtlicher Tests und einer amtlichen Beschreibung, u. a. durch verbesserte Testverfahren, die den Erfordernissen der ökologischen Landwirtschaft und einer nachhaltigen landwirtschaftlichen Entwicklung Rechnung tragen;

b) weniger strenge Registrierungsanforderungen für althergebrachte Sorten auf der Grundlage einer amtlich anerkannten Beschreibung ohne vorgeschriebene Tests. Um die Registrierung solcher Sorten zu fördern, legen die Mitgliedstaaten ermäßigte Registrierungsgebühren fest, und die Jahresgebühr entfällt. Die Registrierung dient der Bewahrung der genetischen Vielfalt, da sie die Erfassung und die Erhaltung dieser Sorten und zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt ihre Aufnahme in Genbanken gewährleistet;

c) sehr geringe Registrierungsanforderungen für heterogenes Material — d. h. Material, das nicht der Definition einer bestimmten Sorte entspricht —, für das die Anforderungen erst zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt festgelegt werden. Diese Art von Vermehrungsmaterial dient in der Regel zu Erhaltungszwecken;

([1]) KOM(2011)244.
([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1467/1994 bzw. Verordnung (EG) Nr. 870/2004 des Rates.
([3]) KOM(2013)262 endg.

d) Ausnahme von den Registrierungsanforderungen für Nischenmarktmaterial, das von Kleinstunternehmern in kleinen Mengen auf dem Markt bereitgestellt wird. Mit dieser Ausnahmeregelung wird dafür gesorgt, dass die genetische Vielfalt den örtlichen Gegebenheiten stärker Rechnung trägt.

Das Tauschen von Saatgut zwischen nicht gewerblichen Akteuren sowie Saatgut, das für Genbanken sowie für Netze zum Erhalt genetischer Ressourcen bestimmt ist, fallen nicht unter die vorgeschlagene Verordnung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004095/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Regulation on seeds — Biodiversity

In order to revive biodiversity, efforts are increasingly being made to plant old vegetable, fruit and cereal varieties so as to prevent them becoming extinct.

According to media reports, a new seed regulation is being prepared in Brussels. The central component of this regulation is reportedly an approval procedure for crops under which each variety will have to be tested, registered and approved in order to be legally sold in the EU. The main authorisation criterion will apparently be uniformity.

Given their marginality, the effort and cost of such a registration procedure would be prohibitive for old and rare varieties. Moreover, they are characterised not by their uniformity, but by their genetic diversity, and most of these virtually extinct varieties would therefore probably fail this test for biological reasons. If a farmer passed on seed or planting stock of an unapproved old and rare variety, he or she would be making him or herself liable to prosecution.

1. The EU is committed to the protection of biodiversity. What projects are being supported in this context at EU level?

2. To what extent does the forthcoming seed regulation sufficiently take into account the problem that the genetic diversity of old vegetable, fruit and cereal varieties poses for seed exchanges, bearing in mind that the EU must not indirectly bring about their extinction?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

1. The EU commitment towards the conservation of genetic diversity is reflected in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([1]), including Action 10 to Conserve Europe's agricultural genetic diversity. The conservation of genetic resources in agriculture has been addressed through the Community programmes on the conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in agriculture ([2]). Through the LIFE Programme and through the EU Research Framework Programmes numerous projects to conserve genetic diversity have been supported.

2. The Commission is committed to enhance and preserve biodiversity. Hence its proposal on the production and marketing of plant reproductive material ([3]) facilitates the conservation and sustainable use of genetic diversity by including different levels of requirements:

(a) registration of new varieties based on an official testing and description, including better testing covering the needs of organic agriculture and sustainability of agricultural development;

(b) light registration for old varieties on the basis of a description which has been officially recognised, without requirements for testing. In order to support the registration of those varieties, Member States will establish reduced registration fees while no annual fee will be charged. The registration of those varieties will serve genetic diversity because it will ensure the recording and maintenance of those varieties, and later on their inclusion in gene banks.

(c) a very light registration for heterogeneous material, namely material not belonging to any variety, for which requirements will be specified at a later stage. That type of material usually serves preservation purposes;

(d) a derogation of the registration requirement of the varieties for niche market material marketed in small quantities and by micro-enterprises. This derogation will allow further development of genetic diversity to adapt to local conditions.

Finally, the exchange of seeds between non-professional operators, as well as seeds intended for gene banks and conservation networks, is outside the scope of the legislative proposal.

([1]) COM(2011) 244.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1467/1994 and Council Regulation (EC) No 870/2004.
([3]) COM(2013) 262 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004097/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse gemäß Artikel 37 der Europäischen Richtlinie 2007/59/EG

Deutschland hat laut mir vorliegenden Informationen bei der Europäischen Kommission die Durchführung einer Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse gemäß Artikel 37 der Richtlinie 2007/59/EG beantragt. Gegenstand dieser Analyse soll es sein zu ermitteln, ob für Triebfahrzeugführer, die ausschließlich auf Strecken im Hoheitsgebiet der Bundesrepublik Deutschland fahren, der Erwerb der neuen EU-weiten Triebfahrzeugführerscheine ausgesetzt und statt dessen eine befristete Weiternutzung der bisher ausgestellten Fahrberechtigungen gemäß der VDV-Schrift 753 angewendet werden darf.

Dazu frage ich die Kommission:

1. Ist es zutreffend, dass die deutschen Behörden eine Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse gemäß Artikel 37 der Europäischen Richtlinie 2007/59/EG beantragt haben?

2. Wenn ja, wie haben die deutschen Behörden diesen Antrag begründet?

3. Wenn ja, wie hat die Kommission auf diesen Antrag reagiert bzw. wie beabsichtigt sie zu reagieren?

4. Hält die Kommission es vor dem Hintergrund der im 4. Eisenbahnpaket angestrebten Harmonisierung und Vereinheitlichung für sinnvoll, eine befristete Weiternutzung der bisher ausgestellten nationalen Fahrberechtigungen gemäß der VDV-Schrift 753 zu erlauben?

5. Garantieren die gemäß VDV-Schrift 753 ausgestellten Fahrberechtigungen in den Augen der Kommission ein gleichwertiges Qualifikations- und Sicherheitsniveau wie die in der Richtlinie 2007/59/EG vorgesehenen Fahrberechtigungen? Wenn nein, warum nicht? Wenn ja, in welcher Form?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2013)

Die Regierung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland hat die Kommission gebeten, die Europäische Eisenbahnagentur (ERA) mit einer Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse hinsichtlich Triebfahrzeugführern, die ausschließlich im deutschen Hoheitsgebiet tätig sind, zu beauftragen. Dies steht im Einklang mit Artikel 37 Absatz 5 der Richtlinie 2007/59/EG über die Zertifizierung von Triebfahrzeugführern, die Lokomotiven und Züge im Eisenbahnsystem in der Gemeinschaft führen ([1]).

Die deutschen Behörden bringen vor, dass die derzeitigen auf der VDV-Empfehlung 753 beruhenden Führerscheindokumente weitgehend mit den Bestimmungen der Richtlinie über die EU-Fahrerlaubnis im Einklang stehen. Die Eisenbahnunternehmen befürchten, dass die Beteiligung von Eisenbahnbehörden die Kosten und die Verfahrensdauer beträchtlich erhöhen könnte, ohne dass sich dabei die Ausbildungs- und Qualifikationsstandards der Triebfahrzeugführer verbessern.

Die Kommission wird Stellung nehmen, sobald sie Gelegenheit hatte, die Ergebnisse der Analyse der ERA zu prüfen, die für Mai 2013 erbeten wurde.

Die Kommission weist darauf hin, dass Artikel 37 Absätze 1 bis 4 der Richtlinie 2007/59/EG eine schrittweise Durchführung und Übergangszeiträume vorsieht. Alle Triebfahrzeugführer müssen bis spätestens 29. Oktober 2018 (d. h. 11 Jahre nach dem Inkrafttreten der Richtlinie) über die in der Richtlinie vorgesehenen Fahrerlaubnisse und Bescheinigungen verfügen. Die erteilenden bzw. ausstellenden Stellen berücksichtigen dabei alle beruflichen Befähigungen, die ein Triebfahrzeugführer bereits erworben hat, so dass diese Vorschrift keinen unnötigen Verwaltungs- und Finanzaufwand verursacht. Triebfahrzeugführer, die vor der Anwendung bestimmter Vorschriften der Richtlinie über eine Fahrberechtigung verfügen, dürfen ihre berufliche Tätigkeit aufgrund ihrer Fahrberechtigungen bis zum Ablauf dieser Frist weiter ausüben.

([1]) ABl. L 315 vom 3.12.2007, S. 51.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004097/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Cost-benefit analysis as referred to in Article 37 of Directive 2007/59/EC

According to the information available to me, Germany has submitted a request to the European Commission for a cost-benefit analysis as referred to in Article 37 of Directive 2007/59/EC. It seems that the purpose of this analysis is to determine whether train drivers who solely drive on routes within the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany can be exempted from having to acquire the new EU-wide entitlement to drive and can instead continue to use the previously issued entitlement to drive for a limited period in line with document 753 published by the VDV (Association of German Transport Companies).

1. Is it the case that the German authorities have submitted a request for a cost-benefit analysis as referred to in Article 37 of Directive 2007/59/EC?

2. If so, what were the reasons given by the German authorities for this request?

3. If so, how did the Commission respond to this request, or how does it intend to respond?

4. In view of the moves towards greater harmonisation and standardisation in the fourth railway package, does the Commission consider it reasonable to permit the continued use of the previously issued entitlement to drive for a limited period in line with document 753 published by the VDV?

5. Does the Commission believe that the entitlements to drive issued according to VDV document 753 guarantee the same qualification and safety level as the entitlements to drive provided for in Directive 2007/59/EC? If not, why not? If so, in what form?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Federal Government of Germany has requested the Commission to ask the European Railway Agency (ERA) to carry out a cost-benefit analysis for train drivers operating exclusively on German territory. This is in line with the provisions of Article 37§5 of Directive 2007/59/EC on the certification of train drivers operating locomotives and trains on the railway system in the Community ([1]).

The German authorities argue that the current documents of the licence, based on VDV recommendation 753, are broadly in line with the provisions of the directive on the EU licence. Railway companies fear that the involvement of railway authorities may lead to a substantial increase in costs and procedure time without any improvement in the standards of training and qualification of train drivers.

The Commission will take position once it has had an opportunity to assess the results of the analysis made by ERA which was requested for May 2013.

The Commission recalls that Article 37§1 to 4 of Directive 2007/59/EC foresees a gradual phasing-in and transitional periods. All drivers shall hold licences and certificates in conformity with this directive by 29 October 2018 at the latest, which is 11 years after the entry into force of the directive. The issuing bodies shall take into account all professional competencies already acquired by each driver in such a way that this requirement does not generate unnecessary administrative and financial burden. However, drivers authorised to drive prior to the application of certain specific requirements of the directive may continue to pursue their professional activities on the basis of their entitlements until this deadline.

([1]) OJ L 315, 3.12.2007, p. 51.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004098/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Rückgang internationaler Personenzugverbindungen in Griechenland

Angesichts der Verschlechterungen im grenzüberschreitenden Eisenbahnverkehr nach und aus Griechenland wird die Kommission um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen ersucht:

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass alle griechischen Grenzübergänge im Schienenverkehr mit Wirkung vom 13. Februar 2011 für Personenzüge geschlossen wurden? Falls ja, wird die Kommission Griechenland auffordern, diese Verbindungen schnellstmöglich wiederherzustellen? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

2. Welche Eisenbahnstrecken in Griechenland wurden mit EU-Mitteln modernisiert? Kann die Kommission den Namen jeder Strecke, den Zeitraum, in dem sie betrieben wurde, die Gesamtkosten der Baumaßnahmen und den Betrag der EU-Kofinanzierung angeben?

3. Was den Sachverhalt anbelangt, dass die OSE (griechische Eisenbahngesellschaft) den Zugbetrieb im Personen- bzw. Güterverkehr bei Infrastrukturen, die mithilfe von EU-Mitteln gebaut oder modernisiert wurden, eingeschränkt hat: Wird die Kommission Griechenland auffordern, diese Dienstleistungen wiederherzustellen, oder die Mittel zurückfordern? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

4. Wie wird die Kommission gewährleisten, dass die von den EU-Organen angeordneten Kürzungen der öffentlichen Ausgaben die Verwirklichung der Ziele einer nachhaltigen Mobilität nicht beeinträchtigen?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2013)

1. Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass die Eisenbahngesellschaft TRAINOSE den grenzüberschreitenden Personenverkehr eingeschränkt hat und dass sie zurzeit eine Wiederaufnahme des Betriebs im Jahr 2014 wohlwollend prüft. Der Güterverkehr auf den fraglichen Strecken läuft weiter. Die Kommission verfügt über keine rechtliche Handhabe, bestimmte Eisenbahnverkehrsdienstleistungen einzufordern; sie hat die griechische Regierung jedoch ersucht, attraktive rechtliche und unternehmerische Rahmenbedingungen zu schaffen, damit Eisenbahngesellschaften solche Verkehrsdienstleistungen anbieten.

2. Nach Auskunft der griechischen Behörden sind (bis Dezember 2012) 5,2 Mrd. EUR investiert worden; davon stammten 2,8 Mrd. EUR aus Kofinanzierungsmitteln der EU.

Der Herr Abgeordnete und das Sekretariat des Parlaments werden einen Anhang mit den finanziellen und technischen Einzelheiten erhalten.

3. Soweit die Kommission weiß, wollte die TRAINOSE mit der Einstellung bestimmter Strecken ihr Netz rationalisieren, um in einem rauen wirtschaftlichen Klima wieder in die Gewinnzone zu kommen, nachdem sie jahrzehntelang Defizite eingefahren hatte. Das Streben nach Rentabilität und die Übernahme gesellschaftlicher Verantwortung stellen einen Mehrwert dar und verbessern die Qualität des Dienstleistungsangebots sowie die Transportmöglichkeiten des Landes.

Die Finanzierung von Eisenbahninfrastrukturen durch die EU ist im Übrigen nicht an die Bedingung geknüpft, dass eine bestimmte Gesellschaft bestimmte Verkehrsdienstleistungen erbringt. Netzbetreiberin und Empfängerin der EU-Finanzmittel ist die OSE, die selbst jedoch keine Verkehrsdienstleistungen erbringt.

4. In ihren Verhandlungen mit den zuständigen griechischen Behörden setzt sich die Kommission für nachhaltige Mobilitätsziele ein. Seit dem Jahr 2010 erhält der griechische Eisenbahnsektor — anders als in den drei vorangegangenen Jahrzehnten — trotz der schwierigen finanziellen Lage Ausgleichszahlungen für die Durchführung defizitärer Personenverkehre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004098/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Loss of international passenger trains in Greece

Given the deterioration of international rail services to and from Greece, I would like to submit the following questions to the Commission:

1. Is the Commission aware that all Greek rail border crossings were closed to passenger trains as of 13 February 2011? If so, will the Commission act to encourage Greece to restore these connections as soon as possible? If not, why not?

2. Which rail routes in Greece have been upgraded with EU money? Please indicate the name of each line, the period during which it was in operation, the total construction costs and the amount of co-funding provided by the EU

3. Where OSE (Greek Railways) has cut passenger or freight train operations on infrastructure built or upgraded with EU funds, will the Commission ask Greece to restore services or repay this money? If not, why not?

4. How will the Commission ensure that public spending cuts demanded by EU institutions do not undermine sustainable mobility objectives?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of TRAINOSE's suspension of international passenger services, as well as its favourable consideration of restarting them in 2014. Freight services have continued operating on these same lines. The Commission has no legal means to request particular rail services, but has asked the Greek Government to create an attractive legal and business environment for railway undertakings to take on such services.

2. According to the information received from the Greek authorities, EUR 5.2 billion has been invested up to December 2012, of which EUR 2.8 billion is EU co-financing.

An annex on the financing details and technical aspects will be sent to the Honourable Member and the Parliament's Secretariat.

3. The Commission understands that the aim of TRAINOSE in suspending certain routes was to rationalise its network and achieve, after decades of loss-making, profitability in a harsh economic climate. Profitability and social responsibility provide added value and improve the quality of service and the country's transport possibilities.

Furthermore, EU financing of rail infrastructure does not impose conditions on the operation of particular train services by a given operator. The infrastructure manager and beneficiary of EU grants is OSE, which itself does not provide transport services.

4. In its negotiations with the relevant Greek authorities, the Commission actively promotes sustainable mobility objectives. Despite the difficult financial situation, the Greek rail sector has been compensated for the provision of loss-making passenger services since 2010, whereas it had received no such compensation in the previous three decades.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004099/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11. April 2013)

Betrifft: Fahrscheinsysteme und Reiseinformationen im einheitlichen europäischen Eisenbahnraum

Hauptziel bei der Reform des Ersten Einsenbahnpakets, und auch des Vierten Eisenbahnpakets, ist es, einen einheitlichen europäischen Eisenbahnraum zu schaffen. Jüngste Entwicklungen aber zeigen eine allgemeine Tendenz hin zur Segmentierung, vor allem bei nahtlosen Fahrscheinsysteme und Reiseinformationen. Daher wird die Kommission um folgende Mitteilungen ersucht:

1. Ist sie sich dessen bewusst, dass es trotz der Bestimmungen im Dritten Eisenbahnpaket der EU immer schwieriger wird — und eben nicht einfacher — Fahrscheine für grenzüberschreitenden Bahnreisen zu erwerben, bei denen mehr als ein Betreiber involviert ist, und zwar insbesondere bei Online-Buchungen?

2. Welche Maßnahmen — die noch über die im Vierten Eisenbahnpaket vorgeschlagenen Bestimmungen über die Bereitstellung von nationalen Fahrscheinsysteme hinausgehen — will die Kommission ergreifen, um die nahtlose Fahrscheinerstellung auf internationalen Routen zu erleichtern?

3. Ist die Kommission sich dessen bewusst, dass die Fahrgastrechte bei Verspätungen unklar sind, wenn für eine einzige Reise von mehr als nur einem Betreiber separate Fahrscheine für verschiedene Einzeletappen ausgestellt wurden — zumal dieses Problem noch zugenommen hat, da es immer schwieriger wird, einen einzigen Fahrschein für eine komplette Reise zu buchen? Kann die Kommission bitte klarstellen, dass ein „Fahrschein" etwas anderes ist als eine „Reise" und dass eine „Reise" mit mehr als einem Fahrschein gemacht werden kann? Plant die Kommission dies klarzustellen oder die Rechtsvorschrift zu ändern, damit sichergestellt ist, dass Passagiere ohne Mehrkosten mit den Zügen jedweden Betreibers weiter fahren können, wenn sie ohne eigenes Verschulden die gebuchte Verbindung verpasst haben?

4. Viele Langstreckenzüge in Frankreich und Spanien sind gesperrt für internationale Rundreisen von InterRail- und EuroRail- Passinhabern. Es müssen dort und in Italien und Portugal teure Aufschläge gezahlt werden. Eine immer größere Anzahl regionaler Betreiber, die in Deutschland, Polen und Rumänien per Ausschreibung vergebene Strecken bedienen, akzeptieren diese Pässe überhaupt nicht. Dies führt zu Verwirrungen und reduziert die Attraktivität Europas als Reiseziel. Erwägt die Kommission die Schaffung eines flexiblen Pauschal-Passes für frei wählbare Ziele, der einen gewissen wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und/oder ökologischen Wert repräsentiert? Wenn ja, was wird die Kommission unternehmen, um die Betreiber zu einer vollumfänglichen Teilhabe am InterRail-System oder an einem ähnlichen System zu bewegen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2013)

Mit dem von der Kommission am 30. Januar 2013 vorgelegten umfassenden Paket ([1]) soll der einheitliche europäische Eisenbahnraum vollendet werden. Ziel ist es, Qualität und Auswahl im Eisenbahnverkehr durch Innovationen, die durch die Öffnung der inländischen Schienenpersonenverkehrsmärkte in der EU für den Wettbewerb ermöglicht werden, sowie durch technische und strukturelle Reformen zu erhöhen.

Die Kommission stimmt zu, dass nahtlose Fahrscheinsysteme und Reiseinformationen für die Attraktivität der Eisenbahn von entscheidender Bedeutung sind.

Dabei ist zwischen einer „Fahrkarte" und einer „Reise" zu unterscheiden: Nach der Verordnung Nr. 1371/2007 ([2]) unterscheiden sich die Rechtswirkungen dieser beiden Begriffe. Eine Durchgangsfahrkarte (die auch andere Verkehrsträger einschließen kann) ermöglicht es dem Fahrgast, seine Rechte einzuklagen, wenn er aufgrund einer Verspätung einen Anschluss verpasst. Durchgangsfahrkarten sind nur dann erhältlich, wenn Handels- und Vertriebsvereinbarungen vorhanden sind und solche Fahrkarten vorsehen. Einzelne Fahrkarten für eine Reise sind unterschiedliche Beförderungsverträge mit verschiedenen Eisenbahnunternehmen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_de.htm
([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1371/2007 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. Oktober 2007 über die Rechte und Pflichten der Fahrgäste im Eisenbahnverkehr, ABl. L 315 vom 3.12.2007, S. 14.

Diese Aspekte wurden bei den Folgenabschätzungen, die der Initiative der Kommission zugrunde liegen, umfassend berücksichtigt. Im Interesse der Subsidiarität sehen die Vorschläge keine Verpflichtung der Mitgliedstaaten vor, integrierte Fahrkartensysteme einzurichten, wenngleich deren Bedeutung uneingeschränkt anerkannt wird. Im 4. Eisenbahnpaket sind daher die erforderlichen Maßnahmen vorgesehen, mit denen die Mitgliedstaaten in die Lage versetzt werden, integrierte Fahrscheinsysteme einzuführen und die Eisenbahnunternehmen zu verpflichten, daran auf diskriminierungsfreie Weise teilzunehmen. Die Kommission erarbeitet derzeit hinsichtlich der Fahrscheinausstellung und der effizienten Bereitstellung von Reiseinformationen technische Standards für die Interoperabilität gemäß der Richtlinie 2008/57/EG über die Interoperabilität des Eisenbahnsystems in der Gemeinschaft ([3]).

([3]) ABl. L 191 vom 18.7.2008, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004099/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Ticketing and travel information in the Single European Railway Area

The major objective of the recast of the First Railway Package, as well as of the Fourth Railway Package, is to create a genuine Single European Railway Area. Yet, recent developments show a general trend towards segmentation when it comes to seamless ticketing and travel information. I therefore ask the Commission:

1. Is the Commission aware that, despite of the provisions contained in the EU's Third Railway Package, it is becoming more difficult — not easier — to buy tickets for international rail journeys involving more than one operator, especially when booking online?

2. What measures will the Commission take beyond the provision on national ticketing schemes proposed in the Fourth Railway Package in order to facilitate seamless ticketing on international routes?

3. Is the Commission aware that rail passenger rights in the event of delay are unclear where there are separate tickets for a single journey, especially when more than one operator is involved? This problem has grown as it has become more difficult to buy one ticket to cover an entire journey. I would like to ask the Commission to make it clear that a 'ticket' is distinct from a 'journey', and that a 'journey' can be made using more than one ticket. Does the Commission plan to clarify or amend the legislation in order to ensure that passengers can travel forward on the trains of any operator at no extra cost when their booked connection is missed from no fault of their own?

4. Many long-distance trains in France and Spain are barred to 'go-anywhere' InterRail and Eurail pass holders. Expensive supplements are required there and also in Italy and Portugal. An increasing number of small regional operators of tendered routes in Germany, Poland and Romania do not accept these passes. This creates confusion and reduces the attractiveness of Europe as a tourist destination. Does the Commission consider a flexible 'go-anywhere' pass to be of economic, social and/or environmental value? If so, how will the Commission act to encourage operators to participate fully in InterRail or a similar scheme?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The comprehensive package put forward by the Commission on 30 January 2013 ([1]) aims at completing the Single European Railway Area. The goal is to deliver better quality and choice in railway services in Europe through innovation resulting from opening EU domestic passenger markets to competition, technical and structural reforms.

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that seamless ticketing and travel information are central to rail's attractiveness.

There is a distinction between 'a ticket' and 'a journey': different legal implications attach to each under Regulation 1371/2007 ([2]). A through ticket (including travel on other transport modes) enables a passenger to claim his rights in case of a missed connection due to a delay in a previous leg of his journey. Through tickets are available only if commercial and distribution arrangements exist and so permit. Separate tickets purchased for a journey mean different transport contracts with different railway undertakings.

These aspects were fully taken into account in the impact assessments underpinning the Commission initiative. In the interests of subsidiarity the proposal did not require Member States to put in place integrated ticketing systems, but it fully recognises their importance. Thus the 4th rail package includes the measures needed to ensure Member States can develop integrated ticketing and require railways to take part in it in a non-discriminatory manner. The Commission is developing technical standards for interoperability for ticketing, and for efficient provision of travel information, based on Directive 2008/57/EC on the interoperability of the rail system in the Community ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_en.htm
([2]) Regulation (EC) 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007, p. 14.
([3]) OJ L 191, 18.7.2008, p. 1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004100/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(11 avril 2013)

Objet: Blocage de la mimolette française aux États-Unis

Depuis plus d'un mois, plus de 500 kg de mimolette française sont bloqués par l'Agence américaine des produits alimentaires et médicamenteux, au motif que la mimolette ne remplit pas les normes sanitaires américaines.

La France exporte depuis des décennies ce fromage aux États-Unis et la recette n'a pas été récemment modifiée. Pourtant, l'Agence américaine des produits alimentaires et médicamenteux est incapable de donner des précisions sur les raisons du blocage actuel. Il est inquiétant qu'aucune explication logique ni aucun texte juridique (norme) n'aient été avancés par les autorités pour justifier l'interdiction des importations de mimolette.

Alors que l'Union européenne est en pleine négociation pour un accord de libre-échange avec les États-Unis, comment la Commission peut-elle tolérer une telle entrave au principe de liberté de commerce d'un produit européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(7 juin 2013)

L'exportation vers les États-Unis de produits d'origine animale fabriqués dans l'Union doit respecter les dispositions réglementaires adoptées par l'Agence américaine des produits alimentaires et médicamenteux *(Food and Drug Administration)*. Ces dispositions doivent être appliquées avant que les produits puissent entrer sur le territoire des États-Unis. Les produits sont soumis à des contrôles, y compris des essais de laboratoire, de la part des autorités sanitaires américaines, l'objectif étant de vérifier leur conformité avec les dispositions réglementaires applicables dans le pays avant qu'ils soient autorisés à être mis sur le marché américain.

La Commission a connaissance du problème auquel se sont heurtées les autorités françaises en ce qui concerne l'exportation vers les États-Unis d'une variété très spécifique de fromage, la mimolette, dont la croûte contient normalement des mites et des larves de mites. La FDA considère que ce lot de fromage ne peut entrer sur le marché américain en raison d'une présence excessive de mites, laquelle pourrait se traduire, pour les consommateurs, par un taux de réactions allergiques dépassant la limite acceptable.

La Commission examinera s'il est possible de trouver une solution plus stable pour le commerce de mimolette au cours des prochaines négociations avec les États-Unis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004100/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Freeze on French mimolette cheese in the United States

For over a month, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has blocked the entry of more than 500 kg of French mimolette cheese, on the grounds that it does not meet US health standards.

France has been exporting this cheese to the United States for decades, and the recipe has not recently changed. However, the FDA is unable to explain the current freeze. It is worrying that no logical explanation or legal text (standard) has been provided by the authorities to justify the ban on mimolette imports.

At a time when the European Union is in the midst of negotiating a free-trade agreement with the United States, how can the Commission stand for the principle of freedom of trade of a European product being obstructed in such a way?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The export of products of animal origin produced in the EU for the United States must comply with the legal provisions adopted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). These provisions must be fulfilled before those commodities can enter into the United States territory. The commodities are subjected to controls, including laboratory tests, by the U.S. Sanitary Authorities, in order to verify their compliance with the relevant United States legal provisions before they can be authorised to be placed on the market in the United States.

The Commission is aware of the problem faced by the French operators regarding the export to the United States of a very specific kind of cheeses called 'mimolette' which normally contains mites and their larvae in the rind of the cheese. The FDA has considered that this consignment of cheese would be unfit for the U.S. market due to an excessive presence of mites, which could cause more allergenic reaction to the consumers than acceptable.

The Commission will explore if there is room for a more stable solution for the trade of 'mimolette' cheese in the coming negotiations with the U.S.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004101/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Inceneritore di Montale (Pistoia): possibile violazione delle norme a tutela della salute e dell'ambiente

A Montale (Pistoia) da oltre 30 anni è in funzione un inceneritore con quotidiane emissioni di sostanze tossiche. È stato ristrutturato varie volte, ma solo dal 2005 è vincolato al rispetto dei limiti emissivi previsti dal DM 19/11/97 n. 503.

Nel 2008, durante lavori di ampliamento, sotto i piazzali dell'inceneritore sono stati trovati depositi di ceneri non smaltite, ma semplicemente sepolte e ivi stoccate.

Tali ceneri derivavano da lavorazioni precedenti, anche da periodi in cui l'impianto era andato soggetto a gravissimi e pesantissimi superamenti dei limiti per diossine, furani (PCDD-PCDF), peraltro tenuti nascosti e per i quali alcuni dirigenti dell'impianto sono stati condannati in sede penale.

Tali ceneri furono ricoperte con del gesso per nasconderle ai sopralluoghi dell'Agenzia regionale per la protezione ambientale della Toscana e di altre autorità di controllo.

Peraltro tali ceneri furono trasportate sui cumuli delle ceneri smaltibili in quel momento e, fatte passare come ceneri di risulta del momento, furono trasportate, con falsa documentazione, nella discarica di Monsummano e ivi sepolte.

Di tali accadimenti la ditta appaltatrice fece debita relazione-denuncia al Corpo forestale dello Stato di Pistoia nel 2008: una denuncia che è stata lasciata cadere e prescrivere.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se intende stabilire una commissione di inchiesta sulla situazione attuale e su quanto sia accaduto fino a questo momento?

2. Se sono state rispettate le disposizioni di cui all'articolo 168 del TFUE e all'articolo 35 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'UE?

3. Se è stata correttamente esperita la procedura di valutazione d'impatto ambientale preventiva e se esistono o meno le condizioni previste dalla direttiva 2011/92/UE?

4. Se è stato previsto un piano di bonifica e riqualificazione dell'intera area interessata, come prevede la direttiva 2004/35/CE sulla responsabilità ambientale in materia di prevenzione e riparazione del danno ambientale?

5. Se per la bonifica dell'area la società di gestione dell'inceneritore o altri soggetti coinvolti abbiano ricevuto o richiesto fondi comunitari diretti o indiretti?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

La Commissione non è al corrente della possibile messa in discarica illegale di ceneri provenienti dall'inceneritore di Montale e contatterà le autorità italiane competenti per ottenere maggiori informazioni in merito.

L'articolo 168 del TFUE ([1]) e l'articolo 35 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali non sono direttamente pertinenti in quanto esiste un'ampia raccolta di diritto derivato riguardante la gestione di rifiuti, compreso il loro incenerimento.

Per quanto riguarda la direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione d'impatto ambientale (direttiva VIA) ([2]), la Commissione ha contattato l'autorità nazionale competente (la Regione Toscana) per ottenere maggiori informazioni.

([1]) Trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea.
([2]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012: si tratta di una codificazione che comprende la direttiva 2003/35/CE, GU L 156 del 25.6.2003.

La Commissione accerterà inoltre se si sono verificati eventuali danni ambientali in relazione all'inceneritore e, in caso affermativo, se sono state intraprese azioni di riparazione ai sensi della direttiva 2004/35/CE sulla responsabilità ambientale ([3]).

L'autorità di gestione del programma operativo del FESR ([4]) per la Regione Toscana ([5]) ha confermato che non sono stati concessi finanziamenti a titolo del FESR per la bonifica dell'area. L'impresa attualmente responsabile della gestione dell'inceneritore ha ricevuto finanziamenti a titolo del FESR per potenziare la capacità dell'inceneritore nel periodo di programmazione 2000-2006.

([3]) GU L 143 del 30.4.2004.
([4]) Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.
([5]) http://www.regione.toscana.it/por-creo/cos-e.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004101/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Incinerator at Montale (Pistoia): possible violation of health and environmental protection rules

An incinerator has been in operation in Montale (Pistoia) for more than 30 years, with toxic substances being emitted every day. It has been refurbished several times, but only since 2005 has it been bound to comply with the emission limits laid down by Ministerial Decree No 503 of 19 November 1997.

In 2008, while extension work was being carried out, ash deposits were found beneath the incinerator yard. The ash had not been disposed of; it had simply been buried and stored there.

That ash resulted from earlier incineration, including during periods in which the plant had seriously and significantly exceeded the limits for dioxins and furans (PCDD/PCDF), which was moreover kept hidden and in connection with which some of the plant's managers were sentenced in court.

The ash was covered with chalk in order to hide it during site inspections carried out by Tuscany's Regional Environmental Protection Agency and other inspection bodies.

Moreover, it was carried on piles of ash being disposed of at the time and, having been passed off as newly produced ash, it was transported, with false documentation, to the Monsummano landfill and buried there.

In 2008, the contracting company duly submitted a complaint report concerning those events to the Pistoia State Forestry Corps, but the complaint was dropped and was not followed up.

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. whether it intends to set up a committee of inquiry to investigate the current situation and the events that have taken place up to now;

2. whether the provisions of Article 168 TFEU and of Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union have been complied with;

3. whether the preventive environmental impact assessment procedure has been carried out correctly and whether the conditions laid down by Directive 2011/92/EU exist or not;

4. whether a plan has been drafted to reclaim and redevelop the entire area in question, as stipulated by Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage;

5. whether the company responsible for managing the incinerator or other parties involved have received or requested direct or indirect EU funds to reclaim the area?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the possible illegal landfilling of ash from the incinerator in Montale and will contact the competent Italian authorities in order to obtain information on the issue.

Article 168 TFEU ([1]) and Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights are not directly relevant since there is extensive secondary legislation on waste management, including waste incineration.

With regard to Directive 2011/92/EU (the Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA Directive) ([2]), the Commission has contacted the competent national authority (Tuscany Region) to get more details.

([1]) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
([2]) OJ L 28.1.2012, this is a codification which includes Directive 2003/35/EC, OJ L 156, 25.6.2003.

The Commission will also inquire whether any environmental damage in relation to this incinerator has taken place and, if so, whether remedial action has been taken in accordance with Directive 2004/35/EC (the Environmental Liability Directive) ([3]).

The Managing Authority of the ERDF ([4]) operational programme for Tuscany ([5]) has confirmed that no ERDF funding has been granted for the reclamation of the area. The company currently responsible for managing the incinerator received ERDF funding for upgrading the capacity of the incinerator in the 2000-2006 programming period.

([3]) OJ L 143, 30.4.2004.
([4]) European Regional Development Fund.
([5]) http://www.regione.toscana.it/por-creo/cos-e

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004102/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Revizuirea legislației privind drepturile pasagerilor care călătoresc cu avionul

Comisia Europeană va revizui Regulamentul (CE) nr. 261/2004 privind stabilirea unor norme comune în materie de compensare și de asistență a pasagerilor în eventualitatea refuzului la îmbarcare și anulării sau întârzierii prelungite a zborurilor.

Din păcate, există situații în care cetățenii europeni nu pot beneficia de normele UE în materie. De exemplu, un cetățean european achiziționează un bilet de la o companie de transport aerian non-europeană, dar cu filială într-un stat membru și care operează de pe teritoriul UE. Aș dori să întreb Comisia: cum sunt protejați cetățenii UE care călătoresc cu bilete achiziționate într-un stat membru, de pe site-ul internet al unei companii non-europene, și care călătoresc de pe teritoriul unui stat membru, dar întâmpină dificultăți legate de segmente de zbor în afara UE, segmente care fac parte din același bilet?

Vor fi astfel de cazuri luate în considerare în procesul de modernizare a legislației actuale?

Care sunt măsurile ce pot fi luate pentru ca și companiile străine, cu drept de operare în UE, să respecte drepturile pasagerilor UE dincolo de granița UE, în special pentru biletele achiziționate de la o filială europeană a unei companii aeriene non-europene, inclusiv prin mijloace electronice?

Răspuns dat de Kallas în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2013)

Articolul 3 alineatul (1) din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 261/2004 ([1]) prevede că regulamentul se aplică pasagerilor care pleacă de pe un aeroport situat pe teritoriul UE (către un aeroport situat pe teritoriul UE sau în afara acestuia), precum și, în cazul în care operatorul efectiv de transport aerian este un operator european, pasagerilor care pleacă de pe un aeroport situat într-o țară terță către un aeroport situat în UE. Faptul că biletul este cumpărat de pe site-ul internet al unei societăți non-europene nu afectează această regulă.

Prin urmare, astfel cum a fost confirmat prin hotărârea *Emirates* a Curții de Justiție a UE ([2]), regulamentul nu se aplică pasagerilor zborurilor de pe un aeroport situat într-o țară terță către un aeroport situat în UE în cazul în care operatorul efectiv de transport aerian nu este un operator din UE. De asemenea, regulamentul nu se aplică zborurilor în cazul cărora aeroportul de plecare și aeroportul de sosire sunt situate în afara UE.

Date fiind constrângerile impuse de dreptul internațional, Comisia nu propune o modificare a zonei geografice de aplicare a regulamentului, dar urmărește obținerea unei mai bune protecții a pasagerilor zborurilor dinspre țări terțe operate de operatori din afara UE în contextul unor acorduri internaționale privind transportul aerian. În prezent, pasagerii se bucură deja de aceleași drepturi sau de drepturi similare într-o serie de țări terțe, cum ar fi Norvegia, Islanda, Elveția și țările semnatare ale Acordului privind stabilirea unui spațiu aerian comun european ([3]).

În plus, în ceea ce privește călătoriile care includ mai multe zboruri, în propunerea sa de revizuire a drepturilor pasagerilor aerieni ([4]), Comisia a propus norme clare privind asistența și compensațiile pentru cazul în care un pasager pierde un zbor de legătură din cauza întârzierii înregistrate de zborul anterior.

([1]) JO L 46, 17.2.2004.
([2]) C-173/07 Emirates Airlines, 2008 I-05237.
([3]) JO L 285, 16.10.2006: http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do? step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=2661&back=8821
([4]) COM/2013/0130 final „Propunere de Regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului de modificare a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 261/2004 de stabilire a unor norme comune în materie de compensare și de asistență a pasagerilor în eventualitatea refuzului la îmbarcare și anulării sau întârzierii prelungite a zborurilor și a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 2027/97 al Consiliului privind răspunderea operatorilor de transport aerian în ceea ce privește transportul aerian al pasagerilor și al bagajelor acestora".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004102/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Review of air passenger rights legislation

The European Commission will review Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 on establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights.

Unfortunately there are situations where European citizens cannot benefit from the relevant EU rules. For example, a European citizen buys a ticket from a non-European airline with a subsidiary in a Member State operating on EU territory. I would like to ask the Commission what protection is afforded to EU citizens who are travelling with tickets bought in a Member State, from the website of a non-European company, and travelling from the territory of a Member State, but are faced with difficulties relating to flight segments outside the EU that are part of the same ticket?

Will such cases be taken into account in the process of upgrading the current legislation?

What are the measures that can be taken to ensure that foreign companies operating in the EU also comply with EU passengers' rights outside the EU, particularly for tickets bought from a European subsidiary of a non-European airline, including by electronic means?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

Article 3(1) of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 ([1]) specifies that the regulation applies to passengers departing from an airport located in the EU (to an airport located inside or outside the EU) and, if the operating carrier is an EU carrier, to passengers departing from an airport located in a third country to an airport located in the EU. The fact that the ticket is bought from the website of a non-European company does not affect this rule.

It follows that, as confirmed by the EU Court of Justice in the *Emirates* judgment ([2]), the regulation does not apply to passengers on flights from an airport located in a third country to an airport located in the EU if the operating carrier is not an EU carrier. Nor does it apply to flights where the departure airport and the arrival airport are located outside the EU.

Given the constraints imposed by international law, the Commission does not propose a modification of the geographical scope of the regulation, but strives towards a better protection of passengers on flights from third countries operated by non-EU carriers in the context of international air transport agreements. Already today, passengers enjoy the same or similar rights in a number of third countries, such as Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and the countries signatory to the Agreement on the European Common Aviation Area ([3]).

Furthermore, with regard to journeys including several flights, in its proposal for a revision of air passenger rights ([4]), the Commission has proposed clear rules on assistance and compensation when a passenger misses a connecting flight because his previous flight was late.

([1]) OJ L 46, 17.2.2004.
([2]) C-173/07 Emirates Airlines, 2008 I-05237.
([3]) OJ L 285, 16.10.2006, http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=2661&back=8821
([4]) COM(2013) 0130 final 'Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the council amending Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights and Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their baggage by air'.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004103/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(11 april 2013)

Betreft: Regels met betrekking tot „FISA/Patriot Act-vrije" diensten en openbare aanbestedingen

De US Patriot Act maakt het voor de Amerikaanse met rechtshandhaving en veiligheid belaste autoriteiten mogelijk om bedrijven die voldoende banden met de Verenigde Staten hebben door middel van een dagvaarding te verplichten economische, politieke en persoonsgegevens, met inbegrip van die welke op Europese bodem opgeslagen zijn, te overleggen. Voor niet-Amerikaanse staatsburgers is hiervoor geen rechterlijke machtiging noodzakelijk.

Voorts zijn op grond van de US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), zoals gewijzigd door de US Patriot Act, de Amerikaanse autoriteiten bevoegd om zonder rechterlijke tussenkomst via cloud-diensten opgeslagen gegevens te downloaden voor rechtshandhavingsdoeleinden. Bedrijven die aan de Amerikaanse autoriteiten persoonsgegevens afstaan kunnen echter in strijd met de Europese wetgeving inzake gegevensbescherming handelen. Ingeklemd tussen deze twee met elkaar strijdige rechtsregimes zijn bedrijven die besef hebben van het cruciale belang van privacybescherming voor het consumentenvertrouwen, inmiddels overgegaan tot het aanbieden van FISA/Patriot Act-vrije diensten. Op hun beurt nemen aanbestedende overheidsinstanties „FISA/Patriot Act-vrij"-bepalingen als een van de selectiecriteria in hun aanbestedingsprocedure op. Worden echter alleen bedrijven tot aanbestedingsprocedures toegelaten die FISA/Patriot Act-vrije diensten verlenen, dan bestaat er zowel voor de bedrijven als de overheidsinstanties rechtsonzekerheid in verband met een mogelijke schending van Europese internemarkt- en mededingingsregels.

Met het oog hierop wordt de Commissie in verband met de openbare aanbesteding van IT-diensten verzocht met beantwoording van de volgende vragen duidelijkheid te verschaffen:

1. Wordt op grond van de EU-regels inzake mededinging en aanbestedingen (Richtlijn 2004/18/EG, Richtlijn 2004/17/EG en de Overeenkomst inzake overheidsopdrachten) een voorschrift geacht discriminerend te zijn als dit bepaalt dat alleen bedrijven die FISA/Patriot Act-vrije diensten aanbieden tot een aanbestedingsprocedure voor clouddiensten mogen worden toegelaten?

2. Zou een dergelijk voorschrift een inbreuk maken op het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU) en met name op de bepalingen over het vrije verkeer van diensten?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(14 juni 2013)

1. Krachtens de EU-wetgeving inzake het plaatsen van overheidsopdrachten staat het aanbestedende diensten in principe vrij om zelf te besluiten wat zij wensen te kopen, aangezien de regels inzake overheidsopdrachten enkel bepalen hoe de aankoop moet worden uitgevoerd. Bij een contract voor clouddiensten is het de taak van de aanbestedende diensten om de precieze kenmerken van de vereiste dienst te bepalen. Deze kenmerken kunnen bijvoorbeeld technische specificaties omvatten, zoals encryptievereisten, het vereiste veiligheidsniveau of voorwaarden voor toegang tot gegevens. Dergelijke specificaties zijn verenigbaar met de EU-wetgeving en de Overeenkomst inzake overheidsopdrachten zolang ze niet worden ingevoerd om te discrimineren ten gunste of ten nadele van specifieke dienstverleners. Dit zou bijvoorbeeld het geval zijn als de technische vereisten die door de aanbestedende dienst worden vastgesteld, gebaseerd zijn op de gedetailleerde technische kenmerken van een bepaalde dienstverlener.

2. Zoals reeds in punt 1 is aangegeven, vormen de vereisten geen schending van de EU-Verdragen, met inbegrip van de fundamentele vrijheid om diensten te verrichten, zolang de betreffende technische specificaties niet aan openbare aanbestedingen of aanbestedingsstukken worden toegevoegd om ten gunste of ten nadele van specifieke dienstverleners te discrimineren.

De Commissie is niettemin bijzonder waakzaam met betrekking tot de tenuitvoerlegging van de wetgeving van derde landen waarvan de extraterritoriale toepassing het grondrecht op de bescherming van persoonsgegevens in de EU zou kunnen aantasten. Volgens het internationaal publiekrecht kan geen enkel buitenlands rechtsbesluit prevaleren boven de desbetreffende wetgeving van de EU of van de lidstaten, met inbegrip van het gegevensbeschermingsacquis. Elke verwerking van persoonsgegevens in de EU, waaronder deze op het gebied van overheidsopdrachten, moet in overeenstemming zijn met EU-wetgeving inzake gegevensbescherming.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004103/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: FISA/Patriot Act-free services and public procurement rules

The US Patriot Act enables US law enforcement and security authorities, by means of subpoena, to oblige companies with sufficient links to the United States to submit economic, political and personal data, including data stored on European soil. No court warrant is needed for non-US citizens.

In addition, the US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), as amended by the US Patriot Act, would allow US authorities to retrieve data from the cloud for law enforcement purposes, without judicial intervention. However, companies providing personal data to US authorities may be in breach of EU data protection legislation. Thus, companies caught between two conflicting jurisdictions, and aware of privacy protection as an essential condition for customer trust, have come to advertise FISA/Patriot Act-free services. In turn, public authorities, when procuring services, have come to include 'FISA/Patriot Act-free' in the criteria for awarding contracts. However, companies and public authorities alike face a lack of legal certainty when limiting a tender only to those companies that provide FISA/Patriot Act-free services, given that this may constitute a violation of European competition and internal market rules.

Therefore, could the Commission clarify the following, in the case of public procurement of IT services:

1. Would a requirement that only allows for companies that provide FISA/Patriot Act-free services to participate in a public tender for cloud services be regarded as discriminatory, under EU competition and public procurement rules (Directive 2004/18/EC, Directive 2004/17/EC, and the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA))?

2. Would such a requirement constitute a violation of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and, in particular, of the provisions on the freedom to provide services?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

1. Under EU public procurement law, contracting authorities are in principle free to decide on what they intend to buy, the procurement rules determining only how the purchase has to be conducted. In the case of a contract for cloud services, it is up to contracting authorities to decide on the exact characteristics of the service required. This may include technical specifications such as encryption requirements, level of security to be provided or conditions for access to data. Such specifications are compatible with EC law and the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) as long as they are not introduced with the intention of discriminating in favour of or against specific service providers. This would, for instance, be the case if the technical requirements set by the contracting authority reflected the detailed technical features of a specific service provider.

2. As indicated under point 1, as long as the technical specifications at issue are not introduced in calls for tender or in tender documents with the intention of discriminating in favour of or against specific service providers, such requirements do not violate the EU Treaties, including the fundamental freedom to provide services within the EU.

The Commission is nonetheless particularly vigilant as to whether the implementation of the legislation of third countries would amount to extraterritorial application likely to jeopardise the fundamental right to protection of personal data in the EU. As a matter of international public law, no foreign legal act as such can overrule relevant EU or Member States laws, including the data protection *acquis*. Any processing of personal data in the EU, including in the field of public procurement, has to respect EU data protection law.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004104/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Medidas de estímulo ao crédito

Na reunião de 4 de abril o BCE decidiu não alterar a taxa diretora de 0,75 %, sendo a sua redução uma das medidas possíveis para o estímulo do crédito à economia.

Pergunta-se:

Que outras medidas têm sido estudadas pela Comissão para o estímulo ao crédito?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(17 de maio de 2013)

O restabelecimento do fluxo de crédito na União Europeia constitui uma prioridade para a Comissão. Deste modo, esta considera que, para além do que poderá ser alcançado a nível nacional, as instituições da União Europeia devem promover uma repartição adequada do crédito, ao mesmo tempo que mantêm os elementos necessários para garantir a estabilidade financeira.

A Comissão está especialmente empenhada em desenvolver estratégias viáveis para melhorar o financiamento das PME, sendo estas muito importantes para promover o crescimento em todos os Estados-Membros.

Para o efeito, a Comissão considera que assegurar aos bancos um nível suficiente de capital e reforçar a sua situação patrimonial são requisitos prévios para estimular o crédito. Os dois elementos são cruciais para um sistema financeiro sólido. Este aspeto é absolutamente necessário, embora a Comissão considere que não é suficiente.

Além disso, a Comissão pretende desenvolver meios alternativos de financiamento, o que inclui medidas como os instrumentos de financiamento baseados no mercado (ou seja, o reforço do papel dos investidores institucionais e a sua capacidade de investir em mercados de financiamento a longo prazo) ou a necessária revitalização dos mercados de titularização. Outras eventuais medidas implicariam a participação ativa das instituições (ou seja, do BEI e do FEI) que poderiam facilitar a transferência de fundos dos mutuantes para os mutuários.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004104/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Measures to stimulate lending

On 4 April 2013, the European Central Bank decided to keep the base rate at 0.75%, though reducing it would potentially be a way of stimulating lending to the economy.

What other measures has the Commission been considering to stimulate lending?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

Restoring credit flow within the European Union is a priority for the Commission. Therefore, the Commission believes that apart from what can be achieved at a national level, the European Union Institutions must promote an adequate allocation of credit while maintaining the necessary elements of financial stability.

The Commission is particularly concerned about building possible policy avenues to improve funding for SMEs, which are especially relevant to foster growth across all Member States.

For this purpose, the Commission believes that ensuring a sufficient capital level for banks and strengthening their balance sheets are prerequisites to stimulate lending. Both are key elements in order to achieve a healthy financial system. This is absolutely necessary but the Commission thinks that it is not enough.

Beyond that, the Commission aims at improving alternative ways of funding. That includes measures such as market-based financing instruments (i.e. strengthening the role of institutional investors and their capacity to invest on long-term funding markets) or the necessary revitalisation of securitisation markets. Other measures would imply an active involvement of institutions (i.e. EIB and EIF) that could facilitate the transmission of funds from lenders to borrowers.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004105/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Setor bancário no Luxemburgo

O Luxemburgo abriu a porta a uma mudança nas suas regras bancárias. Em entrevista o ministro das Finanças, Luc Frieden, refere que o país está pronto para reduzir parcialmente o sigilo. «Queremos reforçar a cooperação com as autoridades estrangeiras de tributação», disse Luc Frieden. A tendência internacional vai para a troca automática de informações bancárias. Foi também referido que o país não está interessado em clientes que estão a tentar poupar dinheiro nos seus impostos.

Pergunta-se:

Como avalia estas declarações do ministro das Finanças luxemburguês?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão congratula-se com o anúncio de que Luxemburgo irá automaticamente trocar informações com os outros Estados-Membros no quadro da Diretiva relativa à poupança, a partir de 1 de janeiro de 2015, e com facto de que na reunião do Conselho Ecofin no Luxemburgo, em 14 de maio, este país deixou de ter reservas relativamente à decisão do Conselho que autoriza a Comissão a abrir negociações com a Suíça e outros Países Terceiros sobre o reforço dos acordos de poupança da UE. A Comissão espera que isso também permita ao Luxemburgo apoiar a alteração da Diretiva relativa à poupança.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004105/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Banking sector in Luxembourg

Luxembourg is considering introducing changes to its banking regulations. In an interview, the Finance Minister, Luc Frieden, stated that the country was ready to partially ease its secrecy laws and said that it wanted to strengthen cooperation with foreign tax authorities. The international trend is towards automatic exchange of banking information. He also said that the country was not interested in clients who wanted to save on their taxes.

What is the Commission's opinion of these statements by the Luxembourg Finance Minister?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission welcomes the announcement by Luxembourg that it will exchange information with other Member States automatically, under the Savings Directive, with effect from 1 January, 2015, and the fact that at the Ecofin Council meeting on 14 May Luxembourg was able to lift its reservation on the decision by the Council authorising the Commission to open negotiations with Switzerland and other third countries on the enhancement of the EU Savings Agreements. The Commission is hopeful that this will also enable Luxembourg to support the amendment of the Savings Directive.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004106/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Taxas de juro na zona euro

Considerando que:

Christine Lagarde, diretora-geral do FMI, afirmou no Clube Económico de Nova Iorque que «as baixas taxas de juro não se estão a traduzir em crédito barato para as pessoas que dele precisam».

Pergunta-se:

Partilha da mesma opinião da diretora-geral do FMI?

O que tem sido feito para que a reduzida taxa diretora do euro, neste momento em 0,75 %, se veja refletida no crédito concedido a empresas e particulares?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(12 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão recorda que a política monetária é da exclusiva competência do BCE, que atua com toda a independência, em conformidade com o mandato definido pelo Tratado.

A Comissão concorda com o Senhor Deputado em que as reduzidas taxas de juro oficiais do BCE não se refletem nas taxas aplicadas ao crédito a nível retalhista em igual medida em todos os países da área do euro.

No entanto, os atuais instrumentos políticos da UE ajudam a conceder financiamento às PME através de um conjunto de diferentes canais, incluindo subvenções e instrumentos financeiros. Os programas operacionais dos fundos estruturais disponibilizarão cerca de 23 mil milhões de euros de financiamento às PME através do apoio a regimes de auxílio às PME (subvenções) geridos pelos Estados-Membros e pelas regiões, assim como de instrumentos financeiros (que fornecem novos empréstimos, garantias, produtos de capital próprio/de risco) geridos pelo FEI (atualmente 1,2 mil milhões de euros) e pelos intermediários financeiros nacionais públicos e privados ou os gestores nacionais dos fundos (7,7 mil milhões de euros). Os instrumentos financeiros da UE implementados sob gestão direta, a saber, o Programa-Quadro para a Competitividade e a Inovação (PCI), o Instrumento Europeu de Microfinanciamento «Progress» (EPMF) e o Instrumento de Partilha de Riscos (RSI) para as PME e as pequenas empresas de média capitalização orientadas para a investigação inovadora também contribuem com cerca de 1,5 mil milhões de euros durante o período de 2007-2013. Além disso, a Comissão está a preparar uma proposta que visa combinar os fundos estruturais com os recursos orçamentais da UE num instrumento de financiamento das PME no âmbito do novo quadro financeiro plurianual com início em 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004106/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Interest rates in the euro area

The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Christine Lagarde, has stated at the Economic Club of New York that 'low interest rates are not translating into affordable credit for people who need it.'

Does the Commission agree with the Managing Director of the IMF?

What has been done to ensure that the current low euro base rate of 0.75% is reflected in credit granted to businesses and individuals?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission recalls that monetary policy is the exclusive competence of the ECB, which acts in full independence in line with its mandate set out by the Treaty.

While the Commission shares the view that the ECB's low official interest rates have not been passed through to retail lending rates to the same extent in all euro area countries.

Nevertheless, current EU policy instruments help to provide financing for SMEs through a number of different channels, including both grants and financial instruments. Structural Funds operational programmes provide some EUR 23 billion of financing to SMEs by supporting SME aid schemes (grants) managed by Member States and regions as well as financial instruments (providing new loans, guarantees, equity/venture capital products) managed by the EIF (currently EUR 1.2 billion) as well as by national public and private financial intermediaries or fund managers (EUR 7.7 billion). EU financial instruments implemented under direct management, namely the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), the European Progress Microfinance Facility (EPMF) and the Risk Sharing Instrument for Innovative Research oriented SMEs & Small Mid-Caps (RSI) also contribute with some EUR 1.5 billion over the period 2007-2013. Furthermore, the Commission is preparing a proposal to combine Structural Funds and EU Budget resources in a joined instrument for SME financing under the new MFF starting in 2014.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004107/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Contração do crédito na periferia do euro

Christine Lagarde, diretora-geral do FMI, considerou que a «canalização está entupida» e lembrou que, «em toda a periferia europeia, o crédito contraiu 5 % desde o começo da crise, atingindo pequenas e médias empresas com particular impacto».

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Como analisa esta contração do crédito, que é fundamental para o necessário crescimento económico?

Não considera essencial acelerar soluções políticas coletivas, como a união bancária real, para reforçar as fundações da união monetária?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(17 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão acompanha e analisa cuidadosamente os volumes de crédito na Europa. A evolução desfavorável que se regista em diversos países europeus constitui uma fonte de preocupação dado que, em última instância, pesa no crescimento económico. As análises apontam para circunstâncias tanto do lado da procura como da oferta para explicar a contração do crédito, um ponto de vista defendido no Inquérito do BCE aos Bancos sobre o Mercado de Crédito ([1]).

A nível da UE, foram tomadas medidas políticas ambiciosas que, até certo ponto, colmataram as lacunas no setor bancário da UE e o processo de fragmentação financeira na União. Essas medidas fundamentais incluem o anúncio pelo BCE do programa de transações monetárias definitivas (TMD), bem como o estabelecimento de uma União Bancária. Contudo, a divergência entre taxas e volumes de crédito bancário aponta para a necessidade de novas melhorias nos sistemas bancários de diversos Estados-Membros dada a persistência de importantes fatores de risco relacionados com os ativos dos bancos.

As grandes prioridades são o progresso da União Bancária e uma execução rápida. O recente acordo político sobre o pacote legislativo que institui um Mecanismo Único de Supervisão (MUS) liderado pelo BCE constitui um grande sucesso. Prevê-se que o MUS esteja plenamente funcional no verão de 2014. Além disso, a Comissão está a envidar esforços para que se chegue a uma rápida conclusão sobre o quadro proposto pela UE para a recuperação e resolução dos bancos e pretende apresentar uma proposta relativa a um mecanismo único de resolução para os bancos em julho. Estas medidas deverão introduzir mais clareza no mercado e atenuar as divergências.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004107/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Credit contraction in the European periphery

Christine Lagarde, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, has said that the 'plumbing is clogged up' and that 'across the European periphery, credit has contracted by 5% since the onset of the crisis, hitting small and medium-sized enterprises particularly hard.'

What view does the Commission's take of this contraction of credit, which is vital for economic growth?

Does the Commission not agree that it is necessary to expedite collective political solutions, such as EU banking union, so as to strengthen the monetary union's foundations?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission carefully monitors and analyses credit volumes in Europe. Adverse developments in several European countries are a cause of concern as they ultimately weigh on economic growth. Analysis points to both demand and supply effects in explaining the weakness in credit, a view supported by the ECB's Bank Lending Survey (http://www.ecb.int/stats/money/surveys/lend/html/index.en.html).

Ambitious policy measures at EU level have been taken and have already mitigated, to some degree, shortcomings in the EU banking sector and the process of financial fragmentation within the Union. Key policy measures include the ECB's announcement of the OMT programme, as well as the establishment of a Banking Union. However, the divergence in bank-lending rates and volumes suggests the need for further repair in the banking systems of several Member States as important risk factors related to banks' assets are still in place.

Further progress on Banking Union and swift implementation are key priorities. The recent political agreement on the legislative package establishing a Single Supervisory Mechanism headed by the ECB is a major success. It is envisaged that the SSM will be fully in place by summer 2014. Moreover, the Commission is pushing for swift conclusion on the proposed EU framework for bank recovery and resolution and intends to submit a proposal for a Single Resolution Mechanism for banks in July. These measures should provide market clarity and mitigate divergences.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004108/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Processo de ajustamento em Portugal

Considerando que:

Em recente comunicado a Comissão refere:

«A Comissão continuará a trabalhar de forma construtiva com as autoridades portuguesas no âmbito dos parâmetros acordados para atenuar as consequências sociais da crise.

A Comissão reitera que um forte consenso em torno do programa contribuirá para o êxito da sua execução. A este respeito, é essencial o apoio das principais instituições políticas portuguesas.»

Pergunta-se:

Que medidas têm sido estudadas e implementadas para, como refere a Comissão, «atenuar as consequências sociais da crise»?

De que forma têm sido envolvidas na procura de soluções as principais instituições políticas portuguesas, nomeadamente o maior partido da oposição?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(25 de junho de 2013)

No contexto do Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal, a Comissão apoiou, regra geral, a conceção de medidas que afetassem o menos possível os grupos socialmente vulneráveis. Por exemplo, a recente reforma do imposto sobre o rendimento das pessoas singulares, bem como as medidas destinadas a tornar o sistema de pensões mais sustentável foram concebidas para serem aplicadas de forma gradual, isto é, afetando os escalões de rendimento mais baixo proporcionalmente menos do que os escalões de rendimento elevado. Do mesmo modo, a Comissão participou muito ativamente na recente reprogramação dos fundos estruturais da UE, que reforçaram de forma significativa a formação e outras medidas destinadas a promover a criação de emprego, especialmente para os jovens.

A Comissão realiza periodicamente consultas junto de instituições políticas como o Parlamento, de parceiros sociais e da oposição com vista a debater o grau de execução do programa. Por exemplo, durante as missões de avaliação trimestrais, o chefe de missão da Comissão reúne-se regularmente com estas instituições e organismos, a fim de sublinhar a necessidade de um vasto apoio político como condição prévia para a conclusão bem sucedida do programa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004108/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Adjustment process in Portugal

According to a recent statement by the Commission:

'The Commission will continue to work constructively with the Portuguese authorities within the parameters agreed to alleviate the social consequences of the crisis.

The Commission reiterates that a strong consensus around the programme will contribute to its successful implementation. In this respect, it is essential that Portugal's key political institutions are united in their support.'

What measures have been considered and implemented in order to, in the words of the Commission, 'alleviate the social consequences of the crisis'?

How have Portugal's key political institutions, and particularly the main opposition party, been involved in finding solutions?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

Within the context of the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal the Commission has, as a rule, supported the design of measures in such a way that the socially vulnerable groups are affected in the least possible manner. For instance, the recent reform of personal income taxes as well as the measures aimed at making the pension system more sustainable have been designed in a progressive manner, i.e. affecting the lower income classes proportionally less than the high income classes. Also, the Commission has very actively participated in the recent reprogramming of the EU Structural Funds which has significantly strengthened training and other measures aimed at fostering job creation, especially for the youth.

The Commission is regularly consulting with political institutions such as the Parliament, with the social partners, and with the opposition with a view to discussing the status of programme implementation. For instance, during the quarterly review missions, the Commission mission chief regularly meets with these institutions and bodies in order to underline the need for broad political support as a prerequisite for a successful completion of the programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004109/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Fecho de bancos na zona euro

Christine Lagarde, diretora-geral do FMI, em discurso realizado no Clube Económico de Nova Iorque, deixou a seguinte mensagem: «a zona euro deve preocupar-se em sanear o seu sistema financeiro e não ter medo de fechar bancos».

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Existe, na realidade, o risco de encerramento de bancos em países da zona euro?

Não considera que o acelerar da agenda da supervisão bancária e da união bancária seria benéfico para minimizar o risco da falência de bancos na zona euro?

A recapitalização dos bancos em risco na zona euro vai continuar a ser a prática a utilizar pela Comissão e o BCE ou há a possibilidade de vir a ser replicada a receita usada em Chipre?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(7 de junho de 2013)

Chipre é um caso único devido à dimensão do seu setor bancário, conjugada com a sua estrutura, o nível de assunção de riscos e uma supervisão insuficiente. As medidas adotadas correspondem à situação absolutamente excecional de Chipre, visando restabelecer a viabilidade do setor bancário e, ao mesmo tempo, proteger todos os depósitos inferiores a 100 000 EUR em conformidade com os princípios da UE.

Todos os credores de um banco, incluindo os seus depositantes, têm direito a informações claras sobre a situação financeira de qualquer banco com o qual tratam. Existe legislação em vigor na UE relativa aos requisitos de divulgação a que os bancos estão obrigados e a Autoridade Bancária Europeia está a trabalhar no sentido de aumentar a comparabilidade destes requisitos entre todos os bancos. A Comissão dá o seu total apoio a esta iniciativa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004109/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Bank closures in the euro area

In a speech at the Economic Club of New York, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, said the priority of the euro area should be 'to clean up the banking system by recapitalising, restructuring, or — where necessary — shutting down banks.'

Is there a genuine risk of bank closures in euro-area countries?

Does the Commission agree that bringing forward plans for banking supervision and banking union would help to minimise the risk of bank failures in the euro area?

Will the Commission and the European Central Bank continue to recapitalise banks at risk in the euro area or is there a chance that the method used in Cyprus can be copied?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures taken are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with the EU principles.

All creditors of a bank, including its depositors, have the right to clear information regarding the financial situation of any bank they choose to deal with. There is existing EU legislation regarding the disclosure requirements of banks and the EBA is working to enhance the comparability of these requirements across banks. The Commission fully supports this initiative.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004110/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Venda de reservas de ouro de Chipre para financiar programa de assistência

Considerando que:

Está prevista a venda de 13,9 toneladas das reservas de ouro, 400 milhões de euros, por Chipre para financiar parte do seu programa de assistência.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Não foi sempre política da UE a não venda das reservas de ouro dos Estados-Membros?

A venda de parte das reservas de ouro de Chipre significa que, de futuro, outros Estados-Membros poderão ser «obrigados» a vender as suas reservas de ouro para ajudar a financiar os programas de assistência?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(7 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão não participa na gestão das reservas de ouro. O ouro monetário é parte dos balanços dos bancos centrais e as decisões destes a esse respeito devem ser consideradas como fazendo parte da sua gestão dos ativos e das reservas. Qualquer possível decisão sobre a venda de reservas de ouro constitui uma decisão independente do Banco Central de Chipre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004110/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Sale of Cyprus's gold reserves to fund the bailout

It is predicted that Cyprus will sell off 13.9 tonnes of its gold reserves, worth EUR 400 million, to finance part of its bailout.

Has it not always been EU policy not to sell Member States' gold reserves?

Could the sale of part of Cyprus's gold reserves mean that in the future other Member States may be 'obliged' to sell their gold reserves to help finance bailouts?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Commission is not involved in the management of gold reserves. Monetary gold is part of central banks' balance sheets, and their decisions in this regard are to be seen as part of their asset and reserve management. Any possible decision on gold sales would be an independent decision by the Central Bank of Cyprus.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004111/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Decisão do Tribunal Constitucional

Considerando que:

Recentemente o Tribunal Constitucional, em Portugal, tomou a decisão de considerar inconstitucionais quatro normas inscritas no Orçamento do Estado português para 2013. Essas normas representam cerca de mil e trezentos milhões de euros, que terão que ser compensados de alguma forma.

Pergunta-se:

Como pensa a Comissão «ajudar» o governo português a encontrar as melhores soluções para fazer face a esta decisão do Tribunal Constitucional?

Está a Comissão, juntamente com os outros representantes da Troika, disponível para rever o valor do défice acordado entre o governo português e a Troika?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A decisão do Tribunal Constitucional (TC) de 5 de abril gerou um défice orçamental de 1,3 mil milhões de euros em 2013. O governo reagiu de imediato a esta decisão anunciando medidas destinadas a substituir as que foram declaradas inconstitucionais pelo Tribunal, o que permite alcançar o objetivo fixado para 2013, tal como alterado na 7.ª revisão (ou seja, 5,5 % do PIB).

Embora a decisão do Tribunal Constitucional tenha obviamente reduzido a via que o governo pode seguir no intuito de consolidar as finanças públicas portuguesas, deu simultaneamente indicações mais claras sobre o que é ou não é constitucionalmente aceitável, o que ajudará o governo a elaborar medidas sólidas do ponto de vista constitucional.

O governo elaborou rapidamente uma estratégia para superar os desafios colocados pela decisão do Tribunal Constitucional. Para 2013, o governo elaborou um importante pacote que foi avaliado positivamente. Os desafios são mais significativos para 2014, mas o governo comprometeu-se a elaborar um cenário a médio prazo, que integra as medidas relativas à despesa pública em conformidade com as metas definidas na sétima revisão. As autoridades estão em contacto permanente com a Comissão, o BCE e o FMI, com vista a aperfeiçoar a estratégia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004111/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Constitutional Court ruling

The Portuguese Constitutional Court recently ruled that four of the measures in the 2013 Portuguese state budget were unconstitutional. These measures represent approximately EUR 1.3 billion, which will now have to be found elsewhere.

How can the Commission 'help' the Portuguese Government to find the most appropriate solutions for dealing with this ruling by the Constitutional Court?

Is the Commission, together with the other Troika representatives, open to reviewing the deficit value agreed between the Portuguese Government and the Troika?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Constitutional Court (CC) ruling of 5th April generated a fiscal gap of EUR 1.3 bn in 2013. The government reacted promptly to this ruling announcing measures to replace those that were ruled unconstitutional by the Court, thereby allowing the achievement of the 2013 target as revised by the 7th review (i.e. 5.5% of GDP).

While the CC ruling has obviously narrowed the pathway which the government can follow in its approach to consolidate Portuguese public finances, it has at the same time given clearer indications on what is constitutionally acceptable and what is not. This will help the government in designing measures that are sound from a constitutional point of view.

The government swiftly devised a strategy to overcome the challenges posed by the CC ruling. For 2013, the government has elaborated an important package that was positively evaluated. Challenges are somewhat bigger for 2014, but the government has committed to establishing a medium-term scenario which incorporates the public expenditure measures in line with the targets defined in the 7th review. The authorities are in continuous contact with the Commission, the ECB and the IMF with a view to fine-tuning the strategy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004112/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Tranche do empréstimo da Troika prevista para maio

Considerando que:

Está prevista uma tranche de 2 mil milhões de euros a ser entregue a Portugal durante o mês de maio, no âmbito do memorando de entendimento negociado entre Portugal e a Troika, e após a sétima avaliação recentemente finalizada.

Pergunta-se:

Face à decisão do Tribunal Constitucional, que vai implicar um desvio de cerca de mil e trezentos milhões de euros no orçamento para 2013, pode essa tranche do empréstimo estar em causa?

Que necessita o Governo português fazer para não pôr em causa a disponibilidade dessa tranche?

Resposta dada pelo Vice-Presidente Ollie Rehn em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2013)

O Governo português irá apresentar, no final de abril/início de maio, a sua estratégia orçamental a médio prazo, a qual incluirá também medidas para alcançar os objetivos orçamentais em 2013 e 2014, nomeadamente, as medidas necessárias para substituir as declaradas inconstitucionais pelo Tribunal Constitucional. Após a apresentação destas medidas, as instituições da Troika e, em especial, a Comissão, em colaboração com o BCE, instância incumbida de verificar o cumprimento das condições de política económica inerentes à assistência financeira da União, irão apreciar essas medidas e, em função dos resultados positivos desta apreciação, concluirão a sétima avaliação. Tal tornará possível o desembolso da parcela subsequente do empréstimo do MEEF + FEEF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004112/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Next loan instalment from the Troika expected in May

Following the recently completed seventh review and under the memorandum of understanding between Portugal and the Troika, Portugal is set to receive the next instalment of EUR 2 billion in May.

In the light of the ruling of the Constitutional Court, which will lead to a deviation from the budget of around EUR 1.3 billion, is this next instalment at risk?

What does the Portuguese Government need to do in order to ensure that this next instalment is secured?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Portuguese Government will, by end-April/beginning of May, present its medium-term fiscal strategy which will also include the measures to achieve the fiscal targets in 2013 and 2014, including the measures necessary to replace those measures that have been ruled unconstitutional by the Portuguese Constitutional Court. Following the presentation of these measures the troika institutions — and in particular the Commission, in liaison with the ECB, which are in charge of verifying that the economic policy conditions attached to the Union financial assistance are fulfilled — will make an assessment of these measures and, depending on the positive outcome of this assessment, conclude the 7th review. This will pave the way for the disbursement of the next instalment of the loan EFSM+EFSF.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004113/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Consequências do chumbo do Tribunal Constitucional no memorando de entendimento

Considerando que:

Tem sido referido que o chumbo pelo Tribunal Constitucional português de quatro normas do Orçamento do Estado português para 2013 pode fazer suspender todas as decisões relativas ao programa de assistência financeira a Portugal, nomeadamente o relativo ao prolongamento dos prazos de reembolso dos empréstimos europeus e o desembolso da próxima parcela de ajuda.

Pergunta-se:

Confirma os factos acima expostos?

O que foi exigido ao governo português para que tal cenário não se verifique?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

O governo português reagiu rapidamente à decisão do Tribunal Constitucional português e preparou um pacote de novas medidas que compensam — em termos quantitativos e qualitativos — as medidas anuladas pelo Tribunal. As equipas da Comissão, do BCE e do FMI avaliaram as novas medidas e concluíram que o seu montante será suficiente para corrigir o desvio orçamental aberto pelo acórdão do Tribunal. Esta avaliação foi um elemento importante na 7.ª avaliação do programa, cuja conclusão abriu caminho ao prolongamento em 7 anos dos prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos da UE, decidido pelo Eurogrupo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004113/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Consequences of the ruling by the Constitutional Court on the memorandum of understanding

The recent ruling by the Portuguese Constitutional Court rejecting four measures in the 2013 state budget may lead to the suspension of all decisions on Portugal's bailout package, specifically with regard to extending EU loan repayment periods and payment of the next instalment.

Can the Commission confirm the above?

What does the Portuguese Government need to do to avert this situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Portuguese Government has swiftly reacted to the ruling by the Portuguese Constitutional Court and put together a package of new measures that compensate — in quantity and quality — for the measures that were annuled by the Court. Staff teams of the Commission, the ECB and the IMF have assessed the new measures and found their amount sufficient to close the fiscal gap that was openend following the Court ruling. This assessment was an important element in the 7th programme review, the conclusion of which has now paved the way for the extenison of the maturities on EU loans by 7 years, as agreed by the Eurogroup.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004114/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Emissão de dívida a 10 anos por Portugal I

Considerando que:

Após uma bem-sucedida ida aos mercados com a emissão de dívida a cinco anos em janeiro deste ano, com uma procura em muito superior à oferta e uma taxa de juro bastante atrativa, Portugal estava a criar as melhores condições para uma emissão de dívida a 10 anos. Segundo alguns analistas, a instabilidade criada pelos resultados das eleições em Itália e pela crise em Chipre pode ter comprometido essa ida ao mercado. Os analistas referem que estes acontecimentos trouxeram instabilidade à zona euro e fecharam a «janela de oportunidade» para Portugal.

Pergunta-se:

Partilha a Comissão da opinião de que Portugal face aos últimos acontecimentos na zona euro vê comprometida a sua intenção de emitir dívida a 10 anos?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão não concorda com a afirmação segundo a qual a intenção de Portugal emitir obrigações a 10 anos estaria comprometida.

É verdade que, nos últimos meses, os mercados tiveram um comportamento bastante volátil, em parte como reação aos resultados das eleições em Itália e à crise em Chipre. No entanto, após a conclusão do programa de assistência financeira a Chipre, os rendimentos das dívidas soberanas baixaram novamente e são agora inferiores ao nível prevalecente no início do ano.

Portugal não constitui uma exceção e os rendimentos das obrigações a 10 anos no mercado secundário desceram para menos de 6 %, o que permitiria ao Governo português tirar partido do mercado. No entanto, dadas as incertezas criadas pela recente decisão do Tribunal Constitucional, o Governo poderá preferir suspender essa emissão até à conclusão da 7.ª revisão que, caso tenha resultados positivos, levará a uma prorrogação dos prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos da UE em consonância com a recente declaração do Eurogrupo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004114/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Issue of 10-year bonds by Portugal I

After a successful auction of five-year bonds in January this year, which saw demand greatly outstrip supply and a very attractive interest rate, Portugal was set to offer better rates for the issue of 10-year bonds. According to a number of analysts, the instability created by the election results in Italy and by the crisis in Cyprus may have compromised this return to the market. The analysts suggest that these events have brought instability to the euro area and have closed Portugal's 'window of opportunity'.

Does the Commission agree that, owing to the latest events in the euro area, Portugal's plan to issue 10-year bonds has been compromised?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission does not agree with the statement that Portugal's plan to issue 10-year bonds has been compromised.

It is true that in recent months markets have been quite volatile partly in reaction to the election results in Italy and the crisis in Cyprus. However, following the conclusion of the Financial Assistance Programme for Cyprus, sovereign yields have come down again and are now below the level prevailing at the beginning of the year.

Portugal is no exception to this and yields on 10-year bonds in the secondary market have fallen below 6% which would allow the Portuguese Government to tap the market. However, given the uncertainties created by the recent Constitutional Court ruling the government may prefer to wait with such an issuance until after the conclusion of the 7th review which, in a positive case, will trigger an extension of the maturities of the EU loans in line with the recent statement by the Eurogroup.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004115/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Emissão de dívida a 10 anos por Portugal II

Considerando que:

Após uma bem-sucedida ida aos mercados com a emissão de dívida a cinco anos em janeiro deste ano, com uma procura em muito superior à oferta e uma taxa de juro bastante atrativa, Portugal estava a criar as melhores condições para uma emissão de dívida a 10 anos. O recente chumbo por parte do Tribunal Constitucional a quatro normas do orçamento para 2013 veio comprometer o cumprimento do acordado com a Troika, e poderá também comprometer uma possível emissão de dívida a 10 anos.

Pergunta-se:

Considera a Comissão que a decisão do Tribunal Constitucional poderá impedir, no curto prazo, uma futura emissão de dívida a 10 anos pelo Estado português?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

O governo elaborou rapidamente uma estratégia para superar os desafios colocados pela decisão do Tribunal Constitucional português. Para 2013, o governo já elaborou um importante pacote de opções que foi avaliado positivamente pela troica. Os desafios são mais significativos para 2014, mas o governo comprometeu-se a elaborar um cenário a médio prazo, que integra as medidas relativas à despesa pública em conformidade com as metas definidas na sétima revisão.

Na medida em que possa ser encontrada uma solução satisfatória como previsto, não há motivo para crer que o governo português não consiga emitir dívida a 10 anos nos próximos meses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004115/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Issue of 10-year bonds by Portugal II

After a successful auction of five-year bonds in January this year, which saw demand greatly outstrip supply and a very attractive interest rate, Portugal was set to offer better rates for the issue of 10-year bonds. The recent ruling by the Constitutional Court rejecting four measures in the 2013 budget has threatened the agreement with the Troika, and may also threaten the issue of 10-year bonds.

Does the Commission believe that the Constitutional Court's decision may, in the short term, hinder the future sale of 10-year bonds by the Portuguese Government?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The government swiftly devised a strategy to overcome the challenges posed by the ruling of the Portuguese Constitutional Court. For 2013, the government has already elaborated an important menu of options that have been positively evaluated by the troika. Challenges are somewhat bigger for 2014, but the government has committed to establishing a medium-term scenario which incorporates the public expenditure measures in line with the targets as defined in the 7th review.

Provided that a satisfactory solution to these challenges can be found as envisaged, there is no reason to believe that the Portuguese Government will not be able to issue 10-year bonds in the coming months.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004116/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Offshores I

Considerando que:

Uma investigação que durou 15 meses, do Consórcio Internacional de Jornalistas de Investigação (ICIJ), com a colaboração de grandes jornais, como Le Monde ou The Washington Post, é agora chamada *Offshore* Leaks. Esta investigação mostra que membros de governos de vários países e seus familiares usaram falsas empresas e contas bancárias. Por outro lado, os milionários usaram complexas estruturas *offshore* para adquirir mansões, peças de arte ou iates com vantagens fiscais e anonimato que não estão ao alcance do cidadão comum. Também mostra que os principais bancos mundiais trabalham arduamente para proporcionar empresas escondidas em refúgios *offshore*.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta investigação?

O que tem sido feito para combater os *offshores*, responsáveis pela fuga de uma significativa receita fiscal?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão3
(3 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão tomou conhecimento das recentes revelações, fruto dos esforços conjuntos da imprensa internacional, no âmbito da investigação designada por *Offshore Leaks*. São a prova de que a fraude e a evasão fiscais constituem um fenómeno de dimensão mundial que requer uma ação urgente.

Há muito que a Comissão tem vindo a reconhecer a importância dos regimes transfronteiras e *offshore* na ocultação de rendimentos e ativos tributáveis, tendo adotado medidas em conformidade. Constituem exemplos dessas medidas a adoção da Diretiva relativa à tributação da poupança, em 2003 — incluindo acordos conexos com jurisdições fora da UE — e da Diretiva relativa à cooperação administrativa, em 2011.

Mais recentemente, em dezembro de 2012, a Comissão lançou um Plano de Ação relativo à luta contra a fraude e evasão fiscais. Esse plano de ação identifica uma série de medidas específicas que podem ser aplicadas agora e nos próximos anos, apelando essencialmente para uma maior cooperação e para o intercâmbio automático de informações. A Recomendação relativa à boa governação que o acompanha propõe aos Estados-Membros que utilizem critérios comuns, baseados na transparência, intercâmbio de informações e concorrência fiscal leal, para identificar e criai uma lista negra dos países terceiros que não cumprem normas mínimas de boa governação em matéria fiscal. Recomenda ainda aos Estados-Membros que apliquem medidas específicas destinadas a encorajar os países terceiros a adotar essas normas mínimas.

O Plano de Ação e as Recomendações representam um contributo importante para o debate internacional mais alargado sobre a luta contra a fraude e a evasão fiscais em que participam a OCDE, o G20 e o G8. A Comissão vai continuar a promover firmemente o intercâmbio automático de informações enquanto norma europeia e internacional futura em matéria de fiscalidade e congratula-se com os recentes desenvolvimentos neste domínio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004116/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Offshore havens I

A 15 month-long investigation, entitled *Offshore Leaks*, has been released by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), in collaboration with major newspapers such as *Le Monde* and *The Washington Post*. The investigation shows how government members from several countries, and their relatives, use sham companies and bank accounts. Millionaires also use complex offshore structures to purchase mansions, works of art and yachts, gaining tax advantages and anonymity not available to the average person. It also reveals that the major world banks aggressively work to set up secrecy-cloaked companies in offshore havens.

Is the Commission aware of this investigation?

What has been done to combat these offshore havens which are responsible for a significant amount of tax avoidance?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission has taken note of the very recent offshore leaks that were uncovered by the joint efforts of the international press. They provide further evidence that tax fraud and tax evasion is a worldwide phenomenon that requires urgent action.

The Commission has long recognised the significance of cross-border and offshore arrangements in concealing taxable income and assets and acted accordingly. The adoption of the Savings Directive in 2003 — including related agreements with non-EU jurisdictions — and the Administrative Cooperation Directive of 2011 are two main examples.

More recently in December 2012, the Commission launched an Action Plan against tax fraud and evasion. It identifies a series of specific measures which can be developed now and in years to come, essentially pushing for more cooperation and automatic exchange of information. The accompanying Recommendation on good governance proposes Member States to use common criteria, based on transparency, exchange of information and fair tax competition to identify and blacklist third countries that do not comply with minimum standards of good governance in tax matters. It also recommends Member States to apply specific targeted measures to encourage third countries to adopt such minimum standards.

The action plan and Recommendations represent an important contribution to the wider international debate on tackling tax fraud and evasion involving the OECD, the G20 and the G8. The Commission will continue to strongly promote the automatic exchange of information as the future European and international standard in tax matters and welcomes recent developments in this area.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004117/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Falta de fundos em Chipre

Considerando que:

O novo Ministro da Economia de Chipre, Jaris Yeoryiadis, alertou que os fundos públicos podem acabar durante o mês de abril. No entanto, a primeira parcela do resgate financeiro da Troika, cerca de euros 10 000 milhões, não deve chegar antes de maio.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem consciência de que o Chipre pode entrar em «default» ainda antes de receber a parcela do resgate financeiro da Troika?

Que está a ser feito para apoiar financeiramente Chipre antes que este país entre em situação de falência?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(23 de maio de 2013)

Segundo as informações oficiais que a Comissão recebeu do Gabinete de Gestão da Dívida Pública de Chipre, as autoridades cipriotas tomaram medidas para garantir que não haveria défice de liquidez em abril.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004117/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Lack of funds in Cyprus

Cyprus's new Finance Minister, Harris Georgiades, has warned that public funds may run out in April. However, the first bailout instalment from the Troika of approximately EUR 10 billion is not expected to arrive until May.

Is the Commission aware that Cyprus may default even before it receives the first bailout instalment from the Troika?

What is being done to support Cyprus financially in order to avert the threat of bankruptcy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

According to the official information Commission received from the Cyprus Public Debt Management Office, Cyprus authorities took measures to ensure that there is no liquidity shortfall in April.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004118/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Injeção de capital nos hospitais portugueses e aumento do défice

Considerando que:

A injeção de capital que o Governo está a preparar para os hospitais pode vir a ter influência na meta do défice. Em causa estão 430 milhões de euros, o equivalente a cerca de 0,3 % do PIB, que podem vir a ser considerados como despesa, aumentando o valor do défice orçamental deste ano.

O Eurostat está há vários anos a analisar as injeções de capital que envolvam hospitais.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta operação?

Considera que a mesma deverá ser vista como uma simples transferência de verbas para pagar despesas, e assim afetar o défice, ou que, por outro lado deve ser considerada um investimento com potencial de gerar retorno para o Estado?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

A classificação da operação que refere depende de vários elementos, definidos em mais pormenor na ESA95 e no *Manual on Government Deficit and Debt*, do Eurostat ([1]).

A Comissão solicitou às autoridades portuguesas informações mais pormenorizadas sobre esta operação, mas até ao momento ainda não recebeu qualquer resposta. Na ausência dessa informação, não é possível atualmente determinar a forma como a mesma irá ser classificada em termos de contabilidade nacional. A Comissão continuará a estar atenta a esta questão.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-09-017/EN/KS-RA-09-017-EN.PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004118/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Injection of capital for Portuguese hospitals and an increase in the deficit

The injection of capital that the Portuguese Government is about to give hospitals may affect the deficit target. The figure in question is EUR 430 million, which is the equivalent of around 0.3% of GDP. This could be considered as an expense, and thereby increase the value of this year's budget deficit.

Eurostat has been analysing injections of capital for hospitals for several years.

Is the Commission aware of this action?

Does the Commission accept that it should be seen simply as a funds transfer to pay expenses and therefore affect the deficit; alternatively, should it be considered as an investment that has the potential to generate returns for the State?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The classification of the transaction referred to depends on a number of elements which are laid down in more detail in ESA95 and Eurostat's 'Manual on Government Deficit and Debt' ([1]).

The Commission has asked the Portuguese authorities for more detailed information on this transaction, but has not received a response so far. In the absence of such information, it is currently not possible to say how such a transaction will be classified in national accounts terms. The Commission will continue looking into this issue.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-09-017/EN/KS-RA-09-017-EN.PDF

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004119/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Indicadores OCDE de comportamento da economia

De acordo com a OCDE, os sinais da economia portuguesa são positivos. O indicador que perspetiva o comportamento da economia superou os 100 pontos e atingiu o nível mais elevado desde Julho de 2011, revelando, assim, melhorias pelo décimo primeiro mês consecutivo. Os indicadores avançados da Organização para a Cooperação e Desenvolvimento Económico (OCDE) revelam que a economia portuguesa está a dar sinais de melhorias a médio prazo. O indicador para Portugal superou os 100 pontos (100,28 pontos), depois de 11 meses consecutivos de melhorias. Estas melhorias têm vindo a acentuar-se, com a variação de fevereiro a ser a mais pronunciada. Os congéneres europeus, Espanha, Grécia e Irlanda, estão entre os Estados-Membros cujas perspetivas são de crescimento acima da média. Já a Alemanha, a França e a Itália deverão crescer abaixo da média, segundo os indicadores de fevereiro.

Pergunta-se:

A Comissão tem conhecimento destes dados?

Segundo os dados acima revelados, as economias sob resgate vão ter melhor desempenho do que as restantes. Não considera que se deve fazer um esforço de investimento nos países mais ricos para que estes possam ajudar os países em dificuldades a crescer a um melhor ritmo?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(17 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão ignora de qual das muitas publicações da OCDE o Senhor Deputado retirou os dados que refere. A prestação de assistência financeira a Estados-Membros em dificuldades da área do euro e a execução de programas de ajustamento económico criaram as condições para que possa haver futuramente um crescimento forte e sustentável nesses países. As ideias da Comissão quanto às medidas adequadas para estimular o crescimento e a criação de emprego, na UE em geral e na área do euro em particular, constam da Análise Anual do Crescimento de 2013.

A União Europeia apoia também, diretamente, o investimento de longo prazo promotor de crescimento, por exemplo por meio do aumento de capital do BEI num montante de 10 000 milhões de euros, o que irá contribuir para o financiamento de um volume total de investimento de cerca de 180 000 milhões de euros. A Comissão criou instrumentos financeiros específicos, designadamente as obrigações para financiamento de projetos, para mobilizar um maior volume de financiamento privado. No Livro Verde sobre o financiamento a longo prazo da economia europeia, que publicou recentemente, a Comissão discute novas formas de melhorar o investimento de longo prazo ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013DC0150:PT:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004119/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) economic indicators

According to the OECD, the Portuguese economy is showing positive signs of recovery. The indicator for economic development has risen to over 100 points and reached its highest level since July 2011, reflecting improvements for the 11th consecutive month. The OECD indicators reveal that the Portuguese economy is showing signs of medium-term improvements. The indicator for Portugal has risen above 100 points (100.28 points), after 11 consecutive months of improvement. These improvements have become more marked, and the greatest change was seen in February. Its fellow European countries, Spain, Greece and Ireland, are also among the Member States whose economies are showing above-average growth. However, according to February's indicators, Germany, France and Italy are expected to grow at a rate below average.

Is the Commission aware of these figures?

According to the above figures, the economies with bailout packages will perform better than others. Does the Commission think it should invest more in the richer countries so that they can help those countries in difficulty to grow at a faster rate?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission is not aware to which of the many OECD publications the Honourable Member specifically refers. The provision of financial assistance to euro area Member States with difficulties and the implementation of economic adjustment programmes set the ground for strong and sustainable future growth in these countries. The Commission's views on the appropriate actions to stimulate growth and job creation in the EU as a whole and in the euro area are set out in its Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2013.

The European Union is also supporting growth-enhancing long-term investment directly, for example through the increase of the EIB's capital by 10 billion euro, which will ultimately help finance a total investment volume of around 180 billion. The Commission has implemented dedicated financial instruments to unlock greater amounts of private financing, e.g. the project bonds initiative. In its recent Green paper on financing long term growth, the Commission also looks at new ways to improve long-term investment ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013DC0150:EN:NOT.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004120/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Catástrofe na Madeira II

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010200/2012.

Na resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão, é referido que «Se as autoridades portuguesas considerarem a apresentação de um pedido, a Comissão está disponível para prestar aconselhamento e apoio. No caso de vir a concretizar-se, a ajuda financeira concedida pelo Fundo de Solidariedade poderia ser utilizada para prestar apoio de emergência à população afetada, proceder à limpeza das zonas urbanas afetadas, à disponibilização de alojamentos temporários e à reconstrução de infraestruturas».

Pergunto à Comissão:

As autoridades portuguesas apresentaram o referido pedido? Qual?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

Em 14 de janeiro de 2013, as autoridades portuguesas apresentaram um pedido de assistência financeira ao Fundo de Solidariedade da UE para enfrentar a situação desastrosa resultante das inundações ocorridas em certas partes da Madeira em novembro de 2012. De acordo com o pedido, o montante total dos danos diretos causados pela catástrofe ascenderam a 25,7 milhões de euros, ao passo que o limiar normal de ativação do Fundo de Solidariedade em Portugal está atualmente fixado em 987,4 milhões de euros (ou seja, 0,6 % do produto interno bruto).

A Comissão analisou a possibilidade de ativar excecionalmente o Fundo de Solidariedade, baseando-se nos critérios aplicáveis às catástrofes regionais extraordinárias e tendo o estatuto de RUP da Madeira plenamente em conta. Em 22 de abril, a Comissão concluiu que a catástrofe — embora localmente grave — não cumpre esses critérios, em especial dado que não havia indícios de repercussões graves e prolongadas nas condições de vida e na estabilidade económica da região no seu conjunto. As autoridades portuguesas foram informadas do facto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004120/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Catastrophe in Madeira II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Commission (E-010200/2012) on this issue.

According to the answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission, '[s]hould the Portuguese authorities consider making an application, the Commission stands ready to provide guidance and support. If financial aid from the Solidarity Fund is granted, this could be used for emergency support for the affected population, cleaning of the affected urban areas, provision of temporary accommodation and the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure.'

Have the Portuguese authorities made such an application? If so, what have they applied for?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

On 14 January 2013, the Portuguese authorities applied for financial assistance from the EU Solidarity Fund in relation to the disaster created by flooding in parts of Madeira during November 2012. According to the application, the total direct damage caused by the disaster amounted to EUR 25.7 million whereas the normal threshold for activating the Solidarity Fund for Portugal is currently set at EUR 987.4 million (i.e. 0.6% of gross national income).

The Commission examined whether the Solidarity Fund could be activated exceptionally on the basis of the criteria for so-called extraordinary regional disasters, taking the status of Madeira as an outermost region into full account. On 22 April, the Commission concluded that the disaster — while locally serious — did not meet these criteria, in particular as there was no evidence of serious and lasting repercussions on the living conditions and the economic stability of the region as a whole. The Portuguese authorities were informed accordingly.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004121/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: EUA: Nova lei agrícola para responder à seca II

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão a pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009275/2012.

Na resposta dada por Dacian Ciolos em nome da Comissão, é dito que «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».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Em que consistirá este novo dispositivo?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2013)

O novo conjunto de instrumentos de gestão do risco incluído na proposta de Regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativo ao apoio ao desenvolvimento rural pelo Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural (Feader) ([1]), apresentada pela Comissão, é composto por três elementos.

Primeiro, no âmbito do regime de garantia, os agricultores podem receber contribuições para contratos de seguro que cubram as perdas de produção causadas por certos tipos de eventos, como acontecimentos climáticos adversos. Segundo, pode ser dado apoio a fundos mutualistas para compensar os agricultores por perdas económicas causadas, por exemplo, por surtos de doenças dos animais ou das plantas. Terceiro, foi proposto um instrumento de estabilização do rendimento para contribuir para fundos mutualistas que compensem os agricultores por uma diminuição acentuada dos seus rendimentos. A fim de assegurar a igualdade de tratamento entre os agricultores, a ausência de distorção da concorrência e o respeito dos requisitos para a obtenção do estatuto de «caixa verde» da OMC, foram estabelecidas condições específicas.

Os Estados-Membros dispõem de flexibilidade para escolher, em função da sua situação específica, os instrumentos de gestão dos riscos, a dotação orçamental e os beneficiários adequados e podem utilizar o conjunto de instrumentos em combinação com outras medidas de desenvolvimento rural (por exemplo, formação, prevenção contra crises, etc.).

([1]) COM(2011) 627/3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004121/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: USA: New farm bill in response to the drought II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Commission (E-009275/2012) on this issue.

According to the answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission, '[t]he 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'.

What will this new toolkit consist of?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The new risk management toolkit included in the Commission's proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) ([1]) consists of three elements.

First, under the insurance measure, farmers can receive contributions for insurance contracts covering production losses caused by certain types of events, e.g. adverse climatic events. Second, support can be provided to mutual funds to compensate farmers for economic losses caused by, for example, the outbreak of an animal or plant disease. Third, an income stabilisation tool has been proposed to contribute to mutual funds which compensate farmers for a severe drop in their income. In order to ensure equal treatment among farmers, that competition is not distorted and that WTO green-box requirements are respected, specific conditions have been established.

Member States have the flexibility to choose the appropriate risk management tools, budgetary allocation and beneficiaries according to their specific situation and allows using the toolkit in combination with other rural development measures (for example, training, prevention actions against crisis events, etc.).

([1]) (COM(2011) 627/3).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004122/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Futuro da frota de pesca longínqua da UE II

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão a pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008723/2012.

Na resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão, é dito que «a Comissão tenciona lançar uma iniciativa política de alto nível, para discutir vias de redução da capacidade à escala mundial durante 2013.»

Pergunto à Comissão:

Em que ponto se encontra a organização da referida iniciativa política?

Já há data e local para a realização desta iniciativa?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

A iniciativa de organizar uma conferência internacional sobre a redução da capacidade é uma das ações previstas na comunicação relativa à dimensão externa da Política Comum das Pescas. O objetivo será analisar a questão do excesso de capacidade como uma das principais razões para a sobrepesca a nível mundial e discutir formas de tratar o problema à luz das aspirações dos países em desenvolvimento.

A Comissão está atualmente a tentar definir as melhores opções em termos de conteúdo, âmbito de aplicação e participação e apresentará uma comunicação específica logo que possa assegurar-se de que esta iniciativa pode ter o apoio internacional que merece.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004122/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Future of the EU distant-water fishing fleet II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Commission (E-008723/2012) on this issue.

According to the answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission, 'the Commission intends to launch a high-level political initiative to discuss the avenues for capacity reduction at a global level during 2013.'

What progress has been made in arranging the abovementioned political initiative?

Have a date and a place been set for this initiative?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The initiative for an international conference on capacity reduction is one of the actions foreseen in the communication on the external dimension of the common fisheries policy. It aims at addressing overcapacity as one of the main reasons for overfishing worldwide and to discuss ways of addressing it, in a way that takes into account the aspirations of developing states.

The Commission is currently examining which would be the best options for its content scope and participation and will come forward with a specific announcement as soon as it can be sure that this initiative can have the international support it deserves.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004123/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Patente unitária Europeia II

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão a pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008705/2012.

Na resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão, é referido que «a Comissão está confiante em que será alcançado, até ao final do presente ano, um acordo final».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Chegou a ser alcançado o acordo previsto? Qual?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(14 de junho de 2013)

No final do ano passado chegou-se a acordo quanto ao dossiê relativo às patentes.

Foram adotados dois regulamentos que aplicam a cooperação reforçada no que diz respeito à criação de uma proteção unitária de patentes ([1]). Tal permitirá aos inventores obterem proteção de patente unitária para o território de 25 Estados-Membros (todos os Estados-Membros, à exceção de Espanha e Itália) com base num pedido único, sem formalidades adicionais de validação e tradução em cada um dos Estados-Membros e, portanto, a um custo consideravelmente reduzido (após o período de transição, por cerca de 5 000 EUR em vez dos atuais 32 000 EUR). Os regulamentos aplicar-se-ão a partir de 1 de abril de 2014 ou da data de entrada em vigor do Acordo relativo ao Tribunal Unificado de Patentes, consoante a que ocorrer mais tarde.

O Acordo relativo ao Tribunal Unificado de Patentes ([2]), que prevê a criação de um único tribunal comum aos Estados-Membros, foi assinado por 25 Estados-Membros (todos os Estados Membros, à exceção de Espanha e da Polónia). Conseguir-se-á assim a segurança jurídica necessária para fins empresariais, bem como remover as dificuldades atuais em caso de litígio acerca de patentes europeias, que acontece em vários tribunais em diversos Estados-Membros. O Tribunal Unificado de Patentes terá competência exclusiva em matéria de patentes europeias com efeito unitário, bem como quanto a patentes europeias «clássicas». A entrada em vigor do acordo depende da ratificação por 13 Estados-Membros, incluindo a Alemanha, a França e o Reino Unido.

Já se iniciaram os trabalhos preparatórios em ambas as vertentes. A Comissão está confiante que este acordo sobre o dossiê relativo às patentes estimulará a investigação, o desenvolvimento e o investimento em inovação, ajudando também a fomentar o crescimento na UE.

([1]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1257/2012 DO Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 17 de dezembro de 2012, que regulamenta a cooperação reforçada no domínio da criação da proteção unitária de patentes, JO L 361 de 31.12.2012, p. 1; Regulamento (UE) n.° 1260/2012 do Conselho, de 17 de dezembro de 2012, que regulamenta a cooperação reforçada no domínio da criação da proteção unitária de patentes no que diz respeito ao regime de tradução aplicável, JO L 361 de 31.12.2012, p. 89.

([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st16/st16351.en12.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004123/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: European unitary patent II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Commission (E-008705/2012) on this issue.

According to the answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission, '[t]he Commission is confident that a final agreement will be found by the end of this year.'

Has the expected agreement been found? If so, what is it?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

By the end of last year an agreement on the patent file was found:

Two regulations implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection ([1]) were adopted. This will enable inventors to get patent protection for the territory of 25 Member States (all Member States but Spain and Italy) on the basis of one single application, without additional validation and translation requirements in the individual Member States and thus at a considerably reduced cost (after the transitional period around EUR 5 000 instead of around EUR 32 000 today). The regulations will apply from 1 April 2014 or the date of entry into force of the Agreement on the Unified Patent Court, whichever is the later.

The agreement on the Unified Patent Court ([2]) which provides for the establishment of a single Court common to the Member States was signed by 25 Member States (all Member States but Spain and Poland). This will provide legal certainty necessary for business and remove today's difficulties where litigation about European patents often takes place in multiple fora in several Member States. The Unified Patent Court will have exclusive competence for European patents with unitary effect as well as for 'classical' European patents. The entry into force of the agreement depends on ratification by 13 Member States, including Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

The preparatory work on both strands has started. The Commission is confident that this agreement on the patent file will stimulate research, development and investment in innovation and help boost growth in the EU.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1257/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2012 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection, OJ L 361, 31.12.2012/1; Council Regulation (EU) No 1260/2012 of 17 December 2012 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection with regard to the applicable translation arrangements, OJ L 361, 31.12.2012/89.

([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st16/st16351.en12.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004124/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Sistema de identificação de cores

Considerando que:

— Existem aproximadamente 350 milhões de pessoas daltónicas em todo o mundo;

— Esta limitação, de condição hereditária, é transmitida através do cromossoma X, criando ao seu portador daltónico grandes constrangimentos ao nível da integração social e profissional;

— Aproximadamente 90 % da comunicação no Mundo é feita através da cor;

— Foi recentemente apresentado um novo conceito de adição de cores denominado ColorADD, permitindo ao daltónico relacionar os símbolos e facilmente identificar todas as cores.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Quais as medidas adotadas na U.E para um estudo mais aprofundado do daltonismo?

Possui algum estudo relativamente a esta matéria?

Tem conhecimento do referido conceito? Como o avalia?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(4 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do sistema ColorADD, que o Senhor Deputado refere, um código de identificação das cores extremamente simples para as pessoas que sofrem de daltonismo.

No âmbito do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação, Desenvolvimento Tecnológico e Demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), não foi financiada qualquer atividade de investigação sobre o daltonismo. No entanto, foram financiados vários projetos que lidavam com problemas de visão. Podem citar-se, a título de exemplo, os projetos Drugsford ([1]), que visa o desenvolvimento de compostos específicos e dos respetivos sistemas de administração para evitar danos às células fotorrecetoras em modelos patológicos pré-clínicos, e Vision ([2]), que pretende desenvolver uma abordagem terapêutica para evitar a morte das células nervosas utilizando um novo implante intraocular biodegradável. Outros exemplos ainda são os projetos Optoneuro ([3]), Seebetter ([4]), Renvision ([5]) e Visualise ([6]), que exploram novas formas de perceção visual e próteses da retina que permitam às pessoas cegas recuperar a visão perdida devido a doenças degenerativas como a retinite pigmentosa.

No que respeita ao futuro, e tendo em conta o debate atualmente em curso a nível interinstitucional, é demasiado cedo para dizer se o Programa Horizonte 2020 — Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação (2014-2020) ([7]), mais especificamente na sua vertente «Saúde, Evolução Demográfica e Bem-Estar», incluirá possibilidades de investigação sobre os problemas que afetam a visão.

([1]) http://www.drugsford.eu/
([2]) http://fp7-vision.eu/
([3]) www.optoneuro.eu
([4]) www.seebetter.eu
([5]) www.renvision-fp7.eu
([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/106346_en.html
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004124/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Colour identification system

Around 350 million people worldwide suffer from colour blindness.

This hereditary condition is passed on through the X chromosome and can pose significant challenges to social and professional integration for those affected.

Colour is used in approximately 90% of communication in the world.

A new system for adding colours called ColorADD has recently been launched, which allows colour-blind people to associate symbols and easily identify any colour.

What action has the EU taken to study colour blindness in greater depth?

Does it have any research on this subject?

Is it aware of this system? What is its opinion of it?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the ColorADD system mentioned by the Honourable Member, which is a quite straightforward colour identification code for persons suffering from colour blindness.

Under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), no research activities have been financed on colour blindness. However, several projects on combating visual impairments have been funded. Examples are DRUGSFORD ([1]), which aims at developing targeted compounds and delivering systems to prevent photoreceptor damage in preclinical disease models, and VISION ([2]), which intends to develop a therapeutic approach to stop the death of neural cells by using a novel intraocular biodegradable implant. Other examples are OPTONEURO ([3]), SEEBETTER ([4]), RENVISION ([5]), and VISUALISE ([6]), which all explore new ways of visual perception and retina prosthetics for the blind or restore vision lost from degenerative diseases such as *retinitis pigmentosa*.

As for the future, given the ongoing interinstitutional debate, it is too early to say if Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([7]), and more specifically the 'Health, Demographic Change and Well-Being' challenge, will include opportunities for research on visual impairment.

([1]) http://www.drugsford.eu/
([2]) http://fp7-vision.eu/
([3]) www.optoneuro.eu
([4]) www.seebetter.eu
([5]) www.renvision-fp7.eu
([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/106346_en.html
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004125/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Milho transgénico II

O deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão a pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008703/2012. Na resposta dada por Maroš Šefčovič, em nome da Comissão, é dito que «a Comissão irá estudar de forma cuidada o parecer final da AESA sobre a publicação de Séralini et al., assim que este for formulado e tomará todas as medidas de acompanhamento, se tal for necessário, para garantir a proteção da saúde humana e animal e do ambiente».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Já analisou o parecer final da AESA?

Que conclusão retirou do mesmo?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

Em 28 de novembro de 2012, a AESA publicou a sua análise científica final sobre o estudo ([1]), na qual reiterou a sua avaliação inicial, bem como os pareceres já fornecidos por seis agências de segurança alimentar dos Estados-Membros, de que as conclusões dos autores não podem ser consideradas cientificamente sólidas, devido a insuficiências de conceção, comunicação de resultados e análise do estudo. A AESA considera que não há necessidade de reexaminar as suas anteriores avaliações da segurança do milho geneticamente modificado da linhagem NK 603 ou de ter em conta essas conclusões para a avaliação em curso do glifosato.

A Comissão está empenhada em assegurar que sejam aplicados elevados padrões na avaliação da segurança dos OGM. Neste contexto, a Comissão salienta que um novo regulamento sobre os pedidos de autorização de géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais geneticamente modificados foi adotado pela Comissão em 3 de abril de 2013 ([2]), na sequência de uma votação por maioria qualificada dos Estados-Membros no âmbito do Comité Permanente da Cadeia Alimentar e da Saúde Animal, em 25 de fevereiro de 2013. O regulamento exige que os requerentes realizem estudos alimentares de 90 dias.

Um estudo com esta duração é considerado suficiente para identificar os efeitos toxicológicos gerais dos alimentos geneticamente modificados para consumo humano e animal. Além disso, a UE tem vindo a financiar vários projetos de investigação sobre a segurança dos OGM no âmbito dos seus programas-quadro de investigação. Os últimos exemplos são os projetos Gmsafood ([3]) e GRACE ([4]).

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/121128.htm
([2]) A publicação do novo regulamento no Jornal Oficial da União Europeia está pendente.
([3]) http://www.gmsafoodproject.eu/
([4]) http://www.grace-fp7.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004125/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Transgenic corn II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Commission (E-008703/2012) on this issue. According to the answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission, '[t]he Commission will carefully study EFSA's final opinion on the publication by Séralini et al., once adopted, and take the appropriate follow-up measures, if necessary, to ensure the protection of human and animal health and the environment.'

Has the Commission studied EFSA's final opinion?

What conclusion has the Commission drawn from it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

On 28 November 2012 EFSA published its final scientific review on the study ([1]), which reaffirmed its initial assessment, along with opinions already provided by six food safety agencies of the Member States, that the authors' conclusions cannot be regarded as scientifically sound because of inadequacies in the design, reporting and analysis of the study. EFSA finds there is no need to re-examine its previous safety evaluations of the GM maize NK 603 or to consider these findings in the ongoing assessment of glyphosate.

The Commission is committed to ensure that high standards are applied in the safety assessment of GMOs. In this context, the Commission stresses that a new Regulation on GM food and feed applications for authorisation was adopted by the Commission on 3 April 2013 ([2]), following a qualified majority vote by the Member States in the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 25 February 2013. This regulation makes it compulsory for applicants to perform 90-day feeding studies.

Such study is considered of sufficient duration for identification of general toxicological effects of GM food and feed. Furthermore, the EU has been funding several research projects on safety of GMOs under its Research Framework Programmes. Latest examples are the projects GMSAFOOD ([3]) and GRACE ([4]).

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/121128.htm
([2]) Publication of the new Regulation in the Official Journal of the EU is still pending.
([3]) http://www.gmsafoodproject.eu/.
([4]) http://www.grace-fp7.eu/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004126/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Stock da sardinha na costa ibérica II

O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008692/2012.

Na resposta dada por Maria Damanaki, em nome da Comissão, é dito que a Comissão «adotará medidas de salvaguarda do stock de sardinha, no sentido de manter a exploração a níveis capazes de gerar rendimento máximo sustentável».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Quais as medidas previstas pela Comissão para salvaguardar o stock de sardinha?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está a acompanhar de perto a execução do plano de gestão da sardinha, acordado entre Portugal e Espanha em 2012. Este plano foi elaborado pela administração portuguesa, com o objetivo de assegurar a recuperação da unidade populacional de sardinha ibérica do Atlântico do atual nível — baixo — de biomassa e promover a exploração sustentável desta unidade populacional a longo prazo. A Comissão solicitou ao Conselho Internacional de Exploração do Mar (CIEM) que avaliasse as vantagens do plano em termos de conservação. Se o CIEM confirmar que o plano tem efeitos preventivos, este poderá constituir a base para futuras medidas de gestão, como a fixação de totais admissíveis de capturas, para garantir que a unidade populacional de sardinha é explorada a níveis capazes de gerar um rendimento máximo sustentável.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004126/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Sardine stocks off the Iberian coast II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Commission (E-008692/2012) on this issue.

According to the answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission, the Commission 'will take measures to ensure that the sardine stock is exploited at levels capable of generating maximum sustainable yield (MSY).'

What measures is the Commission planning to take to safeguard sardine stocks?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission is following closely the implementation of the sardine management plan agreed between Portugal and Spain in 2012. This plan was developed by the Portuguese administration with the objective of ensuring the recovery of the Iberian Atlantic stock of sardine from the present low biomass level and to promote the sustainable exploitation of this stock in the long-term. The Commission has asked the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) to assess the conservation merits of this plan. If ICES confirms that the management plan is precautionary, it can be the basis for future management measures such as setting total allowable catches, to ensure that the sardine stock is exploited at levels capable of generating maximum sustainable yield.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004127/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório da American Petroleum Institute

Recentemente foi publicado o relatório da American Petroleum Institute (API) que revelou que os inventários de crude aumentaram, na semana passada, em 4,7 milhões de barris, o valor mais elevado em quatro semanas.

Estes números aumentam as preocupações dos investidores quanto à procura de matéria-prima.

Também as estimativas dos analistas consultados pela Bloomberg apontam para um aumento das reservas de crude em 2,1 milhões de barris para 388 milhões de barris, o nível mais elevado em mais de 22 anos.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz do referido relatório?

Na ótica da Comissão, qual a tendência do preço do barril de petróleo para o médio/longo prazo?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(24 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão, a par de outras organizações internacionais, como a Agência Internacional da Energia (AIE), acompanha de perto a evolução dos mercados do petróleo ([1]), nomeadamente no que respeita aos níveis de reservas. Segundo informações do API, os inventários de petróleo bruto dos EUA apresentam um nível muito elevado. Todavia, não se devem tirar conclusões precipitadas da alteração das reservas numa única semana, sobre um único produto (petróleo bruto), num único país (EUA). Embora as reservas de petróleo bruto possam globalmente parecer tranquilizadoras, por os inventários americanos serem atualmente elevados (foram acrescentados 20 milhões de barris desde o final de 2012), os inventários dos produtos refinados intermédios afiguravam-se limitados antes do inverno, com níveis baixos na Europa e na América, em termos absolutos.

Num contexto de elevados riscos de abastecimento (Irão, Nigéria, África Setentrional, etc.), os preços do petróleo podem manter-se voláteis a médio prazo, apesar da recente tendência de baixa significativa, particularmente alimentada por preocupações sobre a recuperação económica mundial, o elevado nível atual de capacidade de produção excedentária da OPEP e o nível relativamente elevado das reservas mundiais de petróleo.

Os serviços da Comissão não publicam projeções sobre o preço do barril a médio e longo prazo.

([1]) Para mais informações, consultar o sítio Web do Observatório do Mercado da Energia da DG Energia da Comissão, em: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/oil/oil_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004127/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Report by the American Petroleum Institute

The American Petroleum Institute (API) recently published a report that revealed that crude oil inventories had increased last week by 4.7 million barrels, the highest increase in four weeks.

These figures have added to investor concerns about the demand for oil.

Estimates by analysts consulted by Bloomberg suggest an increase of 2.1 million barrels leading to crude reserves of 388 million barrels, the highest level in over 22 years.

What is the Commission's assessment of this report?

What, in the Commission's view, is the forecast for the price of a barrel of oil in the medium/long term?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The Commission and other international organisations, like the International Energy Agency (IEA), closely monitor the developments in the oil markets ([1]), notably regarding the oil stock levels. As reported by the API, US crude oil inventories are currently at a very high level. Nevertheless, one should not draw far-reaching conclusions from the stock change in a single week, for a single product (crude oil), in a single country (US). While crude oil stocks look comfortable overall, thanks to present high American inventories (20 million barrels having been added since end-2012), middle distillates inventories were seen as tight ahead of winter, with both Europe and the Americas at low levels in absolute terms.

In a context of elevated supply risks (Iran, Nigeria, North Africa, etc.), oil prices should remain volatile in the medium term despite the significant and recent downward trend in oil prices notably fuelled by concerns about the global economic recovery, current high level of OPEC spare production capacity and relatively high level of global oil stocks.

The Commission services do not publish any projections regarding the price of the barrel in the medium or long term.

([1]) See the Market Observatory website of DG Energy of the Commission for more details at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/oil/oil_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004128/13
alla Commissione
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(11 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Concorrenza fra treni ad alta velocità e autostrade

Molte città europee sono collegate sia da ferrovie ad alta velocità sia da autostrade a pagamento; poiché su queste ultime vige normalmente un limite di velocità, chi voglia raggiungere più celermente la propria destinazione si trova conseguentemente obbligato a usare il treno.

Considerato che i limiti di velocità sono generalizzati e non settoriali, salvo che in Germania (peraltro con autostrade gratuite), e pertanto, apparentemente, non dovuti unicamente a ragioni di sicurezza, può la Commissione far sapere se il non consentire a chi voglia scegliere l'autostrada di tenere una velocità comparabile con quella della ferrovia, che si trova così a godere di un monopolio dell'alta velocità terrestre, è conforme alle norme dell'Unione sulla libera concorrenza?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(6 maggio 2013)

Le norme dell'UE sulla concorrenza (articoli 101 e 102) riguardano la condotta delle imprese. I limiti di velocità in autostrada imposti dalle autorità pubbliche non sono pertanto disciplinati da tali norme.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004128/13
to the Commission
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(11 April 2013)

Subject: Competition between high-speed trains and motorways

Many European cities are connected by both high-speed railways and toll motorways; since the latter normally have speed limits, those who want to reach their destination more quickly are therefore obliged to use the train.

Given that speed limits are universal and non-sectoral, except in Germany (where the motorways are also free), and are therefore apparently not due to safety reasons alone, can the Commission say whether the failure to allow those who prefer motorways to travel at a speed that is comparable to that of the railways — which thus have a monopoly on high-speed travel on land — complies with EU legislation on free competition?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

Competition rules of the EU (Articles 101 and 102) relate to the conduct of companies. The regulation of speed on motorways by public authorities is therefore not governed by such rules.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-004131/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(12. april 2013)

Om: Ryan Airs anvendelse af vikarbureauer

Danske medier har for nyligt berettet (DR.dk, 9.4.2013), hvordan Ryan Air benytter sig af arbejdskontrakter, der ikke giver løn under ferie samt tillader flyselskabet at fyre ansatte med en uges varsel — samt i nogle tilfælde — helt ned til én dags varsel.

Ryan Air benytter sig af selskabet Crewlink, der træner og ansætter personale, som derefter registreres hos Ryan Air. Vil Kommisionen, eftersom Crewlink ikke blot træner Ryan Air-personale, men også ansætter det efterfølgende, tage stilling til, om Crewlink reelt er et vikarbureau?

Kommissionen bedes endvidere, da ansatte hos Ryan Air ofte ikke er direkte ansat af selskabet, men gennem andre konstruktioner, undersøge, om artikel 5 af EU's vikardirektiv (2008/104/EF), om, at vikaransatte skal behandles på lige fod med brugervirksomhedens fastansatte, er respekteret i Ryanairs tilfælde?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(12. juni 2013)

Spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt Crewlink kan anses for at være et vikarbureau, henhører først og fremmest under national lovgivning, som skal anvende den definition af et vikarbureau, der er fastsat i artikel 3, stk. 1, litra b), i direktiv 2008/104/EF om vikararbejde.

Direktivet om vikararbejde forbedrer kvaliteten af vikararbejde og beskyttelsen af de vikaransatte, navnlig ved at sikre, at vikarbureauer og brugervirksomheder behandler de vikaransatte efter de samme væsentlige arbejds- og ansættelsesvilkår (jf. artikel 3, stk. 1, litra f)), som gælder for arbejdstagere, der er ansat direkte af brugervirksomheden til udførelse af det samme arbejde. Under overholdelse af strenge betingelser og efter høring af arbejdsmarkedets parter kan visse bestemmelser i medlemsstaterne dog fravige princippet om ligebehandling.

Medlemsstaternes nationale myndigheder er ansvarlige for håndhævelsen af direktiv 2008/104/EF. Spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt princippet om ligebehandling overholdes af enkeltvirksomheder, henhører først og fremmest under myndighedernes ansvar i de enkelte medlemsstater. Vikaransatte, som mener, at princippet om ligebehandling ikke overholdes af en konkret virksomhed, kan rette henvendelse til den kompetente domstol.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004131/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Ryanair's use of temporary-work agencies

The Danish media has recently reported (DR.dk, 9 April 2013) that Ryanair is using employment contracts that do not provide holiday pay and allow the airline to lay off their employees with a week's notice, and in some cases even just one day's notice.

Ryanair uses the company Crewlink, which trains and takes on staff who are then registered with Ryanair. Since Crewlink not only trains Ryanair staff but also subsequently employs them, can the Commission state its opinion as to whether Crewlink is actually a temporary-work agency?

As employees with Ryanair are often not employed directly by the company but via other arrangements, could the Commission examine whether Article 5 of the EU Temporary Agency Work Directive (2008/104/EC), stating that temporary agency workers shall be treated on a par with permanent employees of the user undertaking, is being respected in the case of Ryanair?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The issue whether Crewlink is to be considered as a temporary-work agency is primarily regulated by national law, which must comply with the definition of 'temporary-work agency' laid down in Article 3(1)(b) of Directive 2008/104/EC on temporary agency work.

The directive on temporary agency work improves the quality of temporary agency work and the protection of the workers concerned, in particular by ensuring that with respect to the basic working and employment conditions (cf. Article 3(1)(f)), the temporary-work agency and the user undertaking treat them in the same way as workers recruited directly by the latter to perform the same job. However, under strict conditions and after consultation of the social partners certain provisions applicable in the Member States may derogate from the principle of equal treatment.

National authorities of the Member States are in charge of the enforcement of Directive 2008/104/EC. The question on whether the principle of equal treatment is being respected by individual companies primarily falls within MS authorities' responsability. Temporary agency workers can submit their claim to the competent tribunal if they are of the opinion that the principle of equal treatment is not being respected by a specific company.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004132/13
an die Kommission
Othmar Karas (PPE)
(12. April 2013)

Betrifft: Potenzielle Umgehung des EU-Beihilfenrechts im Kontext der Liquidierung der Irish Bank Resolution Corporation (IBRC)

Die IBRC, vormals Anglo Irish, befand sich zu 100 % in irischem Staatseigentum. Zur Rettung der Anglo Irish hatte die irische Regierung der Bank finanzielle Hilfe in Form von Schuldscheinen zur Verfügung gestellt, die die Bank wiederum als Sicherheiten verwendete, um auf Notfall-Liquidität der irischen Staatsbank zuzugreifen, welche sich ihrerseits Geld von der Europäischen Zentralbank (EZB) geliehen hatte. Um den Druck der hohen Zinsen zu erleichtern, war die irische Regierung seit längerem im Gespräch mit der EZB. Am 6.02.2013 entschied Irland im Rahmen eines Eilverfahrens einseitig, die IBRC zu liquidieren und in Folge dessen die Schuldscheine in Höhe von 20 Mrd. EUR in langfristige Staatsanleihen mit einer durchschnittlichen Laufzeit von 34 Jahren umzuwandeln, deren Rückzahlung erst zwischen 2038 und 2053 erfolgt; außerdem wird der Zinssatz für den dem Land im November 2010 zur Verhinderung des Staatsbankrotts gewährten Kredit von damals 5,8 % auf nunmehr jährlich 3 % gesenkt. In einer ersten Reaktion hat der Präsident der EZB, Mario Draghi, die einstimmige Kenntnisnahme dieses Vorganges durch den EZB-Rat bestätigt.

Während irische Regierungsmitglieder diesen „Deal" als eine Einsparung von 20 Mrd. EUR Kreditrückzahlungen für das Land und daher einen wichtigen Schritt zur schnelleren Rückkehr an die Kapitalmärkte bezeichneten, wurden seitens europäischer und internationaler Experten rasch ernsthafte Bedenken an dem „Deal" laut, darunter auch in Bezug auf eine Umgehung des EU-Beihilfenrechts.

1. Wurde die Kommission in beihilfenrechtlicher Sicht mit dem Fall IBRC und dem sogenannten „Deal" befasst, oder hat die Kommission von sich aus eine Prüfung des Falls IBRC eingeleitet?

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission den IBRC „Deal" aus beihilfenrechtlicher Sicht? Stellt das Vorgehen aus Sicht der Kommission eine Umgehung der europäischen Verfahren zu staatlichen Beihilfen dar?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2013)

Die Abwicklung der Irish Bank Resolution Corporation (IBRC) war ein wichtiger Schritt im Zuge der Umstrukturierung des irischen Finanzsektors und hat die Nachhaltigkeit des gut funktionierenden irischen Programms gestärkt.

Die Liquidation der IBRC erfolgte nach irischem Recht auf Initiative der irischen Behörden. Im Zusammenhang mit dem damals laufenden beihilferechtlichen Prüfverfahren übermittelten die irischen Behörden den Kommissionsdienststellen detaillierte Informationen über die Liquidation. Diese Informationen gaben keinen Anlass zu beihilferechtlichen Bedenken der EU im Zusammenhang mit dieser Maßnahme. Somit bestand für die Kommissionsdienststellen keine Veranlassung, die Abwicklung der IBRC weiter zu untersuchen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004132/13
to the Commission
Othmar Karas (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Potential circumvention of EU State aid rules in connection with the liquidation of the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation (IBRC)

The IRBC, which was formerly the Anglo Irish Bank, was wholly owned by the Irish State. In order to rescue the Anglo Irish Bank, the Irish Government granted it financial assistance in the form of promissory notes, which the bank then used as securities to access the emergency liquidity of the Central Bank of Ireland, which in turn had borrowed money from the European Central Bank (ECB). The Irish Government had been in talks with the ECB for some time with a view to easing the pressure of high interest rates. On 6 February 2013, Ireland took a unilateral urgent decision to liquidate the IBRC, and as a result to convert the promissory notes worth EUR 20 billion into long-term government bonds to be repaid between 2038 and 2053, with an average maturity of 34 years. The interest rate for the loan granted in November 2010 to prevent the country going bankrupt has also been reduced from the previous 5.8% to an annual rate of 3%. In an initial response, the ECB President Mario Draghi confirmed that the ECB Governing Council had unanimously acknowledged these events.

Although members of the Irish Government are describing this 'deal' as a way for the country to save EUR 20 billion in loan repayments, and thus as a key step in returning more rapidly to capital markets, it did not take long for European and international experts to voice serious doubts about the 'deal', for example that it may circumvent EU State aid rules.

1. Was the Commission involved in any way with the IRBC case and the 'deal' from the point of view of state aid rules, or has the Commission itself initiated a review of the IRBC case?

2. What is the Commission's opinion of the IBRC 'deal' in the context of state aid rules? Does the Commission believe that these events represent a circumvention of European state aid procedures?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The resolution of the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation (IBRC) was an important step in the restructuring of the Irish financial sector and has significantly reinforced the sustainability of the well-performing Irish programme.

The liquidation of IBRC was carried out under Irish national law, at the initiative of the Irish authorities. In the context of the then ongoing state aid monitoring procedure, the Irish authorities provided information to the Commission services on the technicalities of the liquidation. Based on this information, there was no indication of EU State aid concerns arising from this operation. Consequently, the Commission services had no reason to further investigate the liquidation of IBRC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004133/13
to the Commission
Arlene McCarthy (S&D)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Payday loans

Over the past five years, the UK payday loan industry has seen rapid growth, with a 20% increase in the number of loan companies opening in the past year alone. Payday loans are defined as a type of short-term borrowing where an individual borrows a small amount at a very high rate of interest. The borrower typically writes a post-dated personal cheque for the amount they wish to borrow plus a fee in exchange for cash. The lender holds on to the cheque and cashes it on the date agreed, usually the borrower's next payday. These loans are also called cash advance loans or cheque advance loans. There are concerns from consumer groups that some payday loan companies are charging extortionate interest rates of up to 1000%. This has a particularly negative effect on vulnerable, lower-income citizens who, because of the crisis, have ever-shrinking household budgets and need access to short-term funding at any cost.

Does this practice contravene the Consumer Credit Directive and, in particular, consumer protection as established in EC law?

Is the Commission aware of the emergence of similar schemes in other Member States, given the difficulty in accessing personal loans and the limitations on personal credit facilities resulting from the financial crisis?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

Payday loans involving a total amount of credit between EUR 200 and EUR 75 000 fall within the scope of the Consumer Credit Directive (CCD) ([1]). The providers of those loans have to clearly indicate, in advertisements, in pre-contractual information and in the contract itself, the obligatory information including the Annual Percentage Rate of charge (APR). This information should be correct and clear enabling the borrower to take an informed choice. The CCD also obliges the creditor to carry out a creditworthiness assessment before granting the loan.

The Commission is currently carrying out a study on consumer credit markets which is also looking into the short term loans issue, where they fall within the CCD. The study will be completed in mid-2013.

The Commission is aware of the steps taken recently by the UK's Office of Fair Trading to improve the functioning of payday loans market ([2]) and will monitor it closely.

The Commission is not currently considering introducing rules at Union level to limit the price of credit contracts.

There is other EU legislation which protects consumers against the practices of rogue traders, including in the area of financial services. The Unfair Contract Terms Directive ([3]) provides that a contract term causing a significant imbalance between the parties to the detriment of the consumer shall be regarded as unfair and as such shall not be binding, The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([4]) requires traders to inform consumers in advertising and other invitations to purchase about the total cost of a financial service also in situations where the CCD does not apply.

Any alleged breach of EU legislation should be brought to the attention of national authorities and courts.

([1]) Directive 2008/48/EC, OJ L 133, 22.5.2008, p. 66.
([2]) http://www.oft.gov.uk/news-and-updates/press/2013/20-13
([3]) Directive 93/13/EEC, OJ L 095, 21.4.1993, p. 29.
([4]) Directive 2005/29/EC, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004134/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Decreto interministeriale italiano (atto n. 542) in violazione della direttiva 94/62/CE sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio

Nel febbraio 2012 la Commissione ha avviato una procedura d'infrazione contro l'Italia per una presunta violazione della direttiva 98/34/CE. Nell'ambito della stessa procedura la Commissione ha altresì esaminato la potenziale violazione della direttiva 94/62/CE.

L'Italia ha quindi informato la Commissione sul decreto-legge n. 2 del 2012 — convertito dalla legge n. 28 del 2012 il 24 marzo 2012 — finalizzato ad affrontare la commercializzazione dei sacchetti di plastica per l'asporto merci. La Commissione sta esaminando la compatibilità di tale legge con le norme e le politiche dell'UE in materia.

Nel febbraio 2013 il governo italiano ha trasmesso il decreto interministeriale n. 452 al Senato e alla Camera dei deputati italiani, onde individuare le caratteristiche tecniche dei sacchi per l'asporto merci. Il decreto contiene, tra l'altro, le condizioni per la vendita dei sacchi di plastica non biodegradabile, in quanto vi è il rischio che si creino perturbazioni sul mercato interno. Per poter essere immessi sul mercato interno è necessario che i sacchetti riutilizzabili, realizzati con polimeri non biodegradabili, soddisfino determinati criteri quali lo spessore e il contenuto percentuale di plastica riciclata, mentre non vi sono criteri restrittivi per i sacchetti monouso biodegradabili e compostabili.

Non vi sono sufficienti informazioni sui sacchetti in bioplastica, né vi sono dati concreti che dimostrino i vantaggi ambientali dei sacchetti biodegradabili rispetto ai sacchetti in polimeri ordinari.

Le norme proposte sembrano altresì sproporzionate e in contrasto con gli obiettivi della direttiva sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio, dato che permettono di frapporre ostacoli alla libera circolazione di merci. Pertanto le restrizioni proposte non sono idonee, e inoltre vengono meno alle loro finalità in termini di conseguimento degli obiettivi della direttiva sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio.

1. Potrebbe la Commissione confermare se ha adottato una decisione definitiva sulla procedura d'infrazione? Sta esaminando, nell'ambito della stessa procedura, il nuovo decreto interministeriale (atto n. 452) concernente l'individuazione delle caratteristiche tecniche dei sacchi per l'asporto merci?

2. È a conoscenza degli argomenti riguardanti le plastiche biodegradabili?

3. Intende provvedere affinché il decreto non ostacoli la libera immissione sul mercato di merci? Intende altresì affrontare con il governo italiano i contenziosi citati?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

1. La Commissione non ha ancora adottato una decisione definitiva sulla procedura d'infrazione 2011/4030, nell'ambito della quale sta vagliando le informazioni trasmesse dall'Italia per stabilire se la normativa italiana applicabile è compatibile con la legislazione dell'UE in materia.

2. La Commissione è a conoscenza degli argomenti riguardanti le plastiche biodegradabili e rimanda l'onorevole deputato alle risposte da essa date alle interrogazioni scritte E-4217/2011 ([1]) e P-5840/2011 ([2]).

Nel 2011, su richiesta della Commissione, è stato realizzato uno studio sull'argomento: *Plastic Waste in the Environment* ([3]). Al momento è in corso una consultazione pubblica lanciata dalla Commissione sulla base del Libro verde, pubblicato a marzo 2013, dal titolo *Una strategia europea per i rifiuti di plastica nell'ambiente* ([4]), che affronta il problema dei rifiuti di plastica nell'ambiente sotto tutti gli aspetti, ivi comprese le plastiche biodegradabili. L'esito della consultazione sarà tenuto in considerazione in sede di revisione della legislazione sui rifiuti.

([1]) GU C 314 E del 27.10.2011.
([2]) GU C 365 E del 15.12.2011.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/studies/pdf/plastics.pdf
([4]) COM(2013)123 final.

3. Nel marzo 2013 le autorità italiane, a norma della direttiva 98/34/CE ([5]) che prevede una procedura d'informazione nel settore delle norme e delle regolamentazioni tecniche, hanno notificato alla Commissione il decreto interministeriale (atto n. 542), che è attualmente in esame. In base alla procedura prevista dalla suddetta direttiva, la Commissione valuterà se il progetto di misura costituisca una restrizione alla libera circolazione delle merci oppure una misura avente effetto equivalente, per poi formulare un parere sul progetto di decreto notificato.

([5]) GU L 204 del 21.7.1998, pagg. 37-48.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004134/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Italian draft interdepartmental decree (Act No 542) in violation of Directive 94/62/EC on Packaging and Packaging Waste

In February 2012 the Commission launched an infringement procedure against Italy for a presumed violation of Directive 98/34/EC. As part of the same procedure, the Commission also assessed a potential violation of Directive 94/62/EC.

Since then, Italy has informed the Commission of its Decree-Law No 2/2012 — which became Law No 28/2012 on 24 March 2012 — aimed at addressing the marketing of plastic carrier bags. The Commission is examining the compatibility of this law with EU norms and policies relative to the sector.

In February 2013 the Italian Government transmitted Act No 452, an interdepartmental decree, to the Italian Senate and Chamber of Deputies, aiming to identify the technical specifications of carrier bags. The decree contains, among other things, conditions for the sale of non-biodegradable plastic bags that could potentially cause disturbances to the internal market. While reusable bags made of non-biodegradable polymers would have to fulfil certain criteria regarding thickness and percentage composition of recycled plastic to be allowed to enter the market, there are no restricting criteria imposed upon biodegradable and compostable disposable bags.

There is a lack of information on bio-plastic bags and concrete data demonstrating the environmental advantages of biodegradable bags regular polymers bags is also lacking.

In addition, the rules proposed appear to be disproportionate and in breach of the aims of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive, given that they allow for obstacles to the free movement of goods. Therefore, the proposed restrictions are both unsuitable, and also lacking in their reach in terms of achieving the aims of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive.

1. Could the Commission confirm whether it has reached a final decision on the infringement procedure? As part of the same procedure, is the Commission analysing the new interdepartmental decree (Act No 452) aimed at identifying the technical specifications of carrier bags?

2. Is the Commission aware of the arguments surrounding biodegradable plastics?

3. Will the Commission ensure that the decree does not impede the freedom to place goods on the market? Also, does the Commission intend to address the abovementioned contentious matters with the Italian Government?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

1. The Commission has not yet taken a final decision on infringement procedure 2011/4030. In the framework of this procedure, the Commission is currently assessing the information from Italy to establish whether the applicable Italian legislation is compatible with EU legislation in this sector.

2. The Commission is indeed aware of the arguments surrounding biodegradable plastics. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Questions E-4217/2011 ([1]) and P-5840/2011 ([2]).

A study was carried out in 2011 on behalf of the Commission on the issue of 'Plastic Waste in the Environment' ([3]). At present, the Commission is undertaking a public consultation on the basis of its Green Paper of March 2013 on 'a European Strategy on Plastic Waste in the Environment' ([4]), addressing plastic waste in the environment in all aspects, including the issue of biodegradable plastics. The response to the Green Paper will feed into wider review of waste legislation.

([1]) OJ C 314 E, 27.10.2011.
([2]) OJ C 365 E, 15.12.2011.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/studies/pdf/plastics.pdf
([4]) COM(2013) 123 final.

3. On March 2013 the interdepartmental Decree, Act No 542 was notified by the Italian authorities to the Commission under Directive 98/34/EC ([5]) laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations. This notification is currently under assessment. According to the procedure set out in this directive it will be examined whether or not the draft measure constitutes a restriction to the free movement of goods or a measure having an equivalent effect and the Commission will produce an opinion on the notified draft decree.

([5]) OJ L 204, 21.7.1998, p. 37-48.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004135/13
to the Commission
Edward McMillan-Scott (ALDE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Ongoing discrimination against foreign language teachers (lettori) in Italy

The Commission is aware of the situation of foreign language teachers (*lettori*) and *collaboratori e esperti linguistici* (CEL) in Italian universities. Despite numerous decisions of the European Court of Justice going back as far as August 1993 (C-259/91, C-331/91, C-332/91) ruling that Italian law in the area contravenes EU rules, the Italian authorities have made no concrete efforts to reform their laws. The introduction of the 'Gelmini reform' in January 2011 further cemented Italy's discrimination against *lettori*, with some having their salaries cut by 60%.

In its answer to Question E-006822/2012, the Commission says that it received a reply from the Italian authorities to its questions about the impact of the 'Gelmini reform' on 29 May 2012, and that 'in the light of the comments received from the Italian Government, the Commission is currently in the process of evaluating the situation of foreign lecturers in Italy in order to establish if the new law as such and/or the administrative practice is violating EC law. Further inquiries might be needed'.

In March 2012, the Parliament adopted a report entitled 'EU citizenship report 2010: dismantling the obstacles to EU citizens' rights', which 'calls on the Commission to investigate further the current so-called "Gelmini reform"'. There is also a petition open in Parliament's Committee on Petitions in relation to this matter.

Considering the above, and the extraordinarily long delay in finding a resolution (nearly a year has passed since the Italian authorities sent their replies to the Commission), this issue must be treated as urgent by the Commission.

1. Will the Commission reveal its conclusions?

2. Have additional inquiries been made?

3. If the Commission agrees that EC law is still being contravened, will it begin infringement proceedings against Italy without further unnecessary delay?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The Commission would invite the Honourable Member to refer to the answer to Written Question E-000936/2013.

On 27.5.2013 the Commission requested further clarifications from the Italian authorities in the framework of EU Pilot concerning Law No 240 of 30 December 2010. After analysis of the reply (the target date for the Italian authorities being the 25 June 2013), the Commission will decide whether and what further steps to take.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004136/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Amendments to the proposed tobacco directive tabled by the Commission

Would the Commission acknowledge that amendments 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 27, 30, 39, 41, 42, 43, 48, and 51 to the proposal for a directive of the Parliament and the Council on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products have all been tabled by the Commission?

Would the Commission also care to comment on suggestions that these amendments are beneficial to the tobacco and chemical industries in their campaign against electronic cigarettes?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission has not tabled amendments to its proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive. ([1])

The Commission has no final position as regards any of the amendments tabled so far.

([1]) COM(2012) 0788.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004137/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Thyroid conditions

Could the Commission outline its actions aimed at helping those affected by thyroid conditions across the EU?

Is there a dedicated programme to aid research into thyroid conditions?

Which Member States show best practice in the treatment of thyroid conditions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of diseases of the thyroid and those related to the regulation of the release of thyroid hormones.

The Commission is however not aware of the specific situation regarding thyroid treatment in individual Member States, as the delivery of healthcare and the implementation of good practice in healthcare systems are the responsibility of Member States.

Research on thyroid diseases has been financed within the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development 2007-2013. Through its various programmes, the framework Programme is currently supporting seven research projects representing over EUR 14 million of EU contribution in this area, where the major part of these funds is devoted to collaborative research across EU countries. The areas of research covered by the supported projects range from diagnosis and genetic analysis of congenital hypothyroidism, to the analysis of thyroid cancer development (CTB ([1]), THYROIDANTIOXIDANT ([2])), as well as the treatment of thyroid hormone deficiency (TRUST ([3])).

([1]) The Chernobyl tissue bank coordinating international research on radiation induced thyroid cancer, http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/211712
([2]) Role of the Keap1/Nrf2 antioxidant response system in thyroid gland homeostasis and thyroid cancer, http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/268266
([3]) Multi-modal effects of thyroid hormone replacement for untreated older adults with subclinical hypothyroidism; a randomised placebo-controlled trial, http://www.trustthyroidtrial.com/

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-004138/13
до Комисията
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE), Jörg Leichtfried (S&D), Paul Rübig (PPE) и Andrey Kovatchev (PPE)
(12 април 2013 г.)

Относно: Освобождавания във връзка с проекта за Трансадриатически газопровод (TAP)

На 6, 9 и 15 март 2013 г. италианските и гръцките регулаторни органи предоставиха освобождавания във връзка с проекта за Трансадриатически газопровод съгласно Директива 2009/73/ЕО за природния газ.

Във връзка с тези освобождавания бяха отбелязани следните аспекти:

— Директивата за природния газ предвижда извършването на обвързваща пазарна проверка като предварително условие за предоставянето на освобождаване. Резултатите от евентуална подобна пазарна проверка в Италия не са известни.

— Трансадриатическият газопровод, изглежда, не отговаря на определението за междусистемен газопровод по смисъла на Директивата за природния газ, тъй като предложеният газопровод няма да пресича границата между две държави членки.

— Спорно е дали Трансадриатическият газопровод осигурява „укрепване на конкуренцията и сигурността на доставките“, както е предвидено в Директивата за природния газ, при положение че Италия вече представлява доста диверсифициран газов пазар и връзките с други газови пазари все още не съществуват или не са достъпни.

— Максималният срок, за който може да се предоставя освобождаване, е пет години и вече е ясно, че Трансадриатическият газопровод ще започне да функционира най-рано през 2019 г., като дотогава всички предоставени освобождавания вече няма да бъдат валидни.

— За разлика от други проекти, за които се предоставят освобождавания, за съответните молби за освобождавания, подадени във връзка с Трансадриатическия газопровод в Италия и Гърция, има много малко обществено достъпна информация.

Като се имат предвид горепосочените факти:

1. Оценката на Комисията относно решенията на гръцките и италианските регулаторни органи напълно ли отговаря на критериите, установени с Директивата за природния газ, особено по отношение на обвързващата пазарна проверка, продължителността на освобождаването, статута на Трансадриатическия газопровод като междусистемен газопровод, както и пазарните критерии?

2. Комисията счита ли, че решенията на гръцките и италианските регулаторни органи са съобразени с най-добрите практики, както по отношение на прозрачността, така и по отношение на подкрепянето на целта за осигуряване на равнопоставени условия за всички конкуриращи се проекти, за които се предоставят освобождавания?

Отговор, даден от г-н Йотингер от името на Комисията
(5 юни 2013 г.)

Комисията разгледа искането за освобождаване на Трансадриатическия газопровод (TAP) по член 36 от Директива 2009/73 за природния газ, както и аспектите, посочени от уважаемите членове на Европейския парламент. На 16 май 2013 г. тя прие решение по този въпрос, което ще бъде публикувано на нейния уебсайт през следващите седмици.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004138/13
an die Kommission
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE), Jörg Leichtfried (S&D), Paul Rübig (PPE) und Andrey Kovatchev (PPE)
(12. April 2013)

Betrifft: Ausnahmeregelung für das Projekt Transadriatische Fernleitung (TAP)

Am 6., 9. und 15. März 2013 gewährten die Regulierungsbehörden Italiens und Griechenlands Ausnahmen für das TAP-Projekt gemäß der Richtlinie 2009/73/EG über Erdgas.

In Bezug auf diese Fragen wurden folgende Punkte zur Kenntnis genommen:

— In der Erdgasrichtlinie ist als Voraussetzung für die Gewährung einer Ausnahme die Durchführung eines verbindlichen Markttests vorgesehen. Die Ergebnisse eines solchen Markttests in Italien sind nicht bekannt.

— TAP scheint der Definition einer Verbindungsleitung im Sinne der Erdgasrichtlinie nicht zu entsprechen, da die vorgeschlagene Fernleitung nicht die Grenze zwischen zwei Mitgliedstaaten überqueren würde.

— Es ist fraglich, ob die TAP-Fernleitung, wie in der Erdgasrichtlinie vorgesehen, den „Wettbewerb in der Stromversorgung verbessert", da es in Italien bereist einen recht diversifizierten Gasmarkt gibt und Verbindungen zu anderen Gasmärkten bislang nicht bestehen oder nicht verfügbar sind.

— Der maximale Zeitraum, für den eine Ausnahme bewilligt werden kann, beträgt fünf Jahre, und bereits jetzt ist klar, dass die TAP-Fernleitung frühestens 2019 in Betrieb genommen werden wird, also zu einem Zeitpunkt, an dem eine bewilligte Ausnahme bereits nicht mehr gültig sein wird.

— Im Gegensatz zu anderen Projekten, für die Ausnahmen gelten, wurden zu den jeweiligen Ausnahmeanträgen für TAP in Italien und Griechenland sehr wenige Informationen öffentlich zugänglich gemacht.

Vor diesem Hintergrund wird die Kommission gebeten, folgende Fragen zu beantworten:

1. Stimmt die Bewertung der Kommission zu den Entscheidungen der Regulierungsbehörden Griechenlands und Italiens vollständig mit den in der Erdgasrichtlinie festgelegten Kriterien überein, insbesondere im Hinblick auf den verbindlichen Markttest, die Dauer der Ausnahme, den Status der TAP-Fernleitung als Verbindungsleitung und die Marktkriterien?

2. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass die Entscheidungen der Regulierungsbehörden Griechenlands und Italiens den bewährten Verfahren entsprechen, sowohl hinsichtlich der Transparenz als auch im Hinblick auf die Unterstützung des Ziels, gleiche Wettbewerbsbedingungen für alle am Wettbewerb beteiligten Projekte zu schaffen, für die Ausnahmen gelten?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission hat den Antrag auf Gewährung einer Ausnahme für die TAP (Transadriatische Fernleitung) gemäß Artikel 36 der Richtlinie 2009/73 über gemeinsame Vorschriften für den Erdgasbinnenmarkt geprüft, einschließlich der von den Herren Abgeordneten erwähnten Aspekte. In dieser Angelegenheit hat sie am 16. Mai 2013 einen Beschluss erlassen, der in den kommenden Wochen auf der Website der Kommission veröffentlicht werden wird.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004138/13
adresată Comisiei
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE), Jörg Leichtfried (S&D), Paul Rübig (PPE) şi Andrey Kovatchev (PPE)
(12 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Derogări în cazul proiectului de gazoduct transadriatic (TAP)

La 6, 9 și 15 martie 2013, autoritățile de reglementare italiene și grecești au emis derogări pentru proiectul TAP, elaborat în temeiul Directivei 2009/73/CE privind gazele naturale.

Aceste derogări au făcut obiectul următoarelor constatări:

— Directiva privind gazele naturale prevede condiționarea acordării unei derogări de realizarea în prealabil a unui test de piață obligatoriu. Nu se cunosc rezultatele unui astfel de test realizat în Italia.

— Proiectul TAP nu pare să respecte definiția unei conducte de interconexiune în sensul Directivei privind gazele naturale, deoarece conducta propusă nu traversează granița dintre două state membre.

— Nu este evident faptul că TAP consolidează concurența și siguranța alimentării, astfel cum se prevede în Directiva privind gazele naturale, având în vedere că Italia reprezintă deja o piață a gazelor destul de diversificată și că conexiunile cu alte piețe ale gazelor sunt deocamdată fie inexistente, fie nedisponibile.

— Durata maximă pentru care poate fi acordată o derogare este de cinci ani și, având în vedere faptul că, în mod evident, gazoductul TAP nu va fi operațional înainte de 2019, orice derogare acordată acum va expira până la acea dată.

— Spre deosebire de alte proiecte cărora li s-au aplicat derogări, foarte puține informații au fost făcute publice în ceea ce privește cererile de derogare relevante făcute de TAP în Italia și Grecia.

Ținând seama de cele menționate mai sus:

1. respectă pe deplin evaluarea Comisiei privind deciziile autorităților de reglementare grecești și italiene criteriile stabilite de Directiva privind gazele naturale, în special referitoare la testul de piață obligatoriu, durata derogării, statutul TAP de conductă de interconexiune, precum și criteriile de piață?

2. consideră Comisia că deciziile autorităților de reglementare grecești și italiene respectă măsurile referitoare la cele mai bune practici, din punct de vedere atât al transparenței, cât și al sprijinirii obiectivului de asigurare a unor condiții egale pentru toate proiectele concurente cărora li se aplică derogări?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(5 iunie 2013)

Comisia a evaluat cererea de derogare pentru gazoductul TAP în temeiul articolului 36 din Directiva 2009/73/CE privind gazele naturale, inclusiv elementele aduse în discuție de distinșii membri ai Parlamentului European. La 16 mai 2013, Comisia a adoptat o decizie în acest caz. Decizia va fi publicată pe site-ul Comisiei în următoarele săptămâni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004138/13
to the Commission
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE), Jörg Leichtfried (S&D), Paul Rübig (PPE) and Andrey Kovatchev (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Exemption for the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) project

On 6, 9 and 15 March 2013, the Italian and Greek regulatory authorities issued exemptions for the TAP project under Directive 2009/73/EC on natural gas.

In reference to these exemptions, the following points have been noted:

— The Natural Gas Directive foresees the carrying-out of a binding market test as a prerequisite for the granting of an exemption. The results of any such market test in Italy are unknown.

— TAP does not appear to fulfil the definition of an interconnector in the sense of the Natural Gas Directive, as the proposed pipeline would not cross the border between two Member States.

— It is questionable whether TAP provides for 'enhancement of competition and security of supply', as foreseen in the Natural Gas Directive, given that Italy already represents quite a diversified gas market and connections to other gas markets are as yet non-existent or unavailable.

— The maximum period of time for which an exemption can be granted is five years, and it is already clear that the TAP pipeline will not be operational until 2019 at the earliest, by which time any exemption granted now will have expired.

— In contrast to other projects holding exemptions, very little information has been made publicly available regarding the relevant exemption applications made by TAP in Italy and Greece.

Taking the above facts into consideration:

1. Is the assessment of the Commission on the decisions of the Greek and Italian regulatory authorities fully compliant with the criteria established by the Natural Gas Directive, particularly with regard to the binding market test, the duration of the exemption, the status of the TAP pipeline as an interconnector, as well as market criteria?

2. Does the Commission believe that the decisions of the Greek and Italian regulatory authorities comply with best practice measures, both in terms of transparency and in supporting the aim of providing a level playing field for all competing projects which hold exemptions?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2013)

The Commission has assessed the request for an exemption for the TAP pipeline under Article 36 of Directive 2009/73 on natural gas, including the elements raised by the Honourable MEPs. It adopted a decision in this case on 16 May 2013. The decision will be published on the Commission's website in the coming weeks.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004139/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(12 avril 2013)

Objet: Gel de quotas dans le cadre de la révision de la directive «ETS»

La Commission a proposé une révision formelle du calendrier visant à reporter la mise aux enchères de 900 millions de quotas d'émission, qui devait marquer le début de la 3e phase de la mise en place de la directive «ETS» en 2014. La Commission souhaite, en effet, suspendre l'attribution de 900 millions de quotas d'émission sur les 2 000 millions existants dans le but d'endiguer la chute du prix du carbone.

La Commission pourrait-elle expliquer pourquoi elle a choisi de suspendre la mise aux enchères de 900 millions de quotas, et non pas d'un nombre moins important, afin de conserver une certaine stabilité du prix du carbone?

Réponse donnée par Mme Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(21 mai 2013)

La Commission a proposé de revoir le calendrier des enchères et de repousser — ou «geler» — la mise aux enchères de 900 millions de quotas d'émissions jusqu'aux dernières années de la troisième période d'échanges (2013-2020) afin de remédier au déséquilibre croissant et en progression rapide entre l'offre et la demande sur le marché, dont les répercussions sont négatives pour les investissements à faible intensité de carbone, et, tout simplement, afin d'éviter de continuer à inonder de quotas un marché déjà saturé. Le gel des quotas devrait permettre d'émettre un signal de prix plus stable et fiable au cours de la période 2013-2020 grâce à une absorption plus progressive de l'excédent.

Dans l'analyse d'impact accompagnant sa proposition ([1]), la Commission a étudié l'incidence du gel de 400 millions, 900 millions et 1,2 milliard de quotas d'émissions. Elle a néanmoins conclu que le gel d'un montant inférieur à 900 millions de quotas ne suffirait pas à rééquilibrer l'offre et la demande au début de la troisième phase, moment où le déséquilibre du marché devrait être le plus prononcé. Il convient de souligner que le gel des quotas vise à empêcher une dégradation de la situation à court terme mais qu'il n'a pas pour finalité de remédier à l'excédent structurel, lequel devrait s'élever, d'après les estimations de la Commission dans son rapport sur le marché du carbone, à environ 2 milliards de quotas durant la majeure partie de la troisième phase, en l'absence de nouvelles mesures.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets/cap/auctioning/docs/20121112_swd_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004139/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Freezing of quotas within the framework of the revision of the ETS Directive

The Commission has proposed a formal revision of the timetable with the aim of postponing the auction of 900 million emissions quotas, which was to mark the beginning of the third implementation phase of the ETS directive in 2014. The Commission wishes, in effect, to suspend the allocation of 900 million emissions quotas on top of the 2 billion in existence with the aim of mitigating the fall in the price of carbon.

Could the Commission explain why it has chosen to suspend the auction of 900 million quotas, and not of a less significant amount, in order to maintain some stability in the price of carbon?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The Commission has proposed to review the auction time profile and to postpone — or 'backload' — the auctioning of 900 million allowances to final years of the third trading period (2013-2020) in order to address a rapidly growing imbalance of supply and demand in the market with adverse effects on low-carbon investment, and, in plain words, to avoid further flooding a market that is already saturated with allowances. Back-loading is expected to deliver a more stable and reliable price signal over the 2013-2020 period through a more gradual absorption of the surplus.

In the impact assessment accompanying the proposal ([1]), the Commission analysed the impact of back-loading 400 million, 900 million and 1.2 billion allowances. It concluded, however, that back-loading an amount lower than 900 million allowances would not sufficiently rebalance the supply and demand early in phase 3, when the market imbalance is actually expected to peak. It should be noted that back-loading is meant to prevent things getting worse in the short term, but is not designed to address the structural surplus which the Commission in its Carbon Market Report estimated in most of phase 3 will be of around 2 billion allowances unless further action is taken.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets/cap/auctioning/docs/20121112_swd_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004140/13
à la Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(12 avril 2013)

Objet: Interdiction des associations de promotion de la pédophilie

La protection des droits de l'enfant, le respect de leurs droits fondamentaux, et plus particulièrement la lutte contre les abus sexuels et l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants, ont été érigés en priorités par les instances européennes. L'avènement des nouveaux moyens de communication, et notamment de l'internet, constitue un défi pour les États membres, qui doivent se doter d'instruments toujours plus efficaces afin d'œuvrer contre la promotion des actes pédophiles.

Des failles existent malgré tout, comme le démontre la décision incompréhensible prise le 4 mai par la justice néerlandaise de lever l'interdiction de l'association pédophile Martijn au nom de la liberté d'expression. Sur son site web, l'association Martijn se décrit comme «*une plate-forme de discussion sur la pédophilie*» qui «*se bat pour l'acceptation sociale et sociétale des relations adulte-enfant*», et estime que «*dans les relations consenties entre enfants et adultes, la possibilité d'une intimité physique ne devrait pas poser problème*». Cette décision plus que scandaleuse est en totale contradiction avec la convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la protection des enfants, adoptée à Lanzarote et ratifiée par les Pays-Bas en 2007. En vertu de ce texte, les associations de promotion de la pédophilie devraient être interdites partout en Europe.

Dans ce contexte, la Commission envisage-t-elle de renforcer d'urgence le cadre juridique européen afin de permettre la dissolution pure et simple de ce type d'association, sans autoriser que le principe de liberté d'expression soit utilisé comme alibi?

Par ailleurs, que compte-t-elle faire dans le cas particulier de l'association Martijn?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(14 juin 2013)

Bien qu'elle ne puisse intervenir dans des domaines qui restent de la compétence des autorités des États membres, telles que les décisions individuelles visant à dissoudre des organisations, la Commission est déterminée à protéger les enfants contre les abus sexuels et l'exploitation sexuelle. C'est la raison pour laquelle elle a présenté une proposition de directive relative à la lutte contre les abus sexuels et l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants et la pornographie enfantine ([1]), qui a été adoptée par le Parlement européen et le Conseil en décembre 2011 et devrait être mise en œuvre dans les États membres en décembre 2013 au plus tard. Elle établit le rapprochement des définitions concernant 20 infractions, définit des niveaux minimaux de sanctions pénales et facilite les rapports, les enquêtes et les poursuites. Des mesures doivent être prises pour retirer le matériel pédopornographique des sites internet sur lesquels il est hébergé et, éventuellement, décider de bloquer l'accès depuis l'UE. Alors que la directive n'aborde pas directement la question des organisations qui encouragent les abus sexuels envers les enfants, elle érige en infractions pénales l'incitation à commettre ces infractions, ainsi que la complicité et la tentative en la matière. Il appartient maintenant aux États membres de mettre en œuvre la directive et de décider, au regard des circonstances particulières dans leur pays, d'introduire ou non une législation nationale prévoyant l'interdiction et/ou la dissolution d'une telle organisation.

Conjointement avec M. Eric Holder, procureur général des États-Unis, l'UE a également créé une Alliance mondiale contre les abus sexuels commis contre des enfants via internet, qui rassemble les ministres de l'intérieur et de la justice du monde entier dans la lutte contre ces crimes odieux.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 13 décembre 2011 relative à la lutte contre les abus sexuels et l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants, ainsi que la pédopornographie et remplaçant la décision-cadre 2004/68/JAI du Conseil, JO L 335 du 17.12.2011, pp. 1-14.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004140/13
to the Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Ban of associations promoting paedophilia

Protecting the rights of the child, respecting their fundamental rights and, more specifically, fighting against sexual abuse and the sexual exploitation of children are priorities for the European authorities. The advent of new means of communication, in particular the Internet, constitutes a challenge for Member States, who must equip themselves with increasingly effective tools in order to fight the promotion of acts of paedophilia.

Flaws do exist, however, as demonstrated by the incomprehensible decision taken on 4 May by the Dutch judiciary to lift the ban on the paedophile association Martijn in the name of freedom of expression. On its website, the Martijn association describes itself as 'a platform for discussion on paedophilia' that 'fights for social and societal acceptance of adult-child relationships', and takes the view that 'in consensual relationships between children and adults, the possibility of physical intimacy should not pose an issue'. This beyond-scandalous decision is in complete contradiction with the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children, adopted in Lanzarote and ratified by the Netherlands in 2007. Pursuant to this document, associations promoting paedophilia should be banned throughout Europe.

In view of the above, does the Commission envisage strengthening the European legal framework as a matter of urgency to enable the pure and simple dissolution of this type of association, without authorising the principle of freedom of expression to be used as an alibi?

Furthermore, what does it intend to do in the specific case of the Martijn association?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

While it cannot intervene in areas that remain within the competence of Member States' authorities, such as individual decisions to dissolve organisations, the Commission is committed to protecting children against child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. That is why the Commission proposed the directive on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography ([1]), which was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in December 2011 and should be implemented in the Member States by December 2013. It approximates the definition of 20 offences, sets minimum levels for criminal penalties, and facilitates reporting, investigation and prosecution. Action shall be taken to remove child pornography from websites where it is hosted and may be taken to block access from the EU. While the directive does not directly address the question of organisations promoting child sexual abuse, it also provides for the criminalisation of incitement and aiding and abetting to commit these crimes. It is now up to the Member States to implement the directive and to decide, in view of the specific circumstances in their State, whether to introduce national legislation providing for the prohibition and/or dissolution of any such organisation.

Jointly with US Attorney General Eric Holder, the EU has also launched a Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online which unites Ministers of the Interior and of Justice from around the world in the fight against these heinous crimes.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA, OJ L 335, 17.12.2011.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004141/13
à la Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(12 avril 2013)

Objet: Lancement d'un second plan d'action européen en matière de santé environnementale

En 2004, de manière très opportune, la Commission lançait son premier «Plan d'action européen 2004-2010 en faveur de l'environnement et de la santé» afin de mieux appréhender l'impact des atteintes à l'environnement sur la santé humaine. Cette initiative fut dans ses grandes lignes soutenue par le Parlement européen via deux résolutions, adoptées respectivement en 2005 et septembre 2008, qui appelaient à la mise en place d'un système de bio-surveillance à l'échelle de l'Union et à l'application du principe de précaution.

Il faut malheureusement constater qu'entre 2008 et 2012, et malgré les demandes répétées du Parlement européen et du Conseil, la Commission européenne semble s'être détournée de toute mise en œuvre effective dudit plan d'action, et donc de sa reconduction. En tant que rapporteure sur ce sujet, il m'apparaît important de faire la lumière sur les raisons de cette inaction communautaire dans le domaine de la santé environnementale.

Comment la Commission justifie-t-elle sa frilosité à toute initiative dans ce domaine? Si ce n'est pas le cas, compte-t-elle mettre en œuvre la stratégie européenne en matière d'environnement et de santé, baptisée SCALE (Science, Children, Awareness, Legal Evaluation), à laquelle le plan d'action devait servir de cadre opérationnel?

Que compte faire la Commission afin d'endiguer l'expansion des quatre maladies retenues comme prioritaires dans le plan d'action: asthme et allergies infantiles, troubles du développement neurologique, cancers, perturbations du système endocrinien? S'agissant de l'origine environnementale de certains types de cancers, la Commission peut-elle préciser si des financements européens ont été alloués pour ce type de recherche dans le cadre de l'actuel septième programme communautaire de recherche et de développement?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à prendre connaissance de sa réponse à la question écrite n° E-008931/2012 ([1]).

La Commission a adopté une proposition de septième programme d'action pour l'environnement ([2]) visant à relever les défis environnementaux auxquels l'Europe est confrontée et fixant notamment comme priorité de protéger les citoyens de l'UE contre les risques pour la santé et le bien-être.

En ce qui concerne les maladies citées dans le plan d'action européen 2004-2010 en faveur de l'environnement et de la santé ([3]), des mesures concertées ont été lancées dans le contexte de la stratégie de l'Union en matière de santé ([4]) à travers un certain nombre d'initiatives financées par le programme d'action de l'UE dans le domaine de la santé ([5]) et le 7e programme-cadre de l'UE pour des actions de recherche et de développement technologique (2007-2013) ([6]): il s'agit du partenariat européen pour la lutte contre le cancer ([7]), de diverses actions relatives aux maladies rares ([8]) et de la recherche sur l'asthme et les allergies infantiles, les troubles du développement neurologique, les cancers et les perturbations du système endocrinien.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012)710 final.
([3]) COM(2004)416 final.
([4]) COM(2007)630.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/.
([7]) COM(2009)291 final.
([8]) COM(2008)679 final et http://ec.europa.eu/health/rare_diseases/policy/

En ce qui concerne plus particulièrement la recherche, plus de 150 millions d'euros ont été alloués à la recherche collaborative contre les maladies dans le domaine des interactions gène-environnement (COGS ([9])), de l'épidémiologie (ECNIS2 ([10])), des mécanismes sous-tendant la carcinogenèse, des marqueurs biologiques pour évaluer et prévoir les risques que représentent les polluants pour la santé (Envirogenomarkers ([11])), des additifs alimentaires, de l'exposition à des rayonnements (Mobi-Kids ([12])), des agents pathogènes et des substances chimiques perturbant le système endocrinien (DEER ([13])) ([14]).

([9]) http://www.cogseu.org/
([10]) http://www.ecnis.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1320&Itemid=185
([11]) http://www.envirogenomarkers.net/
([12]) http://www.mbkds.net/
([13]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/87926_fr.html
([14]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/cowi_study.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004141/13
to the Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Launch of a second European Environment and Health Action Plan

2004 saw the very timely launch of the Commission's first 'European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010', aimed at reaching a better understanding of the impact of environmental pollution on human health. This initiative was broadly supported by Parliament in two resolutions adopted in 2005 and September 2008, which called for a bio-surveillance system at EU level and for adherence to the precautionary principle.

Unfortunately, between 2008 and 2012 the Commission appears to have lost interest in any effective implementation or extension of this Action Plan, in spite of repeated calls from Parliament and the Council. As rapporteur on this subject, I believe it is important to uncover the reasons for this lack of action by the EU in the field of environmental health.

If the Commission is reluctant to take any initiative in this field, what is its justification for this reluctance? If not, is it intending to implement the European environment and health strategy known as SCALE (Science, Children, Awareness, Legal instrument, Evaluation), which was intended to operate within the operational framework of the action plan?

What is the Commission planning to do in order to limit the spread of the four diseases referred to as priorities in the action plan: childhood asthma and allergies, neurodevelopmental disorders, cancer and disruption of the endocrine system? Can the Commission state whether EU funding has been allocated to research into the environmental causes of certain types of cancer under the EU's current Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008931/2012 ([1]).

The Commission has adopted a proposal for a Seventh Environment Action Programme ([2]) to address the environmental challenges Europe is facing, which sets out as a priority safeguarding EU citizens from risks to health and wellbeing.

Concerted efforts related to the diseases identified in the European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010 ([3]) are being taken forward, in the context of the EU Health Strategy ([4]) through a number of initiatives funded by the EU Health Programme ([5]) and the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007- 2013) ([6]): the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer ([7]), various policy initiatives on rare diseases ([8]), research on childhood asthma and allergies, neurodevelopmental disorders, cancer and disruption of the endocrine system.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012) 710 final.
([3]) COM(2004) 416 final.
([4]) COM(2007) 630.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/
([7]) COM(2009) 291 final.
([8]) COM(2008) 679 final and http://ec.europa.eu/health/rare_diseases/policy/

In particular, as regards Research, More than EUR 150 million has been devoted to the support of collaborative disease research on gene-environment interactions (COGS ([9])), epidemiology (ECNIS2 ([10])), mechanisms underlying carcinogenesis, risk assessment biomarkers predictive of health risks posed by pollutants (ENVIROGENOMARKERS ([11])), food additives, radiation (MOBI-KIDS ([12])), pathogens and endocrine disrupting chemicals (DEER ([13])) ([14]).

([9]) http://www.cogseu.org/
([10]) http://www.ecnis.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1320&Itemid=185
([11]) http://www.envirogenomarkers.net/
([12]) http://www.mbkds.net/
([13]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/87926_en.html
([14]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/cowi_study.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004142/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Patto di stabilità e crescita: misure qualitative della spesa per investimenti pubblici produttivi — introduzione della golden rule

Durante il Consiglio europeo di marzo è stato chiesto alla Commissione europea di portare avanti un risanamento di bilancio differenziato e favorevole alla crescita, al fine di accelerare gli sforzi a sostegno dell'occupazione, della coesione sociale e per stimolare la domanda interna.

Tra le diverse misure oggetto di discussione a livello europeo, merita particolare approfondimento la possibilità di introdurre un'analisi qualitativa delle spese da parte delle amministrazioni nazionali e locali, al fine di conciliare la necessità di investimenti pubblici produttivi con gli obiettivi della disciplina di bilancio.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione comunicare:

— quali misure intende adottare, nell'ambito dei fattori di calcolo del Patto di stabilità e crescita, utili per stimolare crescita e occupazione, in particolare per quegli Stati che rispettano il vincolo del 3 %;

— se intende procedere a una valutazione degli aspetti qualitativi della spesa pubblica, anche attraverso l'introduzione di una golden rule che escluda in tutto o in parte, ai fini del computo del deficit, quelle azioni di politica economica in grado di promuovere investimenti per la crescita e di pubblica utilità;

— se intende attivare una task force/cabina di regia e definire una tabella di marcia che assieme ai governi e agli enti locali (regioni e comuni) possa definire regole condivise europee in materia di opere e investimenti pubblici relativamente ai calcoli e ai criteri relativi ai patti di stabilità, al fine di liberare risorse preziose per il tessuto economico e sociale;

— un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(17 maggio 2013)

Il Consiglio ECOFIN del 5 marzo 2013 ha adottato conclusioni sulla qualità della spesa pubblica sottolineando il ruolo del dialogo e delle valutazioni inter pares tra gli Stati membri nella ricerca dei modi con cui aumentarne l'efficienza e la capacità di creare un ambiente favorevole alla crescita, anche attraverso l'adozione di pratiche di gestione pubblica basate sui risultati. Per quanto riguarda l'esigenza di tener conto delle necessità di investimenti pubblici nel Patto di stabilità e crescita (PSC) e nella particolare attenzione che esso riserva a finanze pubbliche sane, riconosciuta nel piano per un'UEM autentica e approfondita e nelle recenti conclusioni del Consiglio europeo, occorre innanzitutto ricordare che il PSC contiene disposizioni che consentono una certa flessibilità per tener conto della spesa per investimenti. Ciò è riscontrabile in particolar modo nel parametro di riferimento per la spesa recentemente introdotto e nella considerazione dei «fattori significativi» ai fini della decisione di avviare una procedura per disavanzi eccessivi nei confronti di uno Stato membro.

Inoltre, la Commissione sta attualmente esaminando le modalità per tener conto delle spese specifiche per investimenti nell'ambito del braccio preventivo del PSC (da applicare agli Stati membri che rispettano il limite del disavanzo del 3 % e il parametro di riferimento per la riduzione del debito), con conseguente scostamento temporaneo dall'obiettivo di medio termine (OMT) relativo al saldo strutturale o dal percorso di avvicinamento a tale obiettivo, pur nel rispetto del termine stabilito per il suo raggiungimento. Tuttavia, per una serie di motivi, non è prevista l'introduzione di una «*golden rule*» che escluda sistematicamente la spesa per investimenti dal relativo dato sul disavanzo.

(Si veda la relazione della Commissione dal titolo «La qualità della spesa pubblica nell'UE», dicembre 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp125_en.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004142/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Stability and Growth Pact: qualitative measures for productive public investment expenditure — introduction of the golden rule

During the European Council of March, the European Commission was asked to pursue a differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation in order to speed up efforts to support employment and social cohesion and stimulate internal demand.

Among the various measures being discussed at European level, the possibility of introducing a qualitative analysis of expenditure by national and local administrations, in order to reconcile the need for productive public investment with the objectives of budgetary discipline, deserves closer examination.

Can the Commission:

— specify what measures it intends to adopt, in the context of the Stability and Growth Pact calculation factors, in order to stimulate growth and employment, in particular in those States that respect the 3% limit;

— state whether it intends to evaluate the qualitative aspects of public expenditure, including through the introduction of a golden rule which, for the purpose of calculating the deficit, excludes some or all of the economic policy measures taken to promote investment for growth and public benefit;

— state whether it intends to set up a task force/'control room' and define a roadmap which, together with governments and local authorities (regional and municipal), lays down common European rules on Stability Pact calculations and criteria in the field of public works and investment, in order to free up precious resources for the economic and social fabric;

— provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Ecofin Council of 5 March 2013 has adopted conclusions on quality of public expenditure underlining the role of dialogue and peer-review among Member States on ways to increase its growth-friendliness and efficiency, including through the adoption of performance-based practices of public management. Concerning the need to accommodate public investment needs within the Stability and Growth Pact and its focus on sound public finance, which is recognised in the Blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU and in recent conclusions of the European Council, it should be recalled that, firstly, the SGP contains provisions which allow some flexibility to take into account investment expenditure, particularly in the recently introduced expenditure benchmark and in the consideration of 'relevant factors' when deciding to place a Member State in Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP).

Furthermore, the Commission is exploring ways to accommodate specific investment expenditures in the preventive arm of the SGP (i.e. applying to Member States respecting the 3% deficit limit and the debt reduction benchmark), leading to temporary deviations from the Medium-Term Objective (MTO) for the structural balance or from the adjustment path towards it — while maintaining the deadline for its achievement. However, a 'Golden rule' systematically subtracting all investment expenditure from the relevant deficit figure is not envisaged for a number of reasons (see Commission Report 'The quality of public expenditure in the EU', December 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp125_en.pdf).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004143/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Lavori di sistemazione idraulica del fiume Timonchio e possibile inosservanza della direttiva 2003/4/CE sull'accesso all'informazione in materia ambientale

A seguito dell'esecuzione di alcuni lavori di sistemazione idraulica avvenuti nel 2007 lungo il fiume Timonchio nel comune di Caldogno, in provincia di Vicenza, il sottoscritto a partire dal mese di gennaio dell'anno 2012 ha presentato plurime richieste di accesso agli atti, ai sensi della direttiva 2003/4/CE, al Genio Civile di Vicenza ([1]) per ottenere alcune informazioni in materia ambientale.

Le richieste di informazioni alla suddetta amministrazione pubblica erano volte a conoscere come venivano applicate le direttive 2000/60/CE ([2]) e 2007/60/CE ([3]) nella provincia di Vicenza, con particolare riferimento al caso dei lavori di sistemazione idraulica suddetti, soprattutto in considerazione degli eventi di piena che avevano interessato quella zona nel 2010 e che, nonostante la sistemazione idraulica, avevano avuto effetti devastanti sul territorio e sull'ambiente, causando danni ingenti.

Le richieste di accesso all'informativa ambientale formulate erano volte, da una parte, a ottenere copia dei progetti di sistemazione idraulica sopra citati, dall'altra, a ottenere copia della documentazione contabile relativa alla spesa effettivamente sostenuta per la realizzazione dei lavori.

Sennonché l'ente pubblico competente ha fornito solo in parte quanto richiesto, ritenendo infatti di non dover fornire alcuna documentazione contabile relativa all'esecuzione degli interventi idraulici, in quanto richiesta non motivata.

Ebbene, l'accesso all'informativa ambientale, così come stabilito in primis dalla direttiva 2003/4/CE, non solo prescinde dall'esistenza e dalla verifica di qualsiasi posizione di interesse qualificato in capo al richiedente, ma garantisce il pieno accesso all'informazione detenuta dalla pubblica autorità, prevedendo in modo specifico i casi di esclusione. Di certo, la richiesta formulata e negata non è annoverabile in alcun caso di esclusione.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, non ritiene la Commissione che, considerata la preminente finalità di permettere un controllo trasparente e democratico dei cittadini sull'operato pubblico, il rifiuto delle competenti autorità italiane di fornire i documenti richiesti dal sottoscritto costituisca una violazione dell'art. 3 della direttiva 2003/4/CE, che garantisce a chiunque ne faccia richiesta la libertà di accesso alle informazioni ambientali in possesso delle autorità pubbliche?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

A norma dell'articolo 3 della direttiva 2003/4/CE ([4]), le autorità pubbliche degli Stati membri provvedono, a determinate condizioni, a rendere disponibile l'informazione ambientale a chiunque ne faccia richiesta.

Invero, ai sensi dell'articolo 3, paragrafo 1, della direttiva, il richiedente non deve dichiarare il proprio interesse relativamente alla richiesta avanzata e, parimenti, non sussiste nessuno dei motivi del rifiuto di mettere a disposizione le informazioni di cui all'articolo 3, paragrafo 4.

Tuttavia, si noti che soltanto l'«informazione ambientale» definita all'articolo 2, paragrafo 1, rientra nel campo di applicazione della direttiva. Alla luce delle indicazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato, la Commissione non è in grado di giudicare se i documenti richiesti costituiscano effettivamente informazioni ambientali a norma della direttiva, mentre la documentazione contabile relativa ai lavori di sistemazione idraulica probabilmente esula dalla definizione di cui sopra. L'onorevole deputato non precisa se le autorità italiane abbiano espresso un parere in merito, né indica se abbia fatto ricorso alla procedura nazionale di cui all'articolo 6 della direttiva.

In tali circostanze, la Commissione non è in grado di accertare se sussiste violazione della direttiva 2003/4/CE.

([1]) Ente pubblico della Regione Veneto appaltante dei lavori in oggetto.
([2]) Direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio istitutiva di un quadro per l'azione comunitaria in materia di acque.
([3]) Direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa alla valutazione e alla gestione dei rischi di alluvioni.
([4]) sull'accesso del pubblico all'informazione ambientale e che abroga la direttiva 90/313/CEE del Consiglio; GU L 41 del 14.2.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004143/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Water management works on the Timonchio river and potential failure to comply with Directive 2003/4/EC on access to environmental information

Following water management works carried out in 2007 on the Timonchio river in the municipality of Caldogno in the province of Vicenza, I have made multiple requests since January 2012 to the civil engineering office of Vicenza ([1]) to access the relevant documents in order to obtain certain environmental information, in accordance with Directive 2003/4/EC.

The purpose of the requests for information addressed to the above authority was to find out how Directive 2000/60/EC ([2]) and Directive 2007/60/EC ([3]) were being implemented in the province of Vicenza, with particular reference to the above water management works, especially in view of the flooding which occurred in that area in 2010 and which, despite the water management works, had a devastating effect on the local area and on the environment, causing serious damage.

The requests for access to environmental information were intended to obtain a copy of the plans of the above water management works and a copy of the accounting records relating to the actual expenditure incurred to carry out the works.

The authority, however, only provided some of the requested documents, believing that it was not required to provide any accounting records relating to the water management works as there were no grounds for making the request.

However, as laid down first and foremost by Directive 2003/4/EC, not only must access to environmental information be provided regardless of the existence and verification of any qualified interest on the part of the applicant, but the aforesaid Directive also guarantees full access to information held by public authorities, clearly specifying the grounds for exclusion. The request that was made and refused certainly does not fall within any grounds for exclusion.

In light of the above, does the Commission not believe that, given the overriding aim of allowing citizens to carry out transparent and democratic checks on the work of public bodies, the refusal by the competent Italian authorities to supply the documents that I requested violates Article 3 of Directive 2003/4/EC, which guarantees any applicant the freedom to access environmental information held by public authorities?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

According to Article 3 of Directive 2003/4/EC ([4]), Member States' public authorities are required to provide access to environmental information upon request, subject to certain conditions.

Indeed, under the terms of Article 3(1) of the directive, an applicant is not obliged to state an interest in relation to his request. Equally none of the reasons for refusal of disclosure under Article 3(4) applies.

However, it is to be noted that only 'environmental information' as defined in Article 2(1) falls under the scope of the directive. From the indications by the Honourable Member, the Commission cannot judge whether the requested documents actually constitute environmental information in the sense of the directive. Rather, the accounting records relating to the water management works might not fall under that definition. The Honourable Member does not indicate whether the Italian Authorities have expressed any opinion in that regard.

The Honourable Member equally does not give any indication as to whether he has used the national remedies foreseen in Article 6 of the directive.

Under these circumstances, the Commission is not in a position to conclude on a possible infringement of the requirements of Directive 2003/4/EC.

([1]) Public body of the Veneto Regional Government which contracted the works in question.
([2]) Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.
([3]) Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment and management of flood risks.
([4]) On public access to environmental information and repealing Council Directive 90/313/EEC, OJ L 41, 14.2.2003.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-004144/13
Komisijai
Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)
(2013. gada 12. aprīlis)

Temats: Par augstākās izglītības grādu pakāpēm Eiropas Savienībā

Eiropas Savienības dalībvalstīs augstākās izglītības diplomi tiek iedalīti dažādi. Vienā valstī profesionālais bakalaurs tiek pielīdzināts koledžas izglītībai, kas sniedz kvalifikāciju, bet ne akadēmisku grādu, bet citā tas tiek atzīts par pilnvērtīgu augstākās izglītības grādu, pēc kura iegūšanas mācības var turpināt maģistrantūrā. Šādu nesakritību rezultātā atsevišķu dalībvalstu universitātes var atteikties uzņemt citu dalībvalstu studentus it kā nepietiekamā izglītības līmeņa dēļ.

Eiropas Savienībā 2008. gadā sāka darboties Eiropas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūra (EKI), kas sasaista valstu kvalifikācijas sistēmas un darbojas kā instruments dažādās valstīs iegūtu kvalifikāciju salīdzināšanai un skaidrošanai, tomēr pašlaik tikai 7 ES dalībvalstis ir piesaistījušas savas kvalifikācijas sistēmas EKI.

Vai Komisija uzskata, ka visām ES dalībvalstīm būtu jāiesaistās Eiropas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūrā, kas novērstu iepriekš minētās nesakritības?

Ko Komisija dara, lai samazinātu šādus ierobežojumus studentu brīvai kustībai Eiropas Savienībā un veicinātu EKI attīstību?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Andrula Vasiliu
(2013. gada 28. maijs)

Pašlaik 36 valstis (27 dalībvalstis, kandidātvalstis un Norvēģija, Lihtenšteina, Šveice) piedalās Eiropas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūras (*EQF*) ieviešanā; 16 valstis no šīm valstīm ir piesaistījušas nacionālos kvalifikācijas līmeņus Eiropas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūrai.

Tiesības uzsākt augstākās izglītības studiju kursa apguvi ir atkarīgas gan no tā, vai tas valstī ir atzīts, gan arī no tā, vai saturs, kas iekļauts diplomā, ar kuru piešķir kvalifikāciju, atbilst augstākam studiju kursa līmenim. To regulē Lisabonas konvencija, kurā noteikta šāda atzīšana pārrobežu situācijās, izņemot gadījumus, kad kvalifikācija ārvalstīs būtiski atšķiras no līdzvērtīgas kvalifikācijas attiecīgajā valstī. Atzīšanu atbalsta Nacionālo akadēmiskās atzīšanas informācijas centru tīkli (*ENIC/NARIC*), kas aizvien vairāk kā daļu no atzīšanas procesa izmanto Eiropas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūras (*EQF*) līmeņus un ar tiem saistītos studiju rezultātus, nevis tās iestādes veidu, kas piešķir kvalifikāciju.

Komisija atbalsta dalībvalstis un augstākās izglītības iestādes nevajadzīgo šķēršļu novēršanā attiecībā uz studentu mobilitāti un mudina tās nodrošināt efektīvu ārzemēs iegūtas kvalifikācijas atzīšanu, izmantojot efektīvu kvalitātes nodrošināšanu (*QA*), Eiropas kredītpunktu pārneses un uzkrāšanas sistēmas (*ECTS*) un diplomu pielikumu salīdzināmu izmantošanu, un saistot kvalifikāciju ar Eiropas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūru. Komisija veicina sadarbību *ENIC/NARIC* tīklu sistēmā un saistībā ar Boloņas procesu sekmē deviņu valstu grupas darbu, kuras meklē iespējamus veidus, kā īstenot nosprausto mērķi – panākt salīdzināmu diplomu automātisku akadēmisku atzīšanu. Turklāt Komisija vada darba grupu, kura pārskata *ECTS* kredītpunktu lietotāju rokasgrāmatu, lai studiju kredītpunktu atzīšana būtu efektīvāka.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004144/13
to the Commission
Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Levels of degrees in higher-education systems in the European Union

In European Union Member States, higher-education diplomas are classified in various different ways. In one country, a professional bachelor's is equated with graduation from a 'college', which counts as a qualification but not as an academic degree, whereas in another it is recognised as a full higher-education certificate, qualifying the holder to proceed with a master's. Because of such discrepancies, universities in different EU Member States may refuse to accept students from other Member States as if their qualifications were inadequate.

In 2008, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) began to operate in the European Union, linking different countries' qualification systems and serving as an instrument for the comparison and clarification of qualifications obtained in different countries, yet so far only seven EU Member States have entered their systems of qualifications in the EQF.

Does the Commission consider that all EU Member States should join the European Qualifications Framework, which would remedy the above discrepancies?

What will the Commission do to reduce such restrictions on freedom of movement for students within the European Union and to promote the development of the EQF?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

Currently, 36 countries (27 Member States, candidate countries and NO, LI, CH) participate in the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), of which 16 have now related their national qualifications levels to the EQF levels.

The right to enter a higher education course depends both on whether it is recognised within the country and on whether the content covered in the qualifying diploma is appropriate to the higher course of study. This is regulated by the Lisbon Convention, which requires such recognition in cross-border situations unless there is a substantial difference between the foreign and equivalent national qualifications. Recognition is supported by networks of National Recognition Information Centres (ENIC/NARICs), which increasingly use the EQF levels and the associated learning outcomes as part of the recognition process, rather than the type of institution that awards the qualification.

The Commission supports Member States and higher education institutions to eliminate unnecessary barriers to mobility of students, encouraging them to ensure the efficient recognition of qualifications gained abroad through effective quality assurance (QA), comparable use of ECTS and the diploma supplement, and by linking qualifications to the EQF. The Commission promotes cooperation within the ENIC-NARIC network and facilitates, within the Bologna Process, the work of a pathfinder group of nine countries exploring ways to achieving the goal of automatic academic recognition of comparable degrees. The Commission also chairs a working group revising the ECTS Users' Guide to make the recognition of study credits more effective.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-004145/13
Komisijai
Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)
(2013. gada 12. aprīlis)

Temats: Par patērētāju iespējām sazināties ar uzņēmumiem, izmantojot elektronisko pastu

Elektroniskais pasts dod iespēju gan indivīdiem, gan organizācijām sazināties savā starpā bez maksas. Tas ir drošs saziņas veids, kas samazina pārpratumu risku, kāds var rasties, piemēram, telefonsarunās. Turklāt abām pusēm ir pieejams rakstisks pierādījums par saziņas esamību.

Mūsdienās elektroniskais pasts ir viens no galvenajiem saziņas līdzekļiem, un tiek prognozēts, ka 2014. gadā tā lietotāju skaits sasniegs 2,5 miljardus. Tomēr ES ir uzņēmumi, ar kuriem patērētāji nevar sazināties, izmantojot elektronisko pastu. Šādā gadījumā patērētājam vienīgais saziņas veids ir telefonsakari vai pasta pakalpojumi, kas var radīt papildu izmaksas un būt laikietilpīgi.

Vai Komisija uzskata, ka šāda situācija nav pretrunā patērētāju interesēm?

Vai Komisija neuzskata, ka šādi tiek apdraudētas patērētāju tiesības?

Ko Komisija plāno darīt, lai darītu situāciju patērētājiem labvēlīgāku?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Nēlī Krusa
(2013. gada 31. maijs)

Komisija apzinās, ka elektroniskā saziņa patērētāju aizsardzības nodrošināšanai ir ļoti svarīga, un ir pieņēmusi daudzus politikas un likumdošanas pasākumus šajā jomā.

Digitālajā programmā Eiropai ([1]) iekļautas darbības, kas stiprina patērētāju aizsardzību digitālajā vidē, savukārt Eiropas Patērētāju tiesību aizsardzības programma ([2]) paredz vispārēju patērētāju aizsardzības sistēmu ES.

Ar Direktīvu 2002/22/EK ir noteiktas funkcionālas piekļuves tiesības tīmeklim kā universālam pakalpojumam, un tas uzlabo patērētāju iespējas izmantot elektroniskos saziņas līdzekļus, lai sazinātos ar uzņēmumiem. Ar Direktīvu 2000/31/EK ([3]) par elektronisko tirdzniecību noteikts pienākums elektronisko pakalpojumu sniedzējiem viņu elektroniskā pasta adresi padarīt pieejamu pakalpojuma saņēmējiem. Ar Direktīvu 2006/123/EK ([4]) noteikts pienākums pakalpojuma sniedzējam nodrošināt kontaktinformāciju, jo īpaši pasta adresi, faksa numuru vai elektroniskā pasta adresi un tālruņa numuru, uz kuru visi pakalpojuma saņēmēji var sūtīt sūdzību vai informācijas pieprasījumu.

Turklāt ar jauno Direktīvu 2011/83/ES ([5]) par patērētāju tiesībām, kas pašlaik tiek transponēta valstu tiesību aktos un ko sāks piemērot 2014. gada jūnijā, noteikts, ka ne tikai e–pakalpojumu sniedzējiem, bet visiem tālpārdošanā iesaistītajiem uzņēmumiem un tiem, kuri tirgo ārpus uzņēmuma telpām, jāsniedz patērētājiem sava elektroniskā pasta adrese, ja viņiem tāda ir, lai tādējādi nodrošinātu ātru un efektīvu saziņu. Komisijas priekšlikumā Regulai par vienotiem Eiropas tirdzniecības noteikumiem arī ir iekļautas līdzīgas prasības attiecībā uz informāciju.

Komisija turpinās veidot nepieciešamo politiku un sagatavot likumdošanas iniciatīvas, lai nodrošinātu patērētāju aizsardzību ES.

([1]) COM(2010) 245.
([2]) COM(2012) 225.
([3]) OV L 178, 17.7.2000.
([4]) OV L 376, 27.12.2006.
([5]) OV L 311, 28.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004145/13
to the Commission
Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Opportunities for consumers to contact businesses by e-mail

E-mail makes it possible both for individuals and for organisations to communicate among themselves free of charge. It is a secure method of communication, which reduces the risk of misunderstandings that may arise for example when telephoning. Moreover, both parties then have access to written evidence of what was said.

Nowadays, e-mail is one of the main means of communication, and it is forecast that in 2014 the number of users will reach the figure of 2.5 billion. However, within the EU there are businesses with which consumers cannot communicate by e-mail. In that case the only way in which consumers can communicate is by telephone or post, which may cost more and take longer.

Does not the Commission consider this situation to be contrary to consumers' interests?

Does not the Commission consider it to be a threat to consumers' rights?

What will the Commission do to alter the situation so as to render it more favourable to consumers?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the importance of electronic communications for the protection of consumers and has adopted a number of policy and legislative measures in this regard.

The Digital Agenda for Europe ([1]) contains actions reinforcing the protection of consumers in the digital environment and the European Consumer Agenda ([2]) provides for a comprehensive framework for the protection of consumers in the EU.

Directive 2002/22/EC establishes the right to functional access to Internet as part of universal service, and this enhances the possibility for consumers to use electronic communications means to contact businesses. Directive 2000/31/EC ([3]) **on electronic commerce establishes the obligation of ensuring** that the providers of these services render accessible to the recipients of the service their electronic mail address. Directive 2006/123/EC ([4]) establishes the obligation to ensure that providers supply contact details, in particular postal address, fax number or e-mail address and telephone number to which all recipients can send a complaint or a request for information.

Furthermore, the new Directive 2011/83/EU ([5]) on consumer rights, currently being transposed into national laws and entering into application in June 2014, requires not only providers of e-commerce services, but generally all distance and off-premises traders to provide their e-mail address, where available, to consumers to enable a quick and efficient communication. The Commission proposal for a regulation on a Common European Sales Law also includes comparable information requirements.

The Commission will continue to develop the necessary policy and legislative initiatives to ensure the protection of consumers in the EU.

([1]) COM(2010) 245.
([2]) COM(2012) 225.
([3]) OJ L 178, 17.7.2000.
([4]) OJ L 376, 27.12.2006 .
([5]) OJ L 311, 28.11.2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004363/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Examen preuniversitario europeo

Debido a las consecuencias de la crisis económica, cada vez más jóvenes se están planteando realizar sus estudios universitarios fuera de su país de origen para poder acceder más fácilmente a la bolsa de trabajo de ese tercer país cuando hayan finalizado sus estudios.

El acceso a la universidad en los distintos Estados miembros es diferente. Estas diferencias pueden crear discriminaciones a la hora de intentar acceder a una universidad de un Estado miembro si es distinto al del país donde ha realizado los estudios preuniversitarios.

Para mejorar esta situación, la vía más adecuada sería la de realizar un examen preuniversitario común en todos los Estados miembros.

Por lo tanto, para evitar estas discriminaciones, ¿va a tomar medidas la Comisión para facilitar a los estudiantes realizar sus estudios universitarios en otros Estados miembros de la Unión Europea?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión interviene activamente para garantizar que se respete el principio de no discriminación por razón de nacionalidad en el contexto del acceso a la enseñanza superior.

Las diferencias en los sistemas de cualificación, las prácticas de calificación y las normas de acceso a la educación superior están profundamente arraigadas en las tradiciones pedagógicas de los distintos sistemas. Dado que los Estados miembros son íntegramente responsables de la organización de sus sistemas educativos, la organización de exámenes preuniversitarios comunes a toda la UE no es responsabilidad de la Unión. La Comisión considera importante lograr que esas diferencias sean transparentes, a fin de que las calificaciones puedan entenderse correctamente al otro lado de las fronteras.

La Comisión promueve el reconocimiento de las cualificaciones académicas a través del respaldo a los NARIC ([1]). Estos centros ofrecen asesoramiento y toman decisiones sobre el reconocimiento académico, también para las cualificaciones de segundo ciclo de la enseñanza secundaria. Muchos de ellos tienen información sobre las tablas de calificaciones, a fin de entender el sistema de calificación de otros países ([2]).

La Guía del usuario de la aplicación del ECTS ([3]) contiene un modelo de tabla de calificaciones destinada a ser utilizada por los centros de enseñanza superior. Una vez introducida en el expediente académico y en el Suplemento de diploma de los estudiantes, la tabla facilita la interpretación de cada calificación obtenida. En el marco del programa Erasmus, la Comisión financia un proyecto que prepara una visión de conjunto de los sistemas de calificación en Europa y formula recomendaciones en relación con su utilización efectiva.

El MEC ([4]) ofrece una referencia europea común para la comparación de las cualificaciones basadas en los resultados del aprendizaje. En abril de 2013, dieciséis Estados miembros vincularon sus niveles de cualificación nacionales al MEC ([5]). Seis Estados miembros ya han empezado a indicar los niveles MEC en sus certificados, diplomas, suplementos Europass y en las bases de datos de las cualificaciones.

([1]) Centros nacionales de reconocimiento académico.
([2]) Véase, por ejemplo, la tabla de títulos del NARIC danés, que ofrece una tabla de conversión entre las calificaciones de enseñanza secundaria y las calificaciones danesas: http://fivu.dk/uddannelse-og-institutioner/anerkendelse-og-dokumentation/find-vurderinger/eksamenshaandbogen/lande-og-eksaminer
([3]) Sistema Europeo de Transferencia y Acumulación de Créditos.
([4]) Marco Europeo de Cualificaciones.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/compare_es.htm

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-004146/13
Komisijai
Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)
(2013. gada 12. aprīlis)

Temats: Par mācību vērtēšanas sistēmām Eiropas Savienībā

Mūsdienās ļoti daudzi studenti pēc vidusskolas absolvēšanas nolemj doties uz ārzemēm un iegūt augstāko izglītību kādā citā Eiropas Savienības valstī. Ārvalstu universitātei, izvērtējot potenciālo studentu, bieži rodas jautājumi par viņa vidusskolas atzīmēm un neskaidrības par atbilstību prasībām, jo gandrīz katrā Eiropas Savienības valstī mācību vērtēšanas sistēma atšķiras. Šī problēma rodas arī studentiem, kas pēc augstākās izglītības iegūšanas vēlas turpināt mācības nākamajās augstākās izglītības pakāpēs kādas citas dalībvalsts universitātē.

Piemēram, ja vienā valstī "5" ir izcila atzīme, tad citā valstī tā skaitās viduvēja atzīme, bet vēl citā tā ir pat nesekmīga atzīme. Dažādo vērtējumu dēļ arī studiju laikā rodas pārpratumi gan studentiem, gan pasniedzējiem, jo studenti nevar pilnvērtīgi salīdzināt dažādu valstu vērtēšanas sistēmas un reizēm neizprot ārzemēs saņemto atzīmju vērtību attiecībā pret savas valsts vērtēšanas sistēmu.

Vai Komisija piekrīt, ka ir nepieciešams integrēt atšķirīgās Eiropas Savienības dalībvalstu mācību vērtēšanas sistēmas?

Vai Komisija ir domājusi par atzīmju pielīdzināšanas sistēmas izveidi, kas ļautu pēc vienotas sistēmas pārrēķināt atzīmju vērtību dažādās ES dalībvalstīs?

Kopīgo atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Andrula Vasiliu
(2013. gada 29. maijs)

Komisija aktīvi gādā par to, lai attiecībā uz augstākās izglītības pieejamību tiktu ievērots princips, atbilstīgi kuram netiktu pieļauta diskriminācija valstspiederības dēļ.

Kvalifikācijas sistēmu, sekmju novērtējuma prakses un augstākās izglītības pieejamības noteikumu atšķirības dziļi sakņojas dažādo sistēmu pedagoģiskajās tradīcijās. Visā ES vispārējo eksāmenu organizēšana pirmsuniversitātes izglītības posmā ir ārpus Savienības atbildības jomas, jo par izglītības sistēmas organizāciju ir pilnībā atbildīgas dalībvalstis. Komisija ir pārliecināta, ka ir svarīgi, lai šīs atšķirības būtu pārskatāmas, jo tad atzīmes varētu pareizi saprast arī citās valstīs.

Komisija sekmē akadēmisko kvalifikāciju atzīšanu, nodrošinot atbalstu *NARIC* centriem ([1]). Tie sniedz konsultācijas un pieņem lēmumus par diplomu atzīšanu, tostarp arī par vidējās izglītības kvalifikācijām. Daudzi no šiem centriem uztur informāciju par atzīmju skaidrojuma tabulām, kas palīdz izprast citās valstīs pieņemtās sekmju novērtējuma sistēmas ([2]).

ECTS ([3]) lietotāja rokasgrāmatā ir ietverts atzīmju skaidrojuma tabulas paraugs, kas jāizmanto augstākās izglītības iestādēm. Šādu tabulu iekļaujot studenta atzīmju izrakstā un diploma papildinājumos, tiek atvieglināta katras piešķirtās atzīmes interpretēšana. *Erasmus* programmā Komisija finansē projektu, kas sagatavo Eiropā izmantoto sekmju novērtējuma sistēmu pārskatu un izstrādā ieteikumus šo sistēmu efektīvam izmantojumam.

EKI ([4]) ir vienota Eiropas mēroga atsauce kvalifikāciju salīdzinājumam, pamatojoties uz mācību procesa rezultātiem. Ar 2013. gada aprīli 16 dalībvalstis savu nacionālo kvalifikāciju līmeņus ir pielīdzinājušas EKI ([5]). Sešas dalībvalstis jau ir sākušas izsniegtajos sertifikātos, diplomos, *Europass* papildinājumos un kvalifikāciju datubāzēs norādīt arī EKI līmeņus.

([1]) Eiropas Savienības diplomatzīšanas tīkla centri.
([2]) Piemēram, sk. Dānijas *NARIC* atzīmju skaidrojuma tabulu, kurā sniegts mehānisms ES dalībvalstu vidusskolas kvalifikāciju pielīdzināšanai Dānijas kvalifikācijām: http://fivu.dk/uddannelse-og-institutioner/anerkendelse-og-dokumentation/find-vurderinger/eksamenshaandbogen/lande-og-eksaminer
([3]) Eiropas kredītpunktu pārneses un uzkrāšanas sistēma.
([4]) Eiropas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūra (*EQF – European Qualification Framework*).
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/compare_lv.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004146/13
to the Commission
Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Systems for grading educational attainment in the European Union

Nowadays, a great many students decide, after completing secondary school, to go abroad for higher education in another EU Member State. When it comes to assessing a potential student, foreign universities are often uncertain how to interpret their secondary school certificates and how well they correspond to requirements, as nearly every Member State has a different system for grading educational attainment. The same problem also faces students who, after graduating from higher education, wish to continue their studies at the next highest level at a university in another Member State.

For example, if in one country '5' means 'excellent', in another country it means 'average', while in another country again it denotes failure. Because of the differences of assessment, misunderstandings also arise during studies, affecting both students and teachers, as students cannot fully compare different countries' grading systems and at times they do not understand the value to be attached to certificates obtained abroad in relation to the grading system of their own country.

Does the Commission agree that it is necessary to integrate the educational grading systems of the various European Union Member States?

Has the Commission considered establishing a system for the comparison of qualifications, which would make it possible to calculate the value of diplomas in the various EU Member States by means of a harmonised system?

Question for written answer E-004363/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: European pre-university examination

As a result of the economic crisis, increasing numbers of young people are thinking about going to university outside their country of origin so that they can more easily access that third country's job opportunities when they finish studying.

Various Member States have different procedures for access to university. These differences can give rise to discrimination when a person is trying to access a university in a Member State other than the one in which they completed their pre-university studies.

The best way to improve this situation would be to hold common pre-university examinations in all Member States.

Therefore, in order to avoid discrimination of this kind, is the Commission going to take steps to facilitate students carrying out their university studies in other EU Member States?

Joint answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission is active in ensuring that the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of nationality is upheld in the context of access to higher education.

Differences in qualification systems, grading practices, and rules on access to higher education are deeply rooted in the pedagogical traditions of different systems. As Member States (MS) are fully responsible for the organisation of their education systems, the organisation of common pre-university examinations across the EU is outside the responsibility of the Union. The Commission believes that it is important to make these differences transparent so that grades can be properly understood across borders.

The Commission promotes the recognition of academic qualifications by supporting the NARICs ([1]). They provide advice and take decisions on academic recognition, including for upper-secondary qualifications. Many maintain information on grading tables for understanding the grading system of other countries ([2]).

The Users' Guide on application of the ECTS ([3]) contains a model grading table to be used by higher education institutions. When included in the Transcript of Records and Diploma Supplements of students, the table facilitates the interpretation of each grade awarded. Under the Erasmus programme, the Commission funds a project which prepares an overview of grading systems in Europe and makes recommendations on their effective use.

The EQF ([4]) provides a common European reference for the comparison of qualifications based on learning outcomes. As of April 2013, 16 MS have related their national qualifications levels to the EQF ([5]). Six MS have already started to indicate EQF levels in their certificates, diplomas, Europass supplements and qualifications databases.

([1]) National Academic Recognition Centres.

([2]) See for example the Danish NARIC grading table which provides a conversion table between EU Member States upper-secondary qualifications and Danish qualifications:
http://fivu.dk/uddannelse-og-institutioner/anerkendelse-og-dokumentation/find-vurderinger/eksamenshaandbogen/lande-og-eksaminer

([3]) European Credit Accumulation and Transfer System.

([4]) European Qualification Framework.

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/compare_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004147/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(12 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Problem bezpieczeństwa na drogach w poszczególnych krajach UE

Co roku Komisja Europejska publikuje raporty nt. stanu bezpieczeństwa na drogach wszystkich krajów UE. Przykładowo w Polsce w 2011 r. doszło do 40 065 wypadków, w których zginęło 4 189 osób, a do końca czerwca 2012 r. na polskich drogach zginęło ok. 1 500 osób. Tegoroczne statystyki wskazują na fakt, iż co dziesiąty uczestnik wypadku drogowego nie przeżywa tego zdarzenia.

W związku z powyższym proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Jakie działania podejmuje Komisja, aby zmniejszyć liczbę ofiar wypadków drogowych w poszczególnych krajach UE?

2. Czy podejmowane działania są skuteczne?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(23 maja 2013 r.)

Za wdrażanie polityki bezpieczeństwa ruchu drogowego odpowiadają wspólnie podmioty działające na różnych poziomach, a główną odpowiedzialność ponoszą państwa członkowskie. Wkład Komisji wynika z kierunków polityki bezpieczeństwa ruchu drogowego na lata 2011-2020 ([1]). Dokument ten podkreśla siedem priorytetowych obszarów, w których Komisja może odegrać ważną rolę. Wśród przykładów można wymienić: wsparcie dla projektów zwiększających świadomość bezpieczeństwa ruchu drogowego wśród młodzieży; wniosek dotyczący nowego pakietu w sprawie przydatności do ruchu drogowego ([2]); zmienioną dyrektywę w sprawie praw jazdy ([3]); platformy wymiany najlepszych praktyk między ekspertami z państw członkowskich oraz prace w zakresie planu działania na rzecz wdrażania inteligentnych systemów transportowych.

Liczba śmiertelnych ofiar wypadków drogowych spada każdego roku. W ostatnim okresie strategii, w latach 2001-2010, liczba śmiertelnych ofiar wypadków drogowych w UE spadła o 43 %, a od 2011 r. do 2012 r. liczba ofiar śmiertelnych w Unii Europejskiej zmalała dalej znacząco o 9 % ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/road_safety_citizen/road_safety_citizen_100924_pl.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/doc/roadworthiness-package/com(2012)380.pdf, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0382(01):FIN:EN:PDF, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0381:FIN:PL:PDF
([3]) Dyrektywa 2006/126/WE, Dz.U. L 403 z 30.12 2006, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006L0126:PL:NOT
([4]) IP/13/236, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-236_pl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004147/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: The problem of road safety in the different EU Member States

The Commission publishes reports every year on road safety in each of the Member States. In Poland in 2011, for example, 4 189 people were killed in 40 065 accidents, and around 1 500 people had died on Poland's roads by the end of June 2012. This year's statistics show that one in ten people who are involved in a road accident do not survive the experience.

1. What steps is the Commission taking to reduce the number of road accident victims in the different Member States?

2. How effective are these steps?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The implementation of road safety policy is a shared responsibility of actors at different levels, with a primary responsibility of Member States. The Commission contributes within the framework of its Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020 ([1]). This document highlights seven priority areas where the Commission can play an important role. Some examples are: support for youth road safety awareness projects; the proposal of a new Roadworthiness package ([2]); the amended Driving licence directive ([3]); platforms for exchange of best practice among Member State experts; and work on deployment of an action plan for Intelligent Transport Systems.

The number of road deaths decrease every year. During the last strategy period, 2001-2010, the number of road fatalities went down by 43% in the EU, between 2011 and 2012 the number of fatalities further decreased in the European Union by a significant 9% ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/road_safety_citizen/road_safety_citizen_100924_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/doc/roadworthiness-package/com(2012)380.pdf
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0382(01):FIN:EN:PDF
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0381:FIN:EN:PDF
([3]) Directive 2006/126/EC, OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006L0126:EN:NOT
([4]) IP/13/236, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-236_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004148/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(12 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przemoc w szkole

Przemoc w szkole to zjawisko coraz częstsze. Znaczny procent dzieci i młodzieży doznał osobiście przemocy i agresji ze strony rówieśników lub nauczycieli albo był świadkiem takich zachowań. Nauczyciele również stają się ofiarami przemocy ze strony uczniów i ze strony przełożonych.

W związku z powyższym bardzo proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja monitoruje zjawisko przemocy w szkole w poszczególnych krajach UE?

2. Jakie działania są podejmowane przez Komisję, by zapobiegać wzrostowi zjawiska przemocy w szkole w poszczególnych krajach UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(29 maja 2013 r.)

Zgodnie z art. 165 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej odpowiedzialność za treść i organizację systemów edukacji i szkolenia leży w wyłącznej gestii państw członkowskich.

W lutym 2011 r. Komisja przyjęła Komunikat w sprawie agendy UE na rzecz praw dziecka ([1]), w którym podkreśliła, że dobro dzieci można osiągnąć jedynie w społeczeństwie wolnym od przemocy.

Ponadto „kompetencje społeczne i obywatelskie" określone w Europejskich ramach kluczowych kompetencji ([2]) obejmują potrzebę wspierania dobra społecznego oraz zdolności do okazywania tolerancji i umiejętności zachowywania się w sposób konstruktywny. W komunikacie zatytułowanym „Rozwijanie kompetencji na miarę XXI w. – plan europejskiej współpracy w zakresie szkół" ([3]), Komisja podkreśliła potrzebę tworzenia w szkołach bezpiecznego środowiska, opartego na wzajemnym szacunku i współpracy, sprzyjającego dobru społecznemu, fizycznemu i dobremu psychicznemu samopoczuciu, w którym nie ma miejsca na prześladowanie i agresję.

Komisja wspiera państwa członkowskie w walce z prześladowaniem uczniów i z agresją w szkołach w ramach różnych programów i działań. Na przykład w ramach programu Comenius ([4]), prowadzonego jako jedna z inicjatyw programu uczenia się przez całe życie, Komisja finansuje kilka projektów realizowanych na poziomie lokalnym, których celem jest przeciwdziałanie agresji i prześladowaniu uczniów w szkołach. Kolejnym przykładem jest program Daphne III ([5]), który bezpośrednio dotyczy zapobiegania agresji wobec dzieci, także w szkołach.

([1]) COM(2011) 60 final.
([2]) Zalecenie 2006/962/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 18 grudnia 2006 r. w sprawie kompetencji kluczowych w procesie uczenia się przez całe życie, Dz.U. L 394, 30.12.2006.
([3]) COM(2008) 425 final.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/index_en.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/2004_2007/daphne/funding_daphne_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004148/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Violence in schools

Violence in schools is becoming an ever more frequent problem. Peer or teacher violence and aggression have been experienced at first hand or witnessed by a significant proportion of children and young people. Teachers also fall victim to violence perpetrated by pupils or superiors.

1. Does the Commission monitor the problem of violence in schools in the different Member States?

2. What action is the Commission taking to prevent any escalation of the problem of violence in schools in the different Member States?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States.

In February 2011, the Commission adopted a communication on an EU agenda on the Rights of the Child ([1]), which highlights that the well-being of children can only be achieved in a society which is free of violence.

In addition, the 'social and civic competences' that are defined in the European Framework of Key Competences ([2]), include the need to support social well-being and the ability to show tolerance and the capacity to behave in a constructive manner. The Commission emphasised, in its communication 'Improving Competences for the 21st Century — an Agenda for European cooperation on schools' ([3]), the need to develop schools as safe environments that are based on mutual respect and cooperation, that promote social, physical and mental well-being and where bullying and violence have no place.

The Commission supports Member States in their fight against bullying and violence at school through different programmes and actions. For instance, the Comenius programme ([4]) within the Lifelong Learning programme funds several grassroots projects on violence and bullying in schools; and the Daphne III programme ([5]) directly addresses the prevention of violence against children, including within schools.

([1]) COM(2011) 60 final.
([2]) Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ L 394, 30.12.2006.
([3]) COM(2008) 425 final.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/index_en.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/2004_2007/daphne/funding_daphne_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004149/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Armas químicas — Síria proíbe observadores das Nações Unidas

Considerando que, no seguimento da proposta do Secretário-Geral da ONU, o regime sírio rejeitou o envio de observadores das Nações Unidas para todo o território da Síria para determinar se estão a ser usadas armas químicas no conflito.

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Que avaliação faz desta situação?

Qual deve ser o papel da UE no que diz respeito à investigação sobre a utilização deste tipo de armas?

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

Em 21 de março de 2013, na sequência da receção de uma carta de 20 de março de 2013 do Vice-Primeiro-Ministro da Síria, o Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas anunciou a sua decisão de realizar uma missão para investigar a alegada utilização de armas químicas lançadas a partir da região de Kfar Dael na área de Khan al-Asal, na província de Alepo. O ataque causou presumidamente a morte de 26 pessoas e requereu a hospitalização de mais de 100 outras.

A Síria não é Parte na Convenção sobre Armas Químicas. No entanto, está vinculada às disposições do Protocolo de Genebra de 1925 e ao direito internacional consuetudinário que proíbem a utilização de armas químicas.

Numa carta conjunta ao Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas, de 25 de março de 2013, os representantes da UE e dos Estados-Membros manifestaram o seu apoio à decisão do Secretário-Geral de dar início a uma investigação e solicitaram que tal investigação abranja todas as graves alegações sobre a utilização de armas químicas na Síria.

Em 26 de março, o Secretário-Geral anunciou a nomeação do Professor Åke Sellström, da Suécia, como chefe da missão e solicitou à Organização para a Proibição de Armas Químicas (OPAQ/OPCW) que ponha os seus recursos à sua disposição e à Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) que preste apoio técnico à missão na avaliação da saúde pública e dos aspetos clínicos e relacionados com a saúde da alegação. A investigação procurará determinar apenas se foram ou não utilizadas armas químicas e não tirará quaisquer conclusões sobre a atribuição de qualquer utilização.

A UE tem repetidamente manifestado grande preocupação perante a probabilidade de uso de armas químicas na Síria e tem instado este país a não utilizar os seus arsenais, em circunstância alguma, e a armazenar as armas em condições de segurança, até que sejam destruídas sob verificação independente. A União Europeia aguarda com expectativa o início da missão de averiguação da ONU e irá acompanhar com grande interesse e preocupação o resultado das investigações.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004149/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Chemical weapons — Syria suspends UN observers

Following the proposal by the UN Secretary-General, the Syrian regime refused to allow UN observers to investigate the use of chemical weapons in the conflict throughout the entire territory.

What is the Vice-President/High Representative's assessment of this situation?

What role should the EU take in the investigation into the use of these kinds of weapons?

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

On 21 March 2013, following the receipt of a letter dated 20 March 2013 from the Deputy Prime Minister of Syria, the United Nations Secretary-General announced his decision to conduct a mission to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons launched from the Kfar Dael region into the Khan al-Asal area in Aleppo governorate. The attack is alleged to have killed 26 people and required the hospitalisation of over 100 others.

Syria is not Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Syria is, however, bound by the terms of the 1925 Geneva Protocol and customary international law which ban the use of chemical weapons.

In a joint letter to the UNSG dated 25 March 2013, the representatives of the EU and the Member States expressed their support for the SG's decision to launch an investigation and asked that the investigation would cover all serious allegations about the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

On 26 March, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of Professor Áke Sellström of Sweden as head of the mission and requested the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to put its resources at his disposal and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to provide technical support to the Mission in assessing the public health, and clinical and event-specific health aspects of the allegation.The investigation will seek to determine only whether or not chemical weapons were used and will not draw any conclusions as to the attribution of any use.

The EU has expressed serious concern at the possible use of chemical weapons in Syria and has called on Syria never to use its stockpile under any circumstances and to store the stockpile securely pending independently verified destruction. The EU looks forward to the beginning of the UN fact finding mission and will monitor with close and concerned interest the outcome of those investigations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004150/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Mulheres decapitadas na Nova Guiné

Duas mulheres foram torturadas durante três dias pela população e decapitadas, em Lopele, na região autónoma de Bougainville, na Papua-Nova Guiné. Este país registou recentemente outros 6 casos de tortura de mulheres acusadas de bruxaria, e que foram igualmente queimadas vivas.

Sabendo que está em causa uma violação dos direitos humanos e tendo em conta as perceções tradicionais do papel das mulheres, pode a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante indicar que posição assume a Comissão para combater situações semelhantes e promover a segurança?

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

Este crime horrendo é chocante e não existe nada que justifique este tipo de atos de violência. Contamos com o Governo do Primeiro-Ministro Peter O'Neill para tomar medidas rápidas e concretas para melhorar a situação das mulheres no país. A UE continuará a apoiar todos os esforços para lutar contra a violência com base no sexo e, nomeadamente, contra qualquer forma de violência cometida sob o pretexto de alegada bruxaria. Desde que tomou posse, o Governo de Peter O'Neill denunciou explicitamente este tipo de crimes e prometeu a realização de investigações sérias. Foi também já iniciado o processo legislativo com vista à revogação da lei contra a bruxaria de 1971. A violência relacionada com a bruxaria deve ser tratada no quadro do atual sistema de justiça, ou seja, como crimes de homicídio, de ofensas à integridade física ou de violação. A União Europeia incita igualmente as autoridades a tomarem outras medidas em termos de educação e sensibilização, bem como a adotar iniciativas legislativas e políticas em matéria de proteção e tratamento das vítimas. Além disso, através dos seus programas de cooperação e do seu trabalho com a sociedade civil, a UE continua a apoiar ações concretas com vista a melhorar as condições de vida das mulheres na Papua-Nova Guiné. A autonomização das mulheres é essencial, pois muitos crimes, nomeadamente os relacionados com acusações de bruxaria, têm frequentemente como alvo os mais fracos e os mais pobres.

Por ocasião das comemorações do Dia Internacional da Mulher, em 8 de março de 2013, foi publicada nos principais jornais do país uma declaração da UE sobre a violência contra as mulheres e crianças.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004150/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Women beheaded in Papua New Guinea

Two women were tortured by local people for three days and then beheaded in Lopele in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. The country has recently seen another six women tortured and burnt alive after accusations of sorcery.

Given that this is an infringement of the most basic of human rights and given the traditional perception of the role of women in the country, can the Vice-President/High Representative give an indication of the stance the Commission is taking to combat similar situations and promote security?

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

This horrific crime is shocking and there can be no justification whatsoever for such abhorrent acts of violence. We are counting on the government of PM O'Neill to take concrete and swift measures to improve the situation of women in the country. The EU will continue to support all efforts in the fight against gender based violence including any form of violence committed under the pretext of alleged sorcery. Since it took office, the O'Neill government has been outspoken in denunciating these crimes and has promised that serious investigations will be made. The legislative process to repeal the Sorcery Act of 1971 has also been initiated; sorcery-related violence should be addressed through the existing criminal justice system i.e. as crimes of murder, grievous bodily harm and rape. The EU is also urging the authorities to take further actions in terms of education/awareness raising, legislative and policy initiatives and with respect to victims' protection and treatment. Besides, the EU continues through its cooperation programmes and its work with the civil society to support concrete initiatives aiming at improving women's life in Papua New Guinea. Empowering of women is essential as sorcery and other crimes often target the weakest and the poorest.

On the occasion of International Women's Day 2013 on 8 March 2013, an EU local statement on violence against women and children has been published in the main papers of the country.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004151/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Degradação do ambiente político em Moçambique

Nos últimos dias, o ambiente político em Moçambique degradou-se, depois de um grupo de militantes da Renamo (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), o principal partido da oposição, ter realizado um ataque a um quartel de uma unidade especial da polícia, na província de Sofala, no centro do país. O ataque surge como retaliação pela detenção de 16 ex-guerrilheiros do antigo movimento rebelde que se opôs à Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), o partido no poder, durante o período da guerra civil — pouco depois da independência, em 1975, e até à assinatura dos acordos de paz, em 1992.

Já depois deste confronto, houve novos ataques de homens armados, dos quais terão resultado quatro mortos e um número indeterminado de feridos.

1. Que avaliação faz a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante da situação descrita?

2. Tendo em conta as próximas eleições autárquicas, previstas para novembro, de que dados dispõe a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante relativamente ao ponto da situação do quadro de tensão política que se vive em Moçambique?

3. Na opinião da Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante, como podem os interesses dos cidadãos europeus ser acautelados?

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

1. A AR/VP condena os atos de violência que causaram a perda de vidas humanas, a perturbação da ordem pública e a instauração do medo em Moçambique. A AR/VP incentiva todas as partes interessadas a dar mostras de contenção e a respeitar a paz que vigorou em Moçambique por um período de vinte anos. As diferenças políticas devem ser resolvidas através do diálogo. O Chefe da Delegação da UE encontrou-se com uma delegação da Renamo em 11 de abril e as embaixadas dos Estados-Membros têm também contactos para compreender a posição da Renamo e transmitir a mensagem incluída no ponto 1.

A AR/VP considera encorajador que as tensões tenham diminuído devido à disponibilidade de diálogo por parte do governo e da garantia do líder da Renamo de que não partiria para a guerra.

2. A AR/VP espera que as eleições locais previstas para novembro deste ano e as eleições legislativas e presidenciais em outubro de 2014 se realizem de forma pacífica e com participação o mais ampla possível e com espaço para a oposição organizar a campanha. A AR/VP vai enviar uma missão de acompanhamento para analisar a aplicação das recomendações da Missão de Observação Eleitoral da UE de 2009 e os preparativos para as eleições em Moçambique.

A AR/VP espera que os debates sirvam para encontrar uma forma de ultrapassar o boicote anunciado pela Renamo, que limitaria a concorrência. No entanto, as ameaças à realização das eleições não são aceitáveis.

3. A salvaguarda de interesses públicos europeus, assim como os do povo de Moçambique, depende da manutenção e da consolidação da paz em Moçambique, bem como da intensificação dos esforços para promover a reconciliação e a inclusão social.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004151/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Deteriorating political situation in Mozambique

The political situation in Mozambique has deteriorated in the last few days, since a group of militants from the main opposition party, the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo), attacked the barracks of a special police unit in Sofala province, in the centre of the country. The attack was retaliation for the arrest of 16 former guerrillas from the old rebel movement that opposed the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) — the party in power — during the civil war, which started soon after independence in 1975 and lasted until the conclusion of the peace agreements in 1992.

Since this clash, there have already been further attacks by armed men, leaving four dead and an unknown number injured.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of this situation?

2. In view of the upcoming local elections, planned for November, what details does the Vice-President/High Representative have regarding the state of play with the politically tense situation in Mozambique?

3. How does she think the European public's interests can be safeguarded?

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

1. The HR/VP condemns the acts of violence that have caused loss of life, breaching the peace and creating fear in Mozambique. The HR/VP encourages all those involved to exercise restraint and respect the peace that has existed in Mozambique for 20 years. Political differences should be resolved through dialogue. The EU Head of Delegation met a delegation from Renamo on 11 April and Member States' embassies have similarly had contacts to understand Renamo's position and to convey the message included in paragraph 1 above.

The HR/VP is encouraged by the reduction in tensions that has come with offers of dialogue on the part of Government and an assurance from the Renamo leader that he would not go back to war.

2. The HR/VP hopes that local elections due in November this year and parliamentary and presidential elections due in October 2014 will take place peacefully and with the widest possible participation and space for opposition to organise and campaign. The HR/VP is sending a follow-up mission to review the implementation of the recommendations of the 2009 EU Election Observation Mission and the preparations for elections in Mozambique.

The HR/VP hopes that discussions can find a way to overcome Renamo's announced boycott of the local elections which would limit the competition. However, threats to the holding of the elections are not acceptable.

3. The safeguarding of the European Public's interests, as those of the people of Mozambique, depend upon the maintenance and reinforcement of the peace in Mozambique and upon increased efforts to promote reconciliation and social inclusion.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004152/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Nova unidade de produção de urânio no Irão

O Irão lançou uma nova unidade de produção de urânio e começou as operações em duas minas de extração de urânio, apesar de este país ser alvo de sanções pelo seu programa de enriquecimento nuclear. As referidas minas estão localizadas na cidade de Saghand, no centro do país, operam a 350 metros de profundidade e estão localizadas a 120 quilómetros da unidade de produção de «yellowcake» — o estado impuro de óxido de urânio.

Tendo em conta o encontro realizado a 26 de fevereiro entre as potências ocidentais e o Irão para debater o programa nuclear deste país, que avaliação faz a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante deste anúncio?

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

As atividades nucleares do Irão têm sido regularmente abordadas pela AR/VP nas conversações E3 +3 com o Irão. O Irão deve conduzir as suas atividades nucleares respeitando plenamente as suas obrigações internacionais no âmbito de diversas resoluções do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas e do Conselho de Governadores da AIEA e abster-se de ações que aumentem as preocupações da comunidade internacional relativamente à natureza exclusivamente pacífica do seu programa nuclear.

As últimas reuniões da AR/VP e do E3 +3 com o Irão em Almaty constituem um exemplo claro da determinação no sentido de tentar alcançar uma solução diplomática a fim de responder às preocupações da comunidade internacional quanto ao programa nuclear do Irão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004152/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — New uranium production unit in Iran

Iran has opened a new uranium production unit and started extraction in two uranium mines, despite the country being under sanctions for its nuclear enrichment programme. These mines are located at Saghand in the centre of the country. They operate at a depth of 350 m and are 120 km from units for producing yellowcake, the impure state of uranium oxide.

In view of the meeting held on 26 February between the Western powers and Iran to discuss the country's nuclear programme, what is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of this announcement?

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

Iran's ongoing nuclear activities have been regularly addressed by the HR/VP in the E3+3 talks with Iran. Iran is requested to bring its nuclear activities in full compliance with its international obligations under various UNSC and IAEA Board of Governors resolutions and to refrain from actions that increase the concerns of the international community about the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

The most recent meetings of the HR/VP and E3+3 with Iran in Almaty are a clear example of the determination to work towards a diplomatic solution in order to resolve the international community's concerns about Iran's nuclear programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004153/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Sérvia rejeita acordo com o Kosovo

No seguimento da condição imposta por Bruxelas para a consideração do pedido de adesão da Sérvia à União Europeia, o governo de Belgrado anunciou que não aceita dois pontos da proposta de reconciliação com Pristina, numa declaração proferida pelo primeiro-ministro Iva Dadic, que refere ainda que «os princípios apresentados não garantem a total segurança, sobrevivência e proteção dos direitos humanos do povo sérvio no Kosovo».

1. Na opinião da Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante, qual será o impacto desta decisão no calendário das negociações para a adesão à UE?

2. Pode a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante indicar qual o atual ponto da situação das negociações no que diz respeito ao enclave do norte do Kosovo, onde os sérvios são maioritários?

3. Que novas estratégias de mediação considera a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante que poderão ser delineadas numa tentativa de ultrapassar com celeridade este impasse?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004179/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Sérvia rejeita acordo com o Kosovo

No seguimento da condição imposta por Bruxelas para a consideração do pedido de adesão da Sérvia à União Europeia, o governo de Belgrado anunciou que não aceita dois pontos da proposta de reconciliação com Pristina, numa declaração proferida pelo primeiro-ministro Iva Dadic, que refere ainda que «os princípios apresentados não garantem a total segurança, sobrevivência e proteção dos direitos humanos do povo sérvio no Kosovo».

1. Na opinião da Comissão, qual será o impacto desta decisão no calendário das negociações

para a adesão à UE?

2. Pode a Comissão indicar qual o atual ponto da situação das negociações no que diz respeito ao enclave do norte do Kosovo, onde os sérvios são maioritários?

3. Que novas estratégias de mediação considera a Comissão que poderão ser delineadas numa tentativa de ultrapassar com celeridade este impasse?

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

Após a rejeição inicial pelo Governo sérvio dos elementos relativos a um acordo sobre a parte norte do Kosovo, a AR/VP incentivou ambas as partes a envidar esforços para alcançar um acordo. Em 17 e 19 de abril de 2013, tiveram lugar em Bruxelas novas reuniões entre o Primeiro-Ministro Dacic e o Primeiro-Ministro Thaci. Promovidas pela AR/VP, estas discussões deram origem em 19 de abril de 2013 à rubrica do «primeiro acordo sobre os princípios que governam a normalização das relações».

Em conformidade com as conclusões do Conselho de dezembro de 2012, foi publicado em 22 de abril de 2013 um relatório conjunto da Comissão e da AR/VP. No que se refere à prioridade fundamental que consiste na melhoria visível e sustentável das relações com o Kosovo, registou-se de forma positiva o progresso alcançado no diálogo, em particular o acordo obtido em 19 de abril de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004153/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Serbia rejects agreement with Kosovo

Following the condition imposed by Brussels on consideration of Serbia's EU membership bid, the Serbian Prime Minister, Ivica Dačić, has announced that Belgrade does not accept two items in the proposal for reconciliation with Pristina, stating that the principles set out 'do not guarantee full security, survival and protection of human rights for the Serbs in Kosovo'.

1. What does the Vice-President/High Representative think will be the impact of this decision on the timetable for EU accession negotiations?

2. Can she indicate the current state of play in negotiations on the enclave in northern Kosovo where Serbs are in the majority?

3. What new mediation strategies does she think could be devised in an attempt to break the deadlock quickly?

Question for written answer E-004179/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Serbia rejects agreement with Kosovo

Following the condition imposed by Brussels on consideration of Serbia's EU membership bid, the Serbian Prime Minister, Ivica Dačić, has announced that Belgrade does not accept two items in the proposal for reconciliation with Pristina, stating that the principles set out 'do not guarantee full security, survival and protection of human rights for the Serbs in Kosovo'.

1. What does the Commission think will be the impact of this decision on the timetable for EU accession negotiations?

2. Can the Commission indicate the current state of play in negotiations on the enclave in northern Kosovo where Serbs are in the majority?

3. What new mediation strategies does the Commission think could be devised in an attempt to break the deadlock quickly?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

After the Serbian Government initially rejected the elements for an agreement on northern Kosovo, the HR/VP encouraged the two sides to make further efforts to reach an agreement. New meetings between Prime Ministers Dacic and Thaci took place on 17 and 19 April 2013 in Brussels. Those discussions, facilitated by the HR/VP, resulted in the initialling of a 'First agreement on principles governing the normalisation of relations' on 19 April 2013.

In line with the Council Conclusions of December 2012, a joint report of the European Commission and the HR/VP was issued on 22 April 2013. Regarding the key priority of a visible and sustainable improvement of relations with Kosovo, it took positive note of the progress achieved in the dialogue, particularly the agreement reached on 19 April 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004155/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Missão militar na RDC

O Conselho de Segurança da ONU autorizou a formação de uma nova «brigada de intervenção» para a República Democrática do Congo (RDC), que terá a duração de um ano. Esta nova brigada terá, entre outras coisas, liberdade para realizar operações militares contra os grupos armados que atuam na região, e as ofensivas poderão ser realizadas com ou sem a companhia do exército congolês.

Esta é a primeira vez que uma missão de manutenção de paz da ONU tem autorização para promover ofensivas, e foi criada «em caráter de exceção e não serve de precedente» aos princípios das missões de manutenção de paz da ONU.

1. Como avalia a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante esta decisão?

2. De que dados dispõe a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante relativamente ao ponto atual da situação na República Democrática do Congo?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente congratula-se com a adoção da Resolução 2098 do Conselho de Segurança da ONU, que visa reforçar o mandato da Monusco, nomeadamente no que se refere à proteção da população civil, neutralizar os grupos armados e contribuir para o processo de paz e de estabilização na região dos Grandes Lagos.

A este respeito, é igualmente importante sublinhar que a decisão do Conselho de Segurança da ONU de destacar uma brigada de intervenção de manutenção da paz se insere numa abordagem mais global, resultante do acordo-quadro para a paz, a segurança e a cooperação na RDC e na região, assinado em Adis Abeba em fevereiro de 2013, e da nomeação de Mary Robinson como enviada especial da ONU para a região dos Grandes Lagos. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente gostaria de reiterar a sua determinação em trabalhar em estreita colaboração com a enviada especial do Secretário-Geral da ONU, em apoio da concretização dos compromissos nacionais e regionais previstos na convenção-quadro. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente louva ainda os esforços da Conferência Internacional sobre a Região dos Grandes Lagos para promover um acordo de paz duradouro entre o Governo da RDC e o movimento M23 que tenha como base o diálogo e ponha termo à violência.

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente continua profundamente preocupada com a situação humanitária e de segurança no leste da RDC e a situação dos direitos humanos no Congo. Por um lado, o Governo da RDC é reponsável pelo exercício da sua plena autoridade em todo território do Congo, prosseguindo, simultaneamente, um programa de reformas em Quinxassa, que deverá prever, entre outras, medidas concretas em matéria de reforma do setor da segurança e de proteção dos direitos humanos e promover um consenso político nas zonas afetadas por conflitos. Por outro, os países vizinhos do Congo devem abster-se de qualquer interferência suscetível de causar distúrbios nas zonas afetadas por conflitos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004155/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Military mission in the DRC

The UN Security Council has authorised the formation of an 'intervention brigade' for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which will exist for one year. Amongst other things, this new brigade will be free to conduct military operations against the armed groups active in the region, and the offensives can be conducted accompanied or unaccompanied by the DRC army.

This is the first time that a UN peacekeeping mission has been authorised to conduct offensives and it has been established 'on an exceptional basis and without creating a precedent' as regards UN peacekeeping principles.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of this decision?

2. What details does she have of the current state of play in the DRC?

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

The HR/VP welcomes the adoption of UNSC resolution 2098 aimed at reinforcing MONUSCO's mandate, in particular as regards protection of civilians, neutralising armed groups, and contributing to peace and stabilisation in the Great Lakes region.

In this regard it is also important to underline that the UNSC decision to deploy a peace-enforcement intervention brigade is part of a more comprehensive approach ensuing from the signing of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region signed in Addis in February 2013 and the appointment of UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes, Mrs Mary Robinson. The HR/VP would like to reiterate her determination to work closely with the UNSG special envoy in support for the implementation of the national and regional commitments included in the framework agreement. The HR/VP also commends the ICGLR's efforts to encourage a lasting peace deal between the DRC government and the M23 movement based on dialogue rather than violence.

The HR/VP remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian and security situation in eastern DRC and the situation of human rights in Congo. On the one hand, the DRC government has the responsibility in asserting its full authority throughout the territory of Congo, while pursuing a reform agenda in Kinshasa, which should include among other things concrete measures in the areas of Security Sector Reform, protection of human rights and progress in promoting political consensus in conflict-affected areas. On the other hand, it is the responsibility of Congo's neighbours not to interfere in whatever manner that promotes disorder in conflict-affected areas.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004156/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Demissão do presidente da Coligação Nacional Síria

O presidente da Coligação Nacional Síria, que luta contra o regime de Assad, demitiu-se, relacionando a sua decisão com a passividade da comunidade internacional perante o morticínio sofrido pelo povo sírio.

Que avaliação faz a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante desta decisão?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente respeita a decisão do Xeque Moaz al-Khatib de apresentar a sua demissão do cargo de Presidente da coligação da oposição síria. O Xeque Al-Khatib foi um líder corajoso, que apresentou a iniciativa audaciosa de encetar o diálogo com os representantes do regime na busca de uma solução política para o conflito. A sua visão foi apoiada pela UE, pelo enviado especial conjunto Brahimi e pelo Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas Ban-ki Moon. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente partilha o ponto de vista do enviado especial conjunto Brahimi, expresso por ocasião da sua reunião com o Conselho de Segurança da ONU de 19 de abril, segundo o qual «a iniciativa de Moaz al-Khatib de fevereiro deve ser aprofundada e não rejeitada» pela nova liderança da coligação da oposição síria, que será escolhida, muito provavelmente, pela assembleia geral desta coligação em maio de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004156/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Resignation of the President of the Syrian National Coalition

The President of the Syrian National Coalition, which is fighting the Assad regime, has resigned. He related his decision to the international community's passive attitude towards the bloodshed being suffered by the Syrian people.

What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of this decision?

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

HR/VP respects the decision of Sheikh Moaz al-Khatib to resign his post as a President of the Syrian Opposition Coalition (SOC). Sheik Al-Khatib was a courageous leader, who presented a bold initiative to enter into the dialogue with representatives of the regime towards a political settlement of the conflict. His vision was supported by the EU, JSR Brahimi and UN SG Ban-ki Moon. HR/VP shares the view of JSR Brahimi expressed at his briefing to the UNSC on 19 April that 'Moaz al-Khatib's initiative in February should be further developed not discarded' by the new SOC leadership that will most likely be chosen by the SOC General Assembly in May 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004157/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: China — maior importador de petróleo do mundo

Segundo notícia veiculada pela imprensa internacional, a China terá ultrapassado os Estados Unidos da América (EUA) e tornou-se o maior importador de petróleo do mundo — uma mudança que pode afetar a «geopolítica dos recursos naturais».

Pergunto à Comissão: estará a Comissão em condições de confirmar a notícia em causa? Considera a Comissão que, de futuro, os países emergentes podem influenciar a escalada dos preços do barril de petróleo?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia não produz estatísticas próprias relativas às importações de petróleo pela China e pelos Estados Unidos da América. No entanto, de acordo com a recente BP Energy Outlook ([1]) e os serviços de informação energética dos EUA (US Energy Information Administration) espera-se, de facto, que a China ultrapasse os EUA como o maior importador mundial de petróleo em 2017.

Os países emergentes têm já um impacto significativo sobre o mercado petrolífero mundial atualmente devido ao seu crescimento económico registado nos últimos anos, com as regiões da Ásia e no Médio Oriente, a título de exemplo, a contribuir para um crescimento significativo da procura global de petróleo, aumentando assim os preços.

([1]) http://www.bp.com/liveassets/bp_internet/globalbp/globalbp_uk_english/reports_and_publications/statistical_energy_review_2011/STAGING/local_assets/pdf/BP_World_Energy_Outlook_booklet_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004157/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: China — the world's largest oil importer

The international media have been reporting that China has overtaken the US to become the world's largest oil importer, a change that could shake up the 'geopolitics of natural resources'.

Is the Commission in a position to confirm this news? Does the Commission believe that, in future, emerging countries could affect the increasing price of a barrel of oil?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The European Commission does not produce its own statistics regarding Chinese and US oil imports. Nonetheless, according to both the recent BP energy outlook ([1]) and the US Energy Information Administration, China is indeed expected to surpass the US as the world's largest importer of oil by 2017.

Emerging countries already have a significant impact on the global oil market now due to their economic growth over the last years, e.g. in the regions of Asia and the Middle East they have accounted for significant growth in global oil demand, thus also affecting prices.

([1]) http://www.bp.com/liveassets/bp_Internet/globalbp/globalbp_uk_english/reports_and_publications/statistical_energy_review_2011/STAGING/local_assets/pdf/BP_World_Energy_Outlook_booklet_2013.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004158/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações de George Soros

Recentemente, segundo notícia veiculada pela agência *Bloomberg*, Soros indicou que a zona euro é mesmo o principal centro de turbulência no sistema financeiro global. A união monetária será o centro da tempestade no próximo ano, que Soros acredita vir a ser problemático.

O investidor multimilionário George Soros refere ainda que há um verdadeiro risco de as políticas de austeridade na zona euro virem a destruir a União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão se considera que, neste momento, a união monetária possa estar na base da turbulência do sistema financeiro global.

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão considera que, em grande medida, as preocupações com uma possível desintegração do euro desapareceram. A estabilidade financeira está firmemente alicerçada. O Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade está em funcionamento e, juntamente com o anúncio das Transações Monetárias Definitivas (TMD) pelo BCE, ajudou a estabilizar os mercados financeiros e de obrigações. O reequilíbrio da economia europeia segue o seu curso e a UE está aplicar um conjunto de medidas centradas no crescimento sustentável e na criação de emprego. A recessão prolongada é, no caso de alguns Estados-Membros, uma recessão de balanço no final de um muito longo ciclo de crédito. O crescimento económico não retomará plenamente antes de o peso da dívida, tanto pública como privada, diminuir no conjunto da economia. Por sua vez, o reequilíbrio económico e as mudanças estruturais necessárias são dificultadas pelas vulnerabilidades no setor bancário e pelas profundas distorções nos canais de concessão de crédito. Fazer face a estes problemas estruturais e à erosão da competitividade da economia são preocupações centrais das recomendações específicas por país adotadas pelo Conselho em 9 de julho de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004158/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Statements by George Soros

Bloomberg recently reported comments by George Soros that the euro area is the main trouble spot in the global financial system today. The monetary union will be the centre of a storm over the course of a coming year that Mr Soros thinks will be difficult.

The multimillionaire investor Mr Soros also mentions that there is a real risk that the austerity policies in the euro area will destroy the EU.

Does the Commission believe that the monetary union might currently be causing turbulence in the global financial system?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The Commission considers that concerns that the euro could disintegrate have largely disappeared. Financial stability is firmly anchored. The European Stability Mechanism is operational and, together with the ECB's announcement of its OMT scheme, it has helped to stabilise financial and bond markets. The rebalancing of the European economy is underway and the EU's policy mix is focused on sustainable growth and job creation. The protracted recession is, in a number of Member States, a balance sheet recession at the end of a very long credit cycle. Economic growth will not fully resume before debt — both public and private — has been reduced in the overall economy. In turn, the necessary economic rebalancing and structural change is hindered by the vulnerabilities in the banking sector and by the deep distortions in the credit channel. Tackling these structural problems and the erosion of economic competitiveness are at the core of the country specific recommendations that were adopted by the Council on 9 July 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004159/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Projeto inovador em aquacultura

Segundo notícia veiculada pela Lusa, um doutorando em biociências da Universidade de Coimbra (UC) desenvolveu um projeto científico para reduzir os custos e o impacto ambiental em aquacultura, aumentando a produção, com o qual venceu um prémio internacional.

A investigação permite «simultaneamente, a redução de custos e o aumento da produção, mitigando o impacto ambiental em aquacultura, de modo que esta se torne mais sustentável».

O doutorando referiu que a introdução de glicerol na dieta alimentar dos peixes «pode permitir a substituição de uma percentagem de proteína sem prejudicar o peixe», com «a grande vantagem de não libertar compostos tóxicos», afirma o investigador, cujo estudo também consegue resolver «um problema para a indústria do biogasóleo, porque o glicerol é um resíduo e, atualmente, não há uma solução para o seu destino».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta importante descoberta?

De que forma este projeto poderá ser comparticipado pela U.E, tendo em conta a referida vantagem ambiental?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(4 de junho de 2013)

A melhoria do índice de conversão alimentar e a substituição de farinha de peixe e de óleo de peixe em alimentos utilizados na aquicultura contribuiu para a redução do impacto ambiental e para aumentar a competitividade do setor aquícola. Estes tópicos de investigação foram tratados por vários projetos financiados ao abrigo do 5.°, 6.° e 7.° Programas-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento, tais como o projeto «Arraina», em curso, e a Comissão acompanha de perto os desenvolvimentos relevantes neste domínio.

A proposta do Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020, que se encontra atualmente em negociação, servirá de base para os futuros projetos de investigação de interesse para a UE, incluindo no domínio da aquicultura. Os futuros projetos de investigação poderão considerar a questão da substituição de farinha de e óleo de peixe.

As possibilidades de obtenção de financiamento ao abrigo do presente programa, uma vez concluída, estarão disponíveis no sítio Internet da Direção-Geral da Investigação e da Inovação ([1]).

Em relação ao glicerol, muitos fabricantes de alimentos compostos já de o incorporam, em certa medida, em alimentos para animais destinados à produção de alimentos, incluindo peixes carnívoros.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004159/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Innovative aquaculture project

According to a report in Lusa, a PhD bioscience student from the University of Coimbra (UC) has won an international award for his project that reduces the cost and environmental impact of aquaculture, and increases production.

The research project enables 'a simultaneous reduction in cost and increase in production, and reduces the environmental impact, thus making it more sustainable'.

The student has stated that introducing glycerol into fish feed 'allows the substitution of a percentage of protein without harming the fish' and has 'the great advantage of not releasing toxic compounds'. The researcher also states that the project manages to solve 'a problem for the biodiesel industry, as glycerol is a waste product for which there is currently no use'.

Is the Commission aware of this important discovery?

In the light of the abovementioned environmental benefits, how might it be possible for the EU to be involved in this project?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

Improvement of feed conversion and the substitution of fishmeal and fish oil in aquaculture feeds have contributed to reducing the environmental impact and increasing the competitiveness of the aquaculture industry. These research topics have been addressed by several projects funded under the 5th, 6th and 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development, such as the ongoing 'ARRAINA' project, and the Commission carefully follows relevant developments in this field.

The proposed Horizon2020 framework programme, which is currently under negotiation, will support future research projects of EU interest, including in the field of aquaculture. Future research projects might consider the issue of further substituting fishmeal and fish oil.

The possibilities for obtaining funding under this programme, once finalised, will be available on the website of the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation ([1]).

In relation to glycerol, many manufacturers of compound feed already incorporate it to a certain extent into feed for food producing animals, including carnivorous fish.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004160/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Abetarda — uma espécie em perigo

A Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves (SPEA) escolheu recentemente a abetarda («Otis tarda») como Ave do Ano de 2013. Esta espécie é uma das mais belas aves que podem ser observadas nas planícies alentejanas. No entanto, os desafios à sua sobrevivência têm vindo a aumentar, sobretudo devido à intensificação da agricultura, à perda de «habitat» e à colisão com linhas elétricas.

Na União Europeia, as maiores populações de abetarda encontram-se em Espanha e em Portugal.

Pergunto à Comissão: tem conhecimento do declínio desta espécie? De que forma tem a Comissão contribuído para a proteção e o aumento dos efetivos da abetarda na UE?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(22 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento da evolução do estado de conservação da espécie, em Portugal e na UE. A abetarda é objeto de elevado interesse de conservação na União Europeia. Está referenciada no anexo I da Diretiva Aves ([1]) e é objeto de um plano de ação UE específico ([2]). A Comissão apoia os Estados-Membros através, por exemplo, de diversos projetos LIFE-Natureza e de medidas agroambientais de conservação da espécie ao abrigo do Fundo de Desenvolvimento Rural da UE. Alguns Estados-Membros, entre os quais Portugal, conceberam diversos espaços da Rede Natura 2000 para a espécie. É aos Estados-Membros que incumbe assegurar que estes espaços são devidamente protegidos e geridos, de modo a garantir a sobrevivência da espécie e o seu restabelecimento num nível estável e saudável.

([1]) Diretiva 2009/147/CE, de 30 de novembro de 2009, relativa à conservação das aves selvagens.
([2]) Pode ser consultado em:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/action_plans/docs/otis_tarda.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004160/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Great bustard — a species under threat

The Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds (SPEA) recently chose the great bustard (*Otis tarda*) as Bird of the Year 2013. It is one of the most beautiful birds that can be observed on the plains of the Alentejo. However, the challenges to its survival have been increasing, particularly due to the intensification of farming, loss of habitat and collisions with power lines.

The EU's largest great bustard populations are concentrated in Spain and Portugal.

Can the Commission state: is it aware of the decline of this species? How has the Commission been contributing to protecting great bustards and increasing their numbers in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the evolution of the species' conservation status, in Portugal and in the EU. The Great Bustard is a species of high conservation interest to the European Union. It is included in Annex I of the Birds Directive ([1]) and a specific EU Action Plan ([2]) was developed for this species. The Commission supports Member States through, for example, a number of LIFE Nature projects and agri-environmental measures under the EU Rural Development Fund targeting the conservation of this species. Member States including Portugal have designated a number of Natura 2000 sites for this species. It is for the Member States to ensure that those Natura 2000 sites are effectively protected and managed so as to ensure that populations of this species are maintained or restored to a stable and healthy state.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.
([2]) Available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/action_plans/docs/otis_tarda.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004161/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento da xenofobia nos sistemas de saúde europeus

Segundo notícia veiculada pelo portal informativo EurActiv, as medidas de austeridade adotadas na Europa em resposta à crise das dívidas públicas tiveram um forte impacto nos serviços de saúde de muitos Estados, tendo como resultado o aumento da xenofobia em países como a Grécia e Espanha.

Pergunto, por isso, à Comissão: tem conhecimento desta situação? Como a avalia?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do artigo ([1]) publicado no portal EurActiv relativo a um relatório recente dos «Médicos do Mundo» sobre «O acesso a cuidados de saúde na Europa em tempos de crise e crescente xenofobia», o qual analisa um alegado aumento dos atos de xenofobia em especial contra os imigrantes sem documentos.

A Comissão condena todas as formas e manifestações de racismo e xenofobia, dado que são totalmente incompatíveis com os valores em que se funda a UE, incluindo a Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais.

A Diretiva 2000/43/CE relativa à igualdade de tratamento, sem distinção de origem racial ou étnica ([2]) visa prevenir a discriminação com base na origem racial ou étnica em diversos domínios, incluindo os cuidados de saúde. Todos os Estados-Membros transpuseram esta diretiva para o seu direito nacional e a Comissão continua a acompanhar de perto a conformidade das legislações nacionais com a diretiva. Contudo, os incidentes isolados de discriminação são resolvidos nos tribunais nacionais e ao abrigo da legislação nacional.

Em março de 2013, a Agência dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia apresentou um relatório sobre «Desigualdades e discriminação múltipla no acesso aos cuidados de saúde e na qualidade dos mesmos» ([3]), que examina experiências de tratamento desigual nos cuidados de saúde.

A um nível mais geral, a Decisão-Quadro 2008/913/JAI do Conselho ([4]) obriga todos os Estados-Membros a garantir que qualquer incitação pública à violência ou ao ódio contra um grupo de pessoas ou os seus membros, definido por referência à raça, cor, religião, ascendência ou origem nacional ou étnica seja punível com sanções penais efetivas, proporcionadas e dissuasivas.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/health/xenophobia-rise-eu-healthcare-do-news-518979
([2]) Diretiva 2000/43/CE do Conselho, de 29 de junho de 2000, que aplica o princípio da igualdade de tratamento entre as pessoas, sem distinção de origem racial ou étnica, JO L 180 de 19.7.2000, p. 22.
([3]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/inequalities-discrimination-healthcare
([4]) Decisão-Quadro 2008/913/JAI do Conselho, de 28 de novembro de 2008, relativa à luta por via do direito penal contra certas formas e manifestações de racismo e xenofobia, JO L 328, p. 55.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004161/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Increased xenophobia in European health services

The information portal EurActiv is reporting that the austerity measures adopted in Europe in response to the public debt crisis have had a major impact on the health services in many Member States, resulting in increased xenophobia in countries like Greece and Spain.

Is the Commission aware of this situation and what is its view of it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the article ([1]) published on the EurActiv website on a recent report by 'Doctors of the World' on 'Access to healthcare in Europe in times of crisis and rising xenophobia', which discusses an alleged rise in xenophobia acts particularly against undocumented migrants.

The Commission condemns all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, as they are fully incompatible with the values on which the EU is founded including the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Directive 2000/43/EC on Racial Equality ([2]) aims to prevent discrimination on the basis of racial or ethnic origin in a number of areas, including healthcare. All Member States have transposed this directive into their national law, and the Commission continues to monitor closely that national laws are in compliance with the directive. However, individual incidents of discrimination are dealt with in national courts and under national law.

In March 2013 the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights published a report on 'Inequalities and multiple discrimination in access to and quality of healthcare' ([3]), which examines experiences of unequal treatment in healthcare.

At a more general level, Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA ([4]) obliges all Member States to ensure that any intentional public incitement to violence or hatred targeted against a group of persons or a member of such group defined by reference to race, colour, descent, religion or ethnic or national origin is punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive criminal penalties.

([1]) See http://www.euractiv.com/health/xenophobia-rise-eu-healthcare-do-news-518979.
([2]) Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 22.
([3]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/inequalities-discrimination-healthcare.
([4]) 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.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004162/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório OCDE — Eslovénia em risco de pedir ajuda financeira

Segundo um relatório recentemente apresentado pela OCDE, a Eslovénia está «imersa numa profunda recessão» e com «uma crise bancária severa».

Tal como aconteceu com Irlanda, com Espanha e com Chipre, serão as debilidades do sistema bancário a tornar incontornável o pedido de apoio externo.

A Eslovénia corre sérios riscos de se tornar no sexto país do euro a pedir ajuda financeira aos parceiros internacionais.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz do relatório da OCDE?

Confirma a possibilidade de um resgate financeiro ao referido país?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(29 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tomou nota do relatório da OCDE. Para consulta da avaliação feita pela Comissão sobre os desequilíbrios macroeconómicos na Eslovénia em 2013, remetemos o Senhor Deputado para a análise aprofundada publicada em 10 de abril de 2013. ([1])

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp142_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004162/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: OECD report — Risk of Slovenia requesting financial aid

According to a report recently published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Slovenia is in a 'deep recession' and 'is facing a severe banking crisis'.

As with Ireland, Spain and Cyprus, it is the weaknesses of the banking system that will make the request for outside help unavoidable.

Slovenia is running a serious risk of becoming the sixth euro area country to ask its international partners for financial aid.

What is the Commission's view of the OECD report?

Can it confirm the possibility of a financial bailout for Slovenia?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commissions took note of the OECD report. The Honourable Member can find the Commission's own assessment of macroeconomic imbalances in Slovenia in the 2013 In-depth-review published on 10 April 2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp142_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004163/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Crédito é mais caro para empresas do sul da Europa

Considerando que:

— Um estudo do banco norte-americano Goldman Sachs, citado ontem pelo jornal *Financial Times*, mostra que uma empresa da periferia europeia paga por um empréstimo, em média, 3,7 pontos percentuais acima do que paga uma congénere do Centro ou Norte da Europa;

— Conclui-se que, por exemplo, uma empresa espanhola, se pedir dinheiro à banca, paga, em média, uma taxa de juro de 5,12 %; se for uma companhia portuguesa, o nível de juros sobe para os 6,68 %; no outro lado da balança, uma empresa germânica consegue, com facilidade, uma taxa inferior a 3 %;

— A disponibilização de crédito às empresas que podem criar emprego — Espanha, Irlanda, Itália, Grécia e Portugal — afigura-se de grande importância;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Considera então que a política do BCE de disponibilizar linhas de crédito de médio e longo prazo à banca com taxas de juro baixas, facilitando o acesso ao crédito por parte das empresas, de forma a apoiar a recuperação das economias, tem sido satisfatória?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(12 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão recorda que a política monetária é da exclusiva competência do BCE, que atua com toda a independência, em conformidade com o mandato definido pelo Tratado.

Em dezembro de 2011, o BCE anunciou, entre outras medidas, duas operações de refinanciamento de longo prazo (LTRO), cada uma com um prazo de vencimento de três anos. Esta medida visa reforçar o financiamento pelos mercados dos bancos da área do euro, incentivando-os assim também a concederem empréstimos à economia real. A adesão às duas LTRO foi significativa, tendo sido possível evitar uma importante crise de crédito na altura. Para assegurar que a sua política monetária se repercuta devidamente em todos os países da área do euro, o BCE anunciou também, no verão de 2012, transações monetárias definitivas (OMT).

Embora as empresas e as famílias de alguns países da área do euro tenham aparentemente que pagar taxas de juro mais elevadas sobre os empréstimos do que as de outros, essa heterogeneidade das taxas deve-se a vários fatores. As diferenças nas condições de financiamento dos bancos são apenas um deles. A estrutura do sistema financeiro e a situação dos bancos em termos de fundos, bem como a situação económica geral do país em causa, também desempenham um papel importante. Estes fatores não podem ser resolvidos através da política monetária.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004163/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Credit is more expensive for companies in Southern Europe

Given that:

— A study by the US bank Goldman Sachs, cited yesterday in the *Financial Times*, shows that a company on the periphery of Europe pays 3.7% more on average for a loan than a similar company in Central or Northern Europe;

— It concludes that, for example, a Spanish company pays an average interest rate of 5.12% if it asks the bank for a loan, with a Portuguese company paying a rate of 6.68%, while a German company, by contrast, can easily find a rate lower than 3%;

— It is very important that credit be made available to companies that could create jobs in Spain, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Portugal;

Does the Commission believe that the European Central Bank's policy of making medium- and long-term credit lines available to banks at low interest rates, thereby making it easier for companies to access credit so as to support economic recovery, has been satisfactory?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission recalls that monetary policy is the exclusive competence of the ECB, which acts in full independence in line with its mandate set out by the Treaty.

The ECB in December 2011 *inter alia* announced two longer-term refinancing operations (LTROs) with a maturity of three years each. This measure aimed at improving euro area banks' market-based funding, thereby also encouraging them to lend to the real economy. Take-up in the two LTROs was significant and a major credit crunch could be avoided at the the time. To ensure that its monetary policy is properly transmitted in all euro area countries, the ECB additionally announced Outright Monetary Transactions in summer 2012.

While firms and households in some euro area countries appear to be facing higher interest rates on loans than in others, this heterogeneity in lending rates is due to a variety of factors. Differences in banks' funding conditions represent only one of them. The structure of the financial system and banks capital positions as well as the general economic situation in the country concerned also play an important role. These factors cannot be addressed by monetary policy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004164/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Crédito às famílias cai 85 % desde os máximos de 2007

Considerando que:

— Em Portugal, os empréstimos concedidos pela banca a empresas e famílias diminuíram em fevereiro, com os financiamentos aos particulares a cederam para níveis nunca antes vistos. A queda, face aos máximos, é de 85 %.

— A queda do financiamento da economia surge num período em que os próprios bancos têm dificuldade em aceder ao financiamento, em que as famílias e empresas têm maiores dificuldades em conseguirem cumprir os pagamentos dos seus empréstimos e em que as previsões económicas não são animadoras, o que leva a que por um lado as condições de financiamento sejam por si só pouco atrativas, com os bancos a fazerem mais exigências, e por outro o nível de incerteza leva também a que a procura de crédito diminua.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Sabendo que a dificuldade em aceder ao financiamento por parte das famílias é provocada, em parte, pela dificuldade dos próprios bancos em recorrer ao financiamento, leva a uma quebra generalizada do consumo e conduz a uma espiral recessiva, que medidas propõe a Comissão para que possibilite que a recapitalização feita em alguns bancos conduza ao efetivo acesso ao crédito por parte das famílias?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está a avaliar cuidadosamente a evolução dos mercados financeiros nacionais, incluindo em Portugal. Os bancos portugueses superaram as principais dificuldades de financiamento dado que alguns bancos já tiveram acesso aos mercados internacionais de capitais para diferentes prazos de vencimentos em 2012 e 2013, antes mesmo de as entidades soberanas terem voltado a emitir dívida a prazos mais longos. Os bancos preencheram satisfatoriamente os requisitos prudenciais em matéria de fundos próprios, tanto nacionais como internacionais, reforçando os seus fundos próprios através de recapitalizações específicas públicas e privadas. A melhoria da situação financeira dos bancos não indica que o baixo nível de créditos às famílias é causado principalmente por um défice da oferta de crédito. A principal razão parece vir do lado da procura, dado que as fracas perspetivas macroeconómicas, as incertezas quanto ao emprego e aos futuros preços dos bens imobiliários travam a procura de crédito por parte das famílias. Por outro lado, o crédito às empresas manteve-se mais estável em cerca de 85 % da média da última década. Trata-se de uma reafetação do crédito disponível que é necessária e procurada para os segmentos mais produtivos da economia, como uma das pedras angulares do programa de ajustamento macroeconómico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004164/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Credit to families falls by 85% since its 2007 peak

Given that:

— In Portugal, bank loans to families dropped in February, with finance for private individuals falling to levels never before seen. There has been an 85% reduction since the peak level.

— The drop in finance in the economy comes at a time when the banks themselves are finding it difficult to access finance, in which families and companies are finding it harder to make their loan repayments, and economic forecasts are not encouraging. On the one hand, this leads to banks attaching tough conditions to loans that make them unattractive, while, on the other, increased uncertainty reduces demand for credit.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Families' difficulties obtaining credit are caused, in part, by the banks' own difficulties accessing finance, leading to reduced consumption across the board and, as a result of that, a recessive spiral. In view of this, what measures does the Commission propose to enable the recapitalisation undertaken by some banks so that families can actually access credit?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission is carefully assessing developments in the national financial markets, including in Portugal. Portuguese banks have overcome main funding difficulties as some banks already accessed international capital markets for different maturities in 2012 and 2013, even before the sovereign reissued longer maturities. Banks successfully met both national and international prudential capital requirements reinforcing their own funds through targeted private and public recapitalisations. The improved funding situation of the banks does not indicate that the low level of credits to families is primarily caused by an undersupply of credit. It seems the main reason stems from the demand side, as a weak macroeconomic outlook, uncertainties about employment and future real estate prices hold back credit demand from families. On the other hand, lending to companies has remained more stable at around 85% of the past decade's average. This constitutes a necessary and sought after reattribution of available credit to the more productive segments of the economy as laid down as one of the macroeconomic adjustment programme's corner stone.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004165/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: A União Europeia propõe a certificação de experiências adquiridas fora da sala de aula

Considerando o seguinte:

— Segundo o acordado recentemente, em 2018, os 27 países da UE terão de disponibilizar aos europeus as ferramentas e os meios para poderem certificar dois tipos de conhecimentos: a educação formal (cursos, workshops), mas também as aprendizagens adquiridas fora da sala de aula (línguas aprendidas no estrangeiro, participação em programas de voluntariado, práticas de liderança em associações ou mesmo experiências como a maternidade);

— A UE analisa esta iniciativa como uma solução para resolver o desemprego jovem;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Não considera que as experiências, cursos de verão ou a própria vida pessoal são competências difíceis de traduzir num currículo académico, conseguindo-se provar que existem habilitações necessárias sem ter frequentado uma escola ou universidade?

2. Não considera que esta avaliação acarreta uma elevada carga de subjetividade?

3. No acordo estabelecido e na proposta lançada, tenciona a Comissão criar uma estrutura única para implementar este regime ou deixar que cada Estado-Membro defina o seu próprio modelo?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(14 de junho de 2013)

De acordo com a Recomendação do Conselho de 20 de dezembro de 2012 ([1]), as qualificações obtidas através da validação de experiências de aprendizagem não formal e informal devem respeitar normas acordadas que sejam iguais ou equivalentes às normas das qualificações obtidas através dos programas de ensino formal.

É essencial que a avaliação dos resultados da aprendizagem alcançados através da aprendizagem não formal e informal seja feita por profissionais com base em procedimentos de validação fiáveis. A este respeito, a recomendação sublinha a necessidade de desenvolver as competências profissionais do pessoal envolvido no processo de validação em todos os setores pertinentes, assim como a necessidade de levar a cabo medidas transparentes de garantia da qualidade que apoiem metodologias de avaliação e ferramentas fiáveis, válidas e credíveis.

A Comissão não tem intenção de instaurar um quadro único para aplicar a recomendação dirigida aos Estados-Membros. O papel e as tarefas futuras da Comissão para este domínio de intervenção estão identificados na recomendação.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:PT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004165/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: On the EU proposal for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

— According to this recent recommendation, in 2018 all 27 EU countries should have in place arrangements for the validation of two kinds of learning: formal education (courses, workshops), and also learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal education (languages learned during a stay in another country, skills acquired through volunteering, leadership skills or even experiences such as motherhood);

— The EU considers this a solution to youth unemployment;

1. Does the Commission not think that life experiences, summer courses and one's personal life are competences that are hard to translate into an academic curriculum, suggesting that there are necessary skills that can be acquired without going to school or university?

2. Does it agree that this validation involves a great degree of subjectivity?

3. In the agreement and proposal, does the Commission intend to set up a single framework to implement this plan, or will it allow each Member State to define its own model?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

According to the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 ([1]) qualifications obtained through the validation of non- formal and informal learning experiences should comply with agreed standards that are either the same as, or equivalent to, the standards for qualifications obtained through formal education programmes.

It is essential that the assessment of learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning is carried out by professionals on the basis of reliable validation procedures. In this respect the recommendation stresses the need to develop the professional competences of staff involved in the validation process across all relevant sectors, as well as the need to take transparent quality assurance measures that support reliable, valid and credible assessment methodologies and tools.

The Commission does not intend to set up a single framework to implement the recommendation addressed to the Member States. The role and future tasks of the Commission in this policy area are identified in the recommendation.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:EN:PDF.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004166/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Processo Europeu das Ações de Pequeno Montante I

Considerando que:

— O Processo Europeu das Ações de Pequeno Montante, disponível desde 2009, configura uma alternativa aos processos existentes nos termos da lei dos Estados-Membros, sendo as decisões proferidas neste tipo de processos reconhecidas e executórias nos outros Estados-Membros sem necessidade de declaração de executoriedade e sem que seja possível contestar o seu reconhecimento;

— Apenas uma parcela mínima dos conflitos transfronteiriços é conduzida através desta solução;

Pergunto à Comissão:

De acordo com a resposta apresentada à pergunta parlamentar E-009293/2012, foi referido a apresentação de propostas para o ano de 2013 no sentido de promover e incentivar esta alternativa simples de resolução deste tipo de conflitos. Em que consistem essas propostas?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(24 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão está a preparar o relatório sobre a aplicação prática do Regulamento que institui o processo europeu para ações de pequeno montante, que será apresentado ao Parlamento Europeu, ao Conselho e ao Comité Económico e Social Europeu até 1 de janeiro de 2014, conforme dispõe o artigo 28.° do mesmo regulamento. A Comissão enviou um questionário aos Estados-Membros, pedindo dados e informações para utilizar na elaboração do relatório. Além disso, está a realizar uma consulta pública destinada a recolher informações e opiniões das partes interessadas, a que é possível aceder através do seguinte apontador ([1]).

Paralelamente, a Comissão está a apreciar os aperfeiçoamentos legislativos a introduzir, eventualmente, no regulamento, no intuito de reduzir os custos do processo e de o simplificar ainda mais, nomeadamente através de uma utilização mais ampla das comunicações eletrónicas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=SmallClaims

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004166/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: European Small Claims Procedure I

Given that:

— Since 2009, the European Small Claims Procedure has offered claimants an alternative to the processes existing under Member States' national laws. Judgments delivered under this procedure are recognised and enforceable in the other Member States without needing a declaration of enforceability, and they cannot be contested;

— This solution is only used for a minimal number of cross-border conflicts;

Can the Commission state:

The answer to Question E-009293/2012 mentioned the tabling of proposals for 2013 to promote and encourage this simple alternative for resolving this type of conflict. Of what do these proposals consist?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2013)

The Commission is in the course of preparation of the report on practical implementation of the regulation establishing the European Small Claims Procedure, which will be presented to the European Parliament, to the Council and to the European Economic and Social Committee by 1 January 2014, as provided for in Article 28 of the regulation. The Commission has sent a questionnaire to the Member States, asking for data and information that will feed in to the report. To gather information and opinions of stakeholders the Commission is running a public consultation, which can be consulted through the following link http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=SmallClaims.

In parallel the Commission carries out an assessment of the possible legislative improvements to the regulation, aiming at reduction of costs of the proceedings and further simplifications, in particular through broader use of electronic communications.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004167/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Disponibilização dos memorandos de entendimento e documentos técnicos na língua portuguesa

Considerando que:

— Nem todos os documentos do programa da troika são disponibilizados em português;

— Desde a assinatura do acordo original do memorando, no verão de 2011, se têm verificado atrasos na divulgação pública dos textos, como, por exemplo, o atraso da publicação em português da 5.ª atualização do memorando, só disponibilizada 15 dias depois da assinatura da 6.ª revisão;

— As traduções para português dos memorandos de entendimento e dos documentos técnicos subsequentes têm sido disponibilizadas, em primeira mão, por *bloggers* portugueses, procurando colmatar os atrasos na publicação oficial dos textos em língua portuguesa.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como justifica esta situação?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2013)

A tradução do Memorando de Entendimento compete às autoridades portuguesas e não à Comissão. Por conseguinte, a Comissão não pode pronunciar-se sobre os alegados atrasos verificados na publicação da versão portuguesa do Memorando de Entendimento.

É de referir que o Memorando de Entendimento é acordado entre as autoridades portuguesas e a Comissão, nos termos da Decisão de Execução do Conselho relativa à concessão de assistência financeira a Portugal, que constitui o principal instrumento jurídico que rege a assistência financeira da União a Portugal. Essa decisão, bem como as suas alterações sucessivas, são publicadas no Jornal Oficial da União Europeia em todas as línguas oficiais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004167/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Availability of Memoranda of Understanding and technical documents in Portuguese

— Not all documents in the Troika programme are available in Portuguese;

— Since the original Memorandum of Understanding agreement was signed in the summer of 2011, there have been delays in releasing texts in Portuguese, an example of which is the delay in publishing the 5th review of the Memorandum, which was only available 15 days after the 6th review had been signed;

— The Portuguese translations of the Memoranda of Understanding and subsequent technical documents have first been released by Portuguese bloggers who have tried to make up for the delays in the official publication of the texts in Portuguese.

How does the Commission justify this situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The translation of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) is arranged by the Portuguese authorities and not by the Commission. The Commission can therefore not comment on any possible delays in the publication of the Portuguese version of the MoU.

It should be noted that the MoU is agreed between the Portuguese authorities and the Commission in accordance with the Council Implementing Decision (CID) on granting Union financial assistance to Portugal — which is the main legal instrument governing the Union financial assistance to Portugal. This decision and its successive amendments are published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* in all official languages.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004168/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Divergências entre Norte e Sul da Europa

Considerando que:

Há uma tendência crescente de divergência entre a região Norte e a região Sul da União Europeia. Essa tendência reflete a natureza do comércio entre empresas do Norte, do Sul e do exterior da UE. Na maior parte dos casos, as empresas do Norte produzem bens de «alta qualidade» com alto valor que são vendidos, principalmente, para o exterior da UE, e as empresas do Sul produzem produtos de «baixa qualidade» que, com elevados custos de transporte, são vendidos, principalmente, para o mercado interno europeu.

Pergunta-se:

Que tem sido feito para que estas divergências se esbatam de forma a aproximar as diversas economias do Norte e do Sul?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(30 de maio de 2013)

À luz da experiência adquirida no contexto da crise económica e financeira, a Comissão tomou medidas para reforçar a supervisão económica na UE, de modo a assegurar que os desequilíbrios macroeconómicos possam ser enfrentados de forma sistemática e numa fase precoce. O procedimento relativo aos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos, que está em vigor desde o outono de 2011, tem por objetivo evitar e ultrapassar os desequilíbrios macroeconómicos prejudiciais, nomeadamente os relacionados com a acumulação de elevados défices e excedentes no interior da UE (e na zona do euro) e a criação de grandes diferenças de competitividade entre os Estados-Membros. Neste contexto, remete-se o Senhor Deputado para a Comunicação da Comissão «Relatório sobre o mecanismo de alerta 2013» ([1]), a Comunicação «Resultados das apreciações aprofundadas realizadas no âmbito do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1176/2011 sobre prevenção e correção dos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos» ([2]), as análises aprofundadas publicadas para 13 Estados-Membros ([3]), bem como o relatório sobre os excedentes da balança corrente «*Current Account Surpluses in the EU*», European Economy, 9 (2012).

A Comissão deverá emitir recomendações para os países que se considerou terem desequilíbrios excessivos, no âmbito do Semestre Europeu de 29 de maio de 2013.

([1]) COM(2012) 751 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 199 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/macroeconomic_imbalance_procedure/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004168/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Divide between north and south in Europe

Given that:

There is a growing north-south divide within the EU. This trend reflects the nature of trade between companies in the north, in the south and outside the EU. For the most part, the companies of the north produce 'high-quality' goods of high value that are mainly sold outside the EU, while the companies of the south produce 'poor-quality' products that, with high transportation costs, are mainly sold within the European internal market.

What has the Commission been doing to highlight this divide, so as to close the gap between the various economies of north and south?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

In the light of the experience gained in the context of the economic and financial crisis, the Commission has taken action to strengthen economic surveillance in the EU so as to ensure that macroeconomic imbalances can be tackled systematically and at an early stage. The Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure, which has been in force since autumn 2011 aims at avoiding and overcoming damaging macroeconomic imbalances, including those related to the accumulation of large deficit and large surpluses inside the EU (and the euro area), and the creation of large competitiveness gaps among Member States. In this context, the Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's 'Alert Mechanism Report 2013' ([1]), the communication 'Results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances ([2])', the in-depth reviews that were published for 13 Member States (available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/macroeconomic_imbalance_procedure/index_en.htm),

as well as the report on 'Current Account Surpluses in the EU,' European Economy, 9(2012).

Recommendations for countries which were found to have excessive imbalances will be issued by the Commission in the framework of the European Semester on 29 May 2013.

([1]) COM(2012) 751 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 199 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004169/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Mortalidade infantil na Europa

Considerando que:

— De acordo com um estudo publicado recentemente, as principais causas de morte entre as crianças com menos de 14 anos deixaram de ser as doenças infecciosas e passaram a ser ferimentos, envenenamento, cancro e doenças congénitas ou neurológicas;

— Segundo este estudo existem muitas diferenças entre os primeiros 15 países da União Europeia e, se todos apresentassem a taxa de mortalidade infantil menos elevada, como a Suécia, morreriam todos os anos menos 6 198 crianças;

— A investigadora que coordenou o artigo explicou que as diferenças entre os melhores e os piores se justificam porque alguns países não conseguiram adaptar-se às mudanças epidemiológicas;

Pergunto à Comissão:

A Comissão dispõe de dados estatísticos sobre a mortalidade infantil na Europa?

Que medidas pode a Comissão tomar para minimizar esta discrepância verificada na UE?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia, por intermédio do Eurostat, recolhe dados sobre as taxas de mortalidade das crianças com menos de 15 anos por 100 000 habitantes ([1]). Em 2010, na UE, a primeira causa de morte neste escalão etário refere-se a patologias específicas com origem no período perinatal (taxa: 13,7 por 100 000 habitantes) seguida mormente por malformações congénitas, deformações e aberrações cromossómicas (8,7); causas externas (4); e cancros (2,6). As doenças infecciosas aparecem mais abaixo na classificação com uma taxa de 1.

A classificação das principais causas de morte é relativamente semelhante nos primeiros 15 países da UE e no conjunto da UE, com apenas uma ligeira diferença relativa às doenças respiratórias, cuja taxa é mais elevada na UE 27 (2,2) do que na UE15 (0,8). Em 2010, a taxa de mortalidade, tendo em conta todas as causas de morte, das crianças com menos de 15 anos era de 40,4 na UE27 e de 35,4 na UE15 por 100 000 habitantes, variando as taxas nacionais entre 24,8 e 101 ([2]).

A Comissão apoia os Estados-Membros na criação de oportunidades para a identificação e o intercâmbio de boas práticas, designadamente através de ações conjuntas no âmbito do Programa de Saúde. Por exemplo, está a ser lançada uma ação conjunta no âmbito da saúde, prevendo-se para 2013 uma ação conjunta no domínio das doenças crónicas.

No que respeita ao trabalho da Comissão em matéria de saúde infantil em domínios como a obesidade, a saúde mental e a diabetes, remete-se o Senhor Deputado para as respostas E-00461/2013, E-11437/2012, E-10819/2012 e E-09806/2012 ([3]).

([1]) Causas de morte por regiões NUTS 2 — Taxa de mortalidade bruta (por 100 000 habitantes) (Dados anuais). http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_acdr&lang=en
([2]) Causas de morte — Números absolutos (Dados anuais). http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_acdr&lang=en
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004169/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Child mortality in Europe

— According to a report published recently, the principal causes of death in children under 14 are no longer infectious diseases, but are due to injury, poisoning, cancer, and congenital and neurological disease.

— The report shows that there are numerous variations between the first 15 countries in the EU and, that if all of them had a child mortality rate as low as Sweden's, there would be 6 198 fewer child deaths every year,

— The researcher responsible for the report explained that the differences between the best and the worst results were based on the fact that several countries had not managed to adapt to epidemiological changes.

Does the Commission have any statistics on child mortality in Europe?

What measures can the Commission take to minimise these EU-wide variations?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The European Commission, via Eurostat, collects data on the rates of death for children below the age of 15 per 100 000 inhabitants ([1]). In 2010, in the EU, the first cause of death for this age group were specific conditions originating in the perinatal period (rate: 13.7 per 100,000 inhabitants) followed, *inter alia*, by congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities (8.7); external causes (4); and cancers (2.6). Infectious diseases appear lower in the ranking with a rate of 1.

The ranking of main causes of death is relatively similar in the first 15 countries in the EU and in the EU as a whole, with only one slight difference for respiratory diseases where the rate is higher for EU 27 (2.2) in comparison with EU-15 (0.8). In 2010, the rate for all causes of death in children under 15 was 40.4 in EU-27 and 35.4 in EU-15 for 100,000 inhabitants, with national rates varying from 24.8 to 101 ([2]).

The Commission supports Member States in providing opportunities for the identification and exchange of good practice, *inter alia* through joint actions under the Health Programme. For example, a joint action on mental health is now getting under way, and in 2013, a joint action on chronic diseases is foreseen.

Regarding the Commission's work on child health in areas such as obesity, mental health and diabetes, the honourable member is also referred to answers E-00461/2013, E-11437/2012, E-10819/2012 and E-09806/2012 ([3]).

([1]) Causes of death by NUTS 2 regions — Crude death rate (per 100 000 inhabitants) (Annual data), http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_acdr&lang=en
([2]) Causes of death — Absolute number (Annual data), http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_anr&lang=en
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004170/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Reativação das centrais nucleares no Japão

Considerando que:

— O primeiro-ministro japonês Shinzo Abe sugeriu reativar os reatores nucleares no Japão para impulsionar a reconstrução das zonas devastadas pelo tsunami de 2011, indicando que tomará a decisão após avaliação da segurança das centrais.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que medidas tem vindo a tomar no sentido de avaliar a segurança das centrais nucleares do espaço europeu?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para as suas respostas às perguntas O-000183/12, formulada pela Senhora Deputada Amalia Sartori, e E-002085/13, formulada pela Senhora Deputada Monika Flašíková Beòová, bem como para a sua resposta à pergunta escrita do Senhor Deputado E-009278/12 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004170/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Reactivation of nuclear plants in Japan

Given that:

— The Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, has suggested reactivating the country's nuclear reactors to boost reconstruction of the areas devastated by the 2011 tsunami, indicating that he will make a decision after assessing safety at the plants.

What measures has the Commission been taking to assess the safety of EU nuclear plants?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies to questions O-000183/12 by Amalia Sartori and E-002085/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová, as well as to its reply to the Honourable Member's Written Question E-009278/12 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004171/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Cancro do esófago — novas descobertas

Considerando o seguinte:

— O cancro do esófago mata anualmente 400 000 pessoas em todo o mundo;

— Uma equipa de cientistas descobriu mutações em 26 genes que podem causar cancro do esófago; este avanço pode conduzir a novos medicamentos para esta doença mortal, que é cada vez mais frequente;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta nova investigação?

No sentido de melhorar a qualidade de vida dos doentes e aumentar a sua esperança de vida, que tipo de medidas pode a Comissão apresentar para apoiar e impulsionar novas investigações nesta área?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos recentes trabalhos de sequenciação do genoma realizados sobre 149 doentes com cancro do esófago, a que se refere o Senhor Deputado ([1]).

A investigação translacional sobre o cancro do esófago e a qualidade de vida, incluindo os cuidados paliativos e de fim de vida e a investigação sobre a dor, têm sido uma prioridade constante do Sexto e Sétimo Programas-Quadro de Investigação, Desenvolvimento Tecnológico e Demonstração (6.° PQ, 2002-2006, 7.° PQ, 2007-2013), recebendo contribuições da UE de 6,5 milhões de euros e 63 milhões de euros, respetivamente.

Exemplos dessa investigação: BAMOD ([2]) (diagnóstico do cancro do esófago por análise do ar exalado), Attack ([3]) (imunoterapia de base celular para o tratamento de doentes com cancro do esófago), Prisma ([4]) e Opcare9 ([5]) (identificação das melhores práticas e lacunas na investigação para cuidados paliativos e de fim de vida, respetivamente). Além disso, a Iniciativa sobre Medicamentos Inovadores (IMI) ([6]) financiou o projeto Europain ([7]) (mecanismos da dor).

Os cuidados paliativos são também objeto da ação comum da Parceria Europeia de Luta contra o Cancro (EPAAC ([8])) 2011-2014, que apoia os Estados-Membros neste esforço, proporcionando um quadro para o intercâmbio de boas práticas, partilha de informações e conhecimentos em matéria de prevenção e controlo do cancro. Este apoio prosseguirá no âmbito de uma nova ação comum de controlo do cancro, esperada para o período de 2014-2016.

A proposta da Comissão no domínio Horizonte 2020 — Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação (2014-2020) ([9]) permitirá estudar abordagens de tratamento do cancro no âmbito do desafio societal «Saúde, alterações demográficas e bem-estar» e do objetivo «Liderança em Tecnologias Facilitadoras e Industriais» da prioridade «Liderança Industrial».

([1]) Dulak et al. (2013) Nature Genetics 45(5): 478-88.
([2]) http://eu-proposal.voc-research.at/
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/106528_en.html
([4]) http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/medicine/research/cancer/palliative/arp/prisma/
([5]) http://www.opcare9.eu/
([6]) http://imi.europa.eu/index_en.html
([7]) http://www.imieuropain.org/
([8]) http://www.epaac.eu/home
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004171/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Oesophageal cancer — new discoveries

— Oesophageal cancer kills 400 000 people worldwide every year;

— A team of scientists have discovered mutations in 26 genes that may cause oesophageal cancer; this development could pave the way for new treatments for this increasingly common and deadly disease;

Is the Commission aware of this new research?

What measures can the Commission take to support and encourage new research in the field in order to improve the quality of life for those affected and to increase their life expectancy?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of recent genome sequencing efforts of 149 patients with oesophageal cancer as mentioned by the Honourable Member ([1]).

Translational research on oesophageal cancer and quality-of-life, including palliative and end-of-life care as well as research on pain, have been a constant priority within the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP6, 2002-2006; FP7, 2007-2013), receiving EU contributions of EUR 6.5 million and EUR 63 million, respectively.

Examples include BAMOD ([2]) (diagnosis of oesophageal cancer patients via breath-gas analysis), ATTACK ([3]) (cell-based immunotherapy to treat patients with oesophageal cancer), PRISMA ([4]) and OPCARE9 ([5]) (identification of best practices and gaps in research for palliative and end-of-life care, respectively); In addition, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) ([6]) funded the project EuropaIN ([7]) (mechanisms of pain).

Palliative care is also addressed by the European Partnership for Action against Cancer Joint Action (EPAAC ([8])) 2011-2014, which supports the Member States in tackling cancer by providing a framework for exchange of best practices, sharing information and knowledge in cancer prevention and control. This support will be continued in a new Joint Action on Comprehensive Cancer Control expected for the period 2014-2016.

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([9]), will offer opportunities to address cancer therapeutic approaches through the 'Health, demographic change and well-being' societal challenge and the 'Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies' objective of the priority 'Industrial leadership'.

([1]) Dulak et al. (2013) Nature Genetics 45(5): 478-88.
([2]) http://eu-proposal.voc-research.at/
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/106528_en.html
([4]) http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/medicine/research/cancer/palliative/arp/prisma/
([5]) http://www.opcare9.eu/
([6]) http://imi.europa.eu/index_en.html
([7]) http://www.imieuropain.org/
([8]) http://www.epaac.eu/home
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004172/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Cancro da mama — nova investigação

Considerando que:

— Todos os anos são diagnosticados na Europa 3,2 milhões de novos casos de cancro, essencialmente cancro da mama, colorrectal e do pulmão;

— Uma equipa de investigadores portugueses está a desenvolver um novo tratamento para o cancro da mama a partir da engenharia molecular, criando um anticorpo capaz de eliminar as células tumorais malignas;

— Esta investigação pode ser um passo importante para o tratamento mais eficaz e menos tóxico do cancro da mama, mas também dos cancros do estômago, do pâncreas e do cólon.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta nova investigação?

No sentido de melhorar a qualidade de vida dos doentes e aumentar a sua esperança de vida, que tipo de medidas pode a Comissão apresentar para apoiar e impulsionar novas investigações nesta área?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do projeto referido pelo Senhor Deputado. A «Engenharia de anticorpos para o tratamento do cancro da mama», a que foi atribuído o «Prémio de Mérito Cientifico Santander Totta Universidade Nova de Lisboa 2012/2013» ([1]), destina-se a desenvolver terapêuticas com anticorpos para tratar o cancro da mama.

A Comissão apoiou, através do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de atividades em matéria de investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), 40 projetos que tratam abordagens imunoterapêuticas do cancro da mama e de outros tipos, incluindo novos agentes terapêuticos com anticorpos, com uma contribuição total da UE de 93,7 milhões de EUR.

As abordagens em causa incluem, por exemplo, a utilização de proteínas de fusão anticorpos-citocina (Adamant ([2])), radioterapia dirigida com utilização de anticorpos (TARCC ([3])), engenharia genética de células T para lutar contra o cancro (Attack ([4])), vacinas personalizadas contra o cancro (Gapvac ([5])) e citoquinas imunomoduladoras (Immomec ([6])).

A proposta da Comissão relativa ao Horizonte 2020 — Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação (2014-2020) ([7]) — irá provavelmente proporcionar oportunidades de investigação sobre abordagens de tratamento do cancro no âmbito do desafio societal «Saúde, alterações demográficas e bem-estar» e do objetivo «Liderança em Tecnologias Facilitadoras e Industriais» da prioridade «Liderança Industrial». É demasiado cedo para definir as questões específicas em matéria de investigação que poderiam ser abordadas.

([1]) http://www.unl.pt/en/news/Premio_de_Merito_Cientifico_Santander_Totta_%E2 %80 %93_Universidade_Nova_de_Lisboa/id=115/
([2]) http://www.adamant-fp7.eu/
([3]) http://www.tarcc.org/
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13489278
([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13295541
([6]) http://www.immomec.eu
([7]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004172/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Breast cancer — new research

— Each year in Europe, 3.2 million new cases of cancer are diagnosed, most of which are breast, colorectal and lung cancer;

— A team of Portuguese researchers is working on a new molecularly engineered breast cancer treatment to create an antibody that is able to eliminate malignant tumour cells;

— This research may be a significant step towards more efficient and less toxic treatment for breast cancer, and also for stomach, pancreatic and bowel cancers.

Is the Commission aware of this new research?

What measures can the Commission take to support and encourage new research in the field in order to improve the quality of life for those affected and to increase life expectancy?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the project mentioned by the Honourable Member: 'Antibody Engineering for the Treatment of Breast Cancer', which was awarded with the 'Prémio de Mérito Cientifico Santander Totta Universidade NOVA de Lisboa 2012/2013' ([1]), and aimed at developing antibody-based therapeutics to treat breast cancer.

The Commission has supported through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), 40 projects addressing immunotherapeutic approaches in breast and other cancers, including novel antibody-based therapeutics, for a total EU contribution of EUR 93.7 million.

The approaches tackled include, for instance, the use of antibody-cytokine fusion proteins (ADAMANT ([2])), antibody-based targeted radiotherapy (TARCC ([3])), engineered T cells to combat cancer (ATTACK ([4])), personalised cancer vaccines (GAPVAC ([5])) and immunomodulatory cytokines (IMMOMEC ([6])).

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([7]) will likely offer opportunities for research on cancer therapeutic approaches through the 'Health, demographic change and well-being' societal challenge and the 'Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies' objective of the priority 'Industrial leadership'. It is too early to define the specific research issues that could be addressed.

([1]) http://www.unl.pt/en/news/Premio_de_Merito_Cientifico_Santander_Totta_%E2%80%93_Universidade_Nova_de_Lisboa/id=115/
([2]) http://www.adamant-fp7.eu/
([3]) http://www.tarcc.org/
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13489278
([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13295541
([6]) http://www.immomec.eu
([7]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004173/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento do número de casos de maus-tratos a menores

Considerando que:

— Em Portugal, a Comissão de Proteção de Crianças e Jovens alertou para o facto de as dificuldades económicas estarem na origem do aumento do número de casos de negligência e maus-tratos a menores;

— Na zona oriental do Porto foram sinalizadas, até 31 março, 114 crianças em situação de perigo, mais oito por mês do que em 2012, por negligência associada a carências económicas;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia esta situação?

A Comissão dispõe de dados estatísticos relativos a situações semelhantes noutros Estados-Membros?

Que apostas se podem fazer no domínio da prevenção, de forma a evitar um aumento do número de casos semelhantes?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão está consciente da possível correlação entre o agravamento da situação económica das famílias e o aumento dos casos de negligência e maus-tratos a menores, e gostaria de salientar que a pobreza dos pais não deve constituir, por si só, motivo para que uma criança lhes seja retirada, em conformidade com os artigos 3.°, 9.° e 18.° da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre os Direitos da Criança (CNUDC). Como sublinhado no Programa da UE para os Direitos da Criança ([1]), as crianças que vivem em risco ou em situação de pobreza são particularmente vulneráveis e enfrentam maiores riscos para a vida e o bem-estar. A Comissão tenta, portanto, ajudar a evitar este fenómeno através de ações orientadas para a sua causa subjacente — a pobreza.

A Comissão não recolhe estatísticas sobre a negligência ou os maus-tratos a menores nos Estados-Membros. Por esta razão, não está em condições de determinar as eventuais ligações entre o aumento da pobreza e os maus-tratos a menores nesses mesmos Estados-Membros.

A Comissão adotou em fevereiro de 2013, no âmbito do seu Pacote de Investimento Social mais alargado, uma Recomendação intitulada «Investir nas crianças: quebrar o ciclo de desvantagens». Nesse contexto, apelou nomeadamente a que os Estados-Membros invistam mais nas crianças, apoiando o acesso dos pais ao mercado de trabalho através da prestação de um apoio adequado ao rendimento, da oferta de serviços de qualidade na educação e cuidados na primeira infância e do reforço dos serviços de prevenção e proteção das crianças ([2]).

O Eurostat apresenta regularmente estatísticas sobre o risco de pobreza infantil e de privação material e sobre os agregados familiares com intensidade de trabalho baixa ([3]). A proporção das crianças em risco de pobreza na UE manteve-se mais ou menos constante entre 2009 e 2011, ano em que aumentou de 19,8 % para 20,6 %. A percentagem de crianças em situação de privação material passou de 9,3 % para 10 %, ao passo que a percentagem de crianças que vivem em agregados familiares com intensidade de trabalho baixa subiu de 8,0 % para 8,8 %.

([1]) COM(2011) 0060 de 15.2.2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=89&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news
([3]) Ver DG EMPL, Evolução do emprego e da situação social na Europa (2012), anexo com os indicadores de inclusão social.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004173/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Rise in the number of child abuse cases

— The Portuguese Commission for the Protection of Children and Young People has warned that economic difficulties are at the root of the rise in the number of child neglect and child abuse cases;

— In the eastern region of Porto, 114 children were registered at risk of negligence due to financial difficulties up until 31 March, an increase of eight per month compared with 2012.

What is the Commission's assessment of this situation?

Does the Commission have statistics on similar situations in other Member States?

What can it do to prevent an increase in similar cases?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the possible correlation between the worsening economic situation of families and rise of the child neglect and abuse cases and is concerned that poverty of the parents should not constitute sole grounds for the removal of a child, in line with UNCRC Articles 3, 9 and 18. As highlighted in the EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child ([1]), children living in or at risk of poverty are particularly vulnerable and face greater risks to their lives and well-being. The Commission therefore aims to help prevent this phenomenon by actions that target the root cause — poverty.

The Commission does not collect statistics on neglect or abuse of children in the Member States. For this reason the Commission is not in a position to determine possible linkages between rising poverty and child abuse in other Member States.

The Commission adopted in February 2013, as part of its broader Social Investment Package, a recommendation on 'Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage'. It notably calls on the Member States to invest more in their children by supporting parents' access to the labour market, by providing adequate income support, by offering quality early childhood education and care and by strengthening preventive child protection services ([2]).

Eurostat regularly presents statistics on the risk of child poverty, material deprivation and low work intensity of the household ([3]) . The share of children in the EU at risk of poverty remained more or less constant between 2009 and 2011 when it went from 19.8 to 20.6%. The share of materially deprived children rose from 9.3% to 10%, while the share of children living in low work intensity households increased from 8.0 to 8.8%.

([1]) COM(2011)0060, 15.2.2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=89&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news.
([3]) See DG EMPL, Employment and Social developments in Europe 2012, annex with social inclusion indicators.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004174/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego na UE afeta mais de 26 milhões de pessoas

Considerando que:

— De acordo com os dados da Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT), e desde a introdução das medidas de austeridade para tentar travar a crise económica e financeira, mais de 26 milhões de europeus ficaram sem trabalho;

— Segundo o comunicado da OIT «o desemprego de longa duração está a tornar-se num problema estrutural para muitos países europeus», e em 19 países «mais de 40 % dos desempregados são de longa duração»;

— A organização culpa as medidas de austeridade e as reformas que «não atacam as raízes da crise», e pede uma «mudança urgente»,

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia as declarações da OIT?

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

O desemprego tem vindo a aumentar na maioria dos países da UE ao longo da crise e, em alguns Estados-Membros, o desemprego de longa duração está a tornar-se numa situação de emergência, tal como sublinhado na declaração da OIT. Embora se saiba que as medidas de consolidação orçamental podem ter um impacto negativo sobre o desemprego, estas não foram a causa mais importante do seu aumento, que esteve sobretudo ligado à recessão resultante da crise financeira e da dívida soberana, agravada pelos graves desequilíbrios que se acumularam nos anos anteriores.

Para os Estados-Membros da UE afetados pela crise da dívida, a consolidação orçamental é uma condição necessária para o restabelecimento da confiança. Não tomar as medidas necessárias a nível das finanças públicas conduziria a uma crise orçamental mais grave e com consequencias muito mais desastrosas para a atividade económica, o emprego, e a disponibilidade dos serviços públicos básicos.

A Comissão recomenda um ritmo de consolidação orçamental modulado de acordo com a necessidade de garantir a solvência fiscal, e que promova simultaneamente a retoma económica. Recomenda igualmente uma composição das medidas de consolidação favorável ao crescimento, bem como a aplicação das reformas necessárias para aumentar a resiliência do mercado de trabalho, reforçar as políticas ativas do mercado de trabalho e as redes de segurança social.

Várias iniciativas incluídas no Pacote do Emprego para 2012 foram adotadas a nível da UE para promover uma recuperação geradora de emprego, nomeadamente, para combater o desemprego dos jovens Na sequência da proposta da Comissão, o Conselho recomendou a instituição de uma «Garantia para a Juventude» em cada Estado-Membro, que visa garantir que os jovens não se encontrarão excluídos do emprego, da educação ou da formação, e para assegurar a disponibilidade dos fundos necessários para financiar esta iniciativa no período de 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004174/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Over 26 million unemployed in the EU

Given that:

— According to figures from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and since the introduction of austerity measures in an attempt to halt the economic and financial crisis, more than 26 million Europeans are out of work.

— The ILO press release states that 'Long-term unemployment is becoming a structural problem for many European countries' and that in 19 countries 'more than 40 per cent of the unemployed are now long-term unemployed'.

— The ILO blames austerity measures and reforms that 'do not address the root causes of the crisis' and calls for urgent change.

What is the Commission's view of the ILO statements?

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

Unemployment has been rising during this crisis in most EU countries, and in some Member States long-term unemployment is becoming an emergency, as stressed in the ILO statement. While it is known that fiscal consolidation measures may have a negative impact on unemployment, these were not the most important cause for the increase in unemployment, which was linked to the largest extent to the recession ensuing from the financial and debt crisis, aggravated by the serious imbalances that built up in the years preceding them.

For the EU Member States hit by the debt crisis, fiscal consolidation is a necessary condition to restore confidence. Failing to undertake the necessary action on public finances would lead to a more acute fiscal crisis and much more disastrous effects on economic activity, employment, and availability of basic public services.

The Commission recommends a pace of fiscal consolidation modulated according to the need to ensure fiscal solvency while promoting the economic recovery. It also recommends a growth-friendly composition of consolidation measures, reforms to increase the resilience and of labour markets, strengthening active labour market policies and social safety nets.

A number of initiatives included in the 2012 Employment package have been taken at EU level to promote a job rich recovery going forward, notably to fight youth unemployment.. Following the Commission proposal, the Council recommended the implementation of a 'Youth Guarantee' in each Member States , aimed at ensuring that the youth is not left out of work, education or training, and Funds to finance such initiative will be made available for the 2014-2020 period.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004175/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Fukushima — Fuga de água radioativa

Considerando que:

— Após o anúncio da reativação das centrais nucleares no Japão, surgiram uma série de problemas relacionados com a central nuclear de Fukushima.

— A operadora da central nuclear japonesa de Fukushima, TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power), confirmou o derrame de 120 toneladas de água contaminada, e na mais recente fuga foi confirmada a presença de radioatividade fora do reservatório.

— Esta série de derrames foi precedida por uma falha nos sistemas de refrigeração, e colocam em evidência a vulnerabilidade da central.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia esta situação?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(5 de junho de 2013)

No que diz respeito aos recentes problemas relacionados com o sistema de refrigeração da central nuclear de Fukushima, a Comissão gostaria de remeter o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta escrita E-003609/13.

A Comissão não participa na monitorização do funcionamento de Fukushima. Uma equipa de avaliação inter pares da AIEA ([1]) visitou recentemente o local de modo a analisar os trabalhos de desativação em curso e verificou que, embora a TEPCO tenha mobilizado com sucesso tecnologias de tratamento para a descontaminação e dessalinização de água altamente radioativa, devem continuar a vigorar as medidas destinadas a melhorar os problemas de gestão relacionados com a libertação de elementos radioativos a partir do local, nomeadamente problemas gerados pelo armazenamento da água acumulada.

([1]) Agência Internacional da Energia Atómica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004175/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Fukushima — Radioactive water spillage

Given that:

— Following the announcement that Japan's nuclear plants will be reactivated, a series of problems have emerged with the Fukushima nuclear plant.

— The company that runs the Fukushima plant, Tokyo Electric Power (Tepco), has confirmed the spillage of 120 tonnes of contaminated water and, during the most recent leak, the presence of radioactivity outside the reservoir was confirmed.

— This series of spillages was preceded by a fault with the cooling systems and demonstrates the plant's vulnerability.

What is the Commission's view of this situation?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2013)

With regard to the recent problems with the cooling system at the Fukushima nuclear power plant (NPP), the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to written question E-003609/13.

The Commission is not involved in monitoring the operation of Fukushima. An IAEA ([1]) peer review team visited the site recently to examine the on-going decommissioning work and noted that although TEPCO had successfully deployed treatment technologies for decontaminating and desalinating highly radioactive water, measures should continue to improve management issues regarding radioactive releases from the site, particularly issues created by the storage of accumulated water.

([1]) International Atomic Energy Agency.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004176/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Nova terapia para o cancro

Considerando que:

— Uma equipa de investigadores norte-americanos anunciou recentemente o desenvolvimento de uma nova terapia de radiação contra o cancro, capaz de fazer a doença entrar em remissão sem produzir quaisquer dos efeitos desagradáveis da quimioterapia e da radioterapia convencional;

— Este tratamento contra o cancro é conhecido como «terapia de captura de neutrões pelo boro» (BNCT) e, segundo os investigadores, há «uma grande variedade de cancros que pode ser atacada com a técnica BNCT»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta descoberta? Como a avalia?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(30 de maio de 2013)

A terapia de captura de neutrões pelo boro (BNCT) tem uma longa história. Os primeiros ensaios, que remontam aos anos cinquenta e foram realizados no Brookhaven National Laboratory nos EUA, permaneceram infrutíferos. Os novos ensaios realizados no início dos anos noventa fizeram uma melhor utilização das drogas buscadoras de tumores (agentes de entrega contendo boro), obtendo melhores resultados.

A Comissão está bem consciente das técnicas utilizadas com BNCT; os primeiros ensaios BNCT na Europa foram realizados nos anos 90 no reator de alto fluxo (HFR) em Petten, nos Países Baixos, com o apoio do Centro Comum de Investigação da Comissão. Estes esforços resultaram em atividades semelhantes desenvolvidas noutros locais na Europa, nomeadamente na Finlândia, Suécia, Itália e República Checa.

Não faz parte das competências da Comissão avaliar o interesse clínico da técnica BNCT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004176/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: New cancer therapy

— A team of North American researchers has recently announced a new cancer radiation therapy that is able to put the disease into remission without any of the unpleasant side effects of conventional chemotherapy and radiotherapy;

— This cancer therapy is known as 'Boron Neutron Cancer Therapy' (BNCT) and according to the researchers 'a wide variety of cancers can be attacked with our BNCT technique';

Is the Commission aware of this discovery? What is its assessment of it?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

Boron Neutron Capture Therapy (BNCT) has a long history. First trials date back to the 1950s at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in the USA, but remained unsuccessful. New trials in the early 1990s could use better tumour-seeking drugs (the boron-containing delivery agents) with better results.

The Commission is well aware of the technique used in BNCT; the first BNCT trials in Europe were carried out in the 1990s at the High Flux Reactor (HFR) in Petten, The Netherlands with the help of the Commission's Joint Research Centre. These efforts led to similar activities elsewhere in Europe, e.g. in Finland, Sweden, Italy and the Czech Republic.

Assessment of the clinical significance of BNCT is not within Commission competence.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004177/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Vírus H7N9

Considerando que:

— Foi anunciado há uma semana na China o primeiro caso de contaminação de um ser humano pelo vírus H7N9;

— Desde então, foram já registados 21 casos, seis dos quais mortais, todos na China;

— Até ao momento, não existem provas sustentadas da transmissão de ser humano para ser humano, mas a fonte de infeção continua a ser desconhecida;

Pergunto à Comissão: dispõe de novos dados sobre esta ameaça?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(4 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão está consciente das ameaças relativamente ao vírus H7N9 na China.

Até 17 de maio, foram comunicados à OMS 131 casos confirmados laboratorialmente de seres humanos infetados com o vírus da gripe aviária A (H7N9), incluindo 36 fatalidades. Não existe atualmente nenhuma prova de transmissão constante entre seres humanos.

Na sequência do anúncio do foco na China, o Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças preparou três avaliações de risco que foram comunicadas aos Estados-Membros. O risco a curto prazo de propagação da doença pela Europa, através de seres humanos, é de momento considerado baixo.

Não podem ser excluídos os casos isolados de seres humanos contaminados que tenham dado entrada na Europa e os países devem preparar-se para detetar e diagnosticar tais casos. Por esta razão, foi acordada com todos os Estados-Membros da UE, uma definição provisória da gripe A (H7N9), partilhada no âmbito do sistema de alerta rápido e de resposta que interliga as autoridades de saúde dos Estados-Membros e a Comissão Europeia. Na eventualidade de surgirem casos confirmados nos Estados-Membros da EU, será ativada a coordenação de medidas.

A Comissão está a acompanhar de perto a situação, mantendo-se em contacto diário com a OMS e o CEPCD.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004177/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: H7N9 virus

Given that:

— The first case of a human contracting the H7N9 virus was announced in China last week;

— Since then, 21 cases have been reported across China, six of them fatal;

— There is currently no substantiated evidence of human-to-human transmission, but the source of the infection remains unknown;

Does the Commission have any new details about this threat?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the threat concerning H7N9 in China.

Up to 17 May, 131 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus, including 36 deaths, were reported to the WHO. At present there is no evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission.

Following the announcement of the outbreak in China, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control prepared three risk assessments which were shared with the Member States. The risk of the disease spreading to Europe via humans in the near future is considered low at this time.

Individual imported human cases to Europe cannot be ruled out and countries need to prepare for detecting and diagnosing such cases. For this reason an interim case definition of Influenza A(H7N9) has been agreed with all the EU Member states and shared within the Early Warning and Response System linking up the Health Authorities in the Member States and the European Commission. In the event of cases being confirmed in EU Member States, coordination of measures would be activated.

The Commission is monitoring the situation closely in contact with WHO and ECDC on a daily basis.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004178/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Emboscada no Sudão do Sul

Considerando que:

— Cinco soldados e, pelo menos, sete civis da ONU foram mortos numa emboscada no Sudão do Sul;

— De acordo com o porta-voz da diplomacia, Syed Akbaruddin, os soldados foram mortos por «rebeldes» não identificados, em Jonglei, quando «escoltavam uma comitiva da ONU»;

— Jonglei tem sido palco de um conflito étnico em larga escala, desde que o Sudão do Sul se tornou num país independente (do Sudão), em julho de 2011.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como avalia o sucedido?

2. De que dados dispõe sobre o atual ponto da situação do conflito?

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

Em 10 de abril, o porta-voz da Alta Representante emitiu uma declaração condenando o ataque a uma caravana da Unmiss perto de Gumuruk no Estado de Jonglei, no Sudão do Sul, em que foram mortos cinco soldados da paz da Unmiss, sete civis, tendo muitos outros ficado feridos. Continua a desconhecer-se a identidade dos autores deste atentado, tendo no entanto o ataque ocorrido numa área em que periodicamente se assiste a incidentes entre o SPLA e milícias de David Yau Yau. Nesta ocasião, a Alta Representante apelou ao governo do Sudão do Sul que procedesse a uma investigação aprofundada e entregasse à justiça os autores desses crimes. Deplorou o conflito em curso em Jonglei e insistiu com os grupos armados para respeitarem o apelo do governo do Sudão do Sul no sentido de deporem as armas e resolverem as divergências através de meios pacíficos. Reiterou igualmente o seu forte apoio à Unmiss.

Os combates em Jonglei continuam desde março, principalmente a leste de Pibor. A ONU considera que os números relativos às forças de Yau Yau e aos seus aliados da milícia Murle se situam agora entre 6 000 e 8 000. O SPLA realizou progressos, mas na perseguição à milícia Yau Yau sofreu também pesadas perdas, estimadas na casa das centenas. Nos últimos anos, a situação a nível da segurança em Pibor e arredores deteriorou-se acentuadamente, uma vez que a milícia Yau Yau lançou um aviso sobre um ataque iminente à cidade e uma série de grupos, nomeadamente membros das forças nacionais de segurança desertores e indisciplinados, recorreu à violência e a pilhagens na cidade de Pibor. Anteriormente, rebeldes de May Yau Yau tinham já adquirido o controlo da cidade vizinha de Boma. De acordo com a ONU, uma parte significativa da população tanto de Boma como de Pibor tinha sido deslocada. Devido ao contexto altamente inseguro, a ONU ainda não tinha conseguido chegar a estes deslocados internos com ajuda humanitária. Por volta de 19 de maio, o SPLA já tinha recapturado a cidade de Boma. Numa declaração local emitida em 18 de maio de 2013, a UE, juntamente com certas embaixadas, apelaram a todas as partes, nomeadamente o SPLA e outros intervenientes estatais e não estatais, para garantirem que os civis são protegidos durante o conflito armado, independentemente da sua origem étnica, e permitirem espaço para a ajuda humanitária. Os que cometeram abusos em Jonglei, nomeadamente os membros das forças de segurança, devem ser responsabilizados através de processos judiciais transparentes. Além disso, a UE apelou a todos os intervenientes a aplicaram as resoluções da Conferência de Paz de All Joglei de maio de 2012. A União apoia igualmente a amnistia em curso em relação aos combatentes rebeldes que pretendem render-se e integrar de novo o exército.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004178/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Ambush in South Sudan

Given that:

— Five Indian peacekeepers and at least seven civilian UN workers have been killed in an ambush in South Sudan;

— The spokesman for the Indian Foreign Ministry, Syed Akbaruddin, stated that the soldiers were killed by unidentified 'rebels' in the state of Jonglei whilst 'escorting a UN convoy';

— Jonglei has been the stage for widespread ethnic conflict since South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in July 2011;

Can the Commission state:

1. What is its view of these events?

2. What details does it have about the current state of play in the conflict?

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

On 10 April the High Representative's Spokesperson issued a statement to condemn the attack on an UNMISS convoy near Gumuruk in Jonglei state, South Sudan, which resulted in the death of five UNMISS peacekeepers, seven civilian staff and several others wounded. The identity of the perpetrators remains unknown, but the attack happened in an area where regular clashes between the SPLA and militias of David Yau Yau occur. At this occasion, the High Representative called on the Government of South Sudan to conduct a full investigation and bring the perpetrators to justice. She deplored the ongoing conflict in Jonglei and urged all armed groups to respect the Government of South Sudan's appeal to lay down their weapons and to settle their differences by peaceful means. She also reiterated her strong support for UNMISS.

Fighting in Jonglei has been ongoing since March, mostly east of Pibor. The UN considers the numbers of Yau Yau's forces and their allied Murle militia now to be between 6,000 to 8,000. The SPLA has made progress, but in the pursuit of the Yau Yau militia have also taken heavy losses, estimated to be in the hundreds. In recent weeks the security situation in and around Pibor town deteriorated sharply, as Yau Yau's militia warned of an imminent attack on the town and a range of groups, including defected and ill-disciplined members of the national security forces, were engaged in violence and looting in Pibor town. Early May Yau Yau rebels had already taken control of nearby Boma town. According to the UN a significant part of the population of both Boma and Pibor town has been displaced. Due to the highly insecure environment the UN has not yet been able to reach these IDPs with humanitarian aid. Around 19 May Boma town was recaptured by the SPLA. In a local statement issued on 18 May 2013 the EU, together with some other embassies, urged all parties, including the SPLA and other state and non-state actors, to ensure that civilians are protected during armed conflict, regardless of their ethnic origin, and to enable humanitarian space. Those who have committed abuses in Jonglei, including members of the security forces — should be held accountable through transparent judicial processes. The EU furthermore called on all stakeholders to implement the resolutions of the All Jonglei Peace Conference of May 2012. It also supports the continuing amnesty for rebel fighters willing to surrender and rejoin the army.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004181/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Vacina BCG interrompida por incapacidade laboratorial

Considerando que:

— Portugal está sem vacina BCG para administrar aos recém-nascidos devido a uma falta de fornecimento por parte do laboratório dinamarquês que distribui a vacina contra a tuberculose para toda a Europa;

— Se trata de uma vacina que é produzida no único laboratório que a fabrica e distribui para todos os países do espaço europeu, localizado na Dinamarca;

— A BCG faz parte do plano nacional de vacinação e é geralmente administrada nos primeiros dias de vida do bebé;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Que análise faz a Comissão desta alegada incapacidade laboratorial que levou ao não fornecimento da vacina BCG?

3. Considera que tal implica algum risco para a saúde pública, designadamente, a possibilidade de contração de tuberculose durante o intervalo de tempo em que não é administrada a vacina?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente de situações relacionadas com a escassez de medicamentos para prevenção de doenças transmissíveis em alguns Estados-Membros dado que estas questões, bem como formas possíveis de ajudar os Estados-Membros em necessidade, são regularmente debatidas no Comité de Segurança da Saúde.

No que se refere à alegada falta de capacidade laboratorial que levou ao não fornecimento da vacina BCG, a Comissão está informada sobre este problema e tenciona debater, no âmbito do Comité de Segurança da Saúde, as possíveis medidas para o intercâmbio de medicamentos essenciais em caso de urgência. Tal poderia incluir por exemplo, uma «reserva virtual» das existências nos Estados-Membros que poderia ser mobilizada em caso de necessidades específicas.

A prestação de cuidados de saúde, incluindo a vacinação, é da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. Na UE, as políticas nacionais de vacinação BCG variam entre os países. Os países com baixa incidência tendem a vacinar apenas as pessoas com maior risco de tuberculose. A Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) recomenda a vacinação BCG em todos os recém-nascidos nos países com uma elevada incidência de tuberculose.

Em 2011, Portugal apresentou uma taxa de comunicação de tuberculose de 23,9 por 100 000 habitantes, colocando Portugal muito próximo de ser considerado um país de «baixa incidência». A vacinação BCG basicamente proporciona proteção contra as formas graves da doença em crianças com menos de cinco anos de idade. Um estudo de modelização ([1]) demonstrou que em Portugal, 5,4 casos graves de tuberculose seriam evitados se estiverem vacinadas 100 000 crianças . No entanto, uma vez que as crianças com tuberculose são menos suscetíveis de serem infecciosas do que os adultos, o risco da tuberculose se propagar durante o período em que a vacina não é administrada é limitado.

([1]) Este valor é proveniente de um cálculo interno do CEPCD com base no seguinte artigo: Manissero D, Lopalco PL, Levy-Bruhl D, Ciofi Degli Atti ML, Giesecke J., «Assessing the impact of different BCG vaccination strategies on severe childhood TB in low-intermediate prevalence settings», 2008, The National Center for Biotechnology Information. O artigo pode ser descarregado a partir do seguinte endereço de Internet: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18400344

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004181/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: BCG vaccine shortage due to lack of laboratory capacity

Given that:

— Portugal has run out of BCG vaccine to administer to newborns because of a supply failure by the Danish laboratory that distributes the tuberculosis vaccine throughout Europe;

— This vaccine is produced in a single laboratory — located in Denmark — that manufactures it and distributes it to all the Member States;

— BCG is part of the national vaccination plan and is generally administered during the first few days of a baby's life;

Can the Commission state:

1. Is it aware of this situation?

2. What is the Commission's view of the alleged lack of laboratory capacity that led to the failure to supply the BCG vaccine?

3. Does the Commission consider this a public health risk; specifically does it believe there is a chance of tuberculosis spreading during the period in which the vaccine is not administered?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of situations related to shortages of medicines to prevent communicable diseases in some Member States, as such issues, and possible ways to help the Member States in need, are discussed regularly in the Health Security Committee.

As regards the alleged lack of laboratory capacity that led to the failure to supply BCG vaccine, the Commission is informed about this problem and intends to discuss, within the Health Security Committee, possible arrangements for exchanging essential medicines in case of urgent need. This could for example include a 'virtual stockpile' of existing stocks in the Member States which could be mobilised in case of specific needs.

Provision of healthcare, including vaccination, fall under the responsibility of the Member States. Within the EU, national policies on BCG-vaccination varies between countries. Low incidence countries tend to vaccinate only those persons with an increased risk of Tuberculosis (TB). The World Health Organisation (WHO) advises BCG-vaccination for all newborns in countries with a high incidence of TB.

In 2011, Portugal reported a TB notification rate of 23.9 per 100 000 population, placing Portugal very close to being considered a 'low incidence country'. BCG vaccination mainly gives protection against severe forms of the disease in children under five years of age. A modelling study ([1]) showed that, in Portugal, 5.4 cases of severe TB would be prevented if 100 000 children are vaccinated. However, since children with TB are less likely to be infectious than adults, the risk of TB spreading during the period in which the vaccine is not administered is limited.

([1]) This figure is coming from an ECDC internal calculation based on the following article: Manissero D, Lopalco PL, Levy-Bruhl D, Ciofi Degli Atti ML, Giesecke J.,'Assessing the impact of different BCG vaccination strategies on severe childhood TB in low-intermediate prevalence settings', 2008, The National Center for Biotechnology Information. The article can be downloaded from the following web address: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18400344

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004182/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Impacto da crise económica na quebra da natalidade

Considerando que:

— A crise, a falta de emprego, a instabilidade, a desilusão quanto ao futuro, a emigração estão a comprometer a natalidade na Europa, sobretudo nos países onde os efeitos da austeridade têm mais impacto e onde se vivem grandes crises económicas, como a Grécia, Espanha, Portugal e Itália;

— Atualmente nenhum país da UE tem assegurada a renovação de gerações.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que análise faz a Comissão da relação descrita entre crise económica e baixa natalidade?

2. Que medidas de incentivo à recuperação da natalidade propõe a Comissão?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2013)

Tal como indicado no suplemento da análise trimestral sobre a demografia, de 26 de março de 2013 ([1]), a fertilidade na UE, que tinha vindo a aumentar pelo menos entre 2004 e 2009, começou mais uma vez a diminuir.

Um relatório recente do Eurostat ([2]) salientou que a fertilidade reage às mudanças económicas com um desfasamento de dois anos. O impacto fez-se sentir mais nos primeiros filhos do que nos seguintes e mais nas mulheres com um nível educativo médio, quando comparadas com mulheres com um nível básico ou superior; também na maior parte dos países, a taxa de fertilidade verificada nos grupos de imigrantes diminuiu mais do que na população nativa.

A Comissão atribui grande importância aos desafios demográficos, como prova a sua Comunicação de 2006 «O futuro demográfico da Europa: transformar um desafio em oportunidade ([3])», que sublinha cinco domínios políticos para travar o declínio demográfico e desenvolver os nossos recursos humanos.

De um modo geral, os jovens adultos na UE gostariam de ter mais filhos para além dos que realmente têm ([4]). No âmbito das suas competências, a Comissão promove a compreensão das dificuldades (como por exemplo, através do projeto REPRO ([5])), as oportunidades para os jovens adultos (como no pacote para o emprego dos jovens ([6])), a conciliação entre trabalho e vida privada (como acontece na diretiva sobre licença parental ([7])), e a inovação social e as boas práticas ([8]) neste domínio.

O Pacote de Investimento Social (PIS) ([9]) identificou as alterações demográficas como um importante motor da mudança no sentido de tornar as despesas sociais mais eficazes, de modo a que o sistema social e económico da Europa possa continuar a contar com recursos humanos adequados. No quadro do Semestre Europeu, a Comissão tem emitido recomendações específicas por país, incluindo algumas em matéria da conciliação entre a vida profissional e a vida privada e sobre a importância da adequação e da sustentabilidade das pensões.

([1]) Consultar: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=pt&catId=113&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes
([2]) Consultar «Statistics in Focus» 13/2013: «Towards a "baby recession" in Europe?» Consultar: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-SF-13-013
([3]) Ver: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en
([4]) Consultar: http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/edrp_2_2012.pdf com base em dados do Eurobarómetro de 2011
([5]) Consultar: http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html
([6]) Consultar: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=pt&catId=89&newsId=1731
([7]) Consultar: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:068:0013:0020:EN:PDF
([8]) Consultar: http://europa.eu/epic/index_en.htm
([9]) Consultar: COM(2013) 83.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004182/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: The impact of the economic crisis on the fall in birth rates

— The crisis, lack of jobs, instability, disillusionment with the future, and emigration are having an effect on birth rates throughout Europe, particularly in those countries most affected by austerity plans and in major economic crisis, such as Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy;

— Currently, no EU country can be sure of a generation renewal.

1. What is the Commission's analysis of the relationship between the economic crisis and low birth rates?

2. What measures can the Commission propose to encourage a rise in birth rates?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

As indicated in the Quarterly Review supplement on demography of 26 March 2013 ([1]), fertility in the EU, which had been rising at least from 2004 to 2009, has started to decline again.

A recent Eurostat report ([2]) highlighted that fertility responds to economic changes, with a time lag of two years. The impact was larger for first births than for subsequent births and for women with medium education compared to those with low or high education; and, in most countries, immigrants' fertility decreased more than that of natives.

The Commission attaches great importance to demographic challenges, as outlined in its 2006 Communication 'The demographic future of Europe — from challenge to opportunity ([3])', highlighting five policy areas to stem demographic decline and develop our human resources.

Young adults in the EU would generally like to have more children than they actually have ([4]). Within its competence, the Commission fosters understanding of the difficulties (as, for instance, via the REPRO project ([5])), opportunities for young adults (as in the Youth Employment Package ([6])), reconciliation between work and private life (as exemplified in the Parental Leave directive ([7])), and social innovation and good practices ([8]) in this area.

The Social Investment Package (SIP) ([9]) identified demographic change as a major engine of change towards making social spending more effective so that Europe's economy and social system can continue counting on adequate human resources. Within the European Semester the Commission has been issuing country-specific recommendations, including some concerning work-life reconciliation and tackling pension sustainability and adequacy.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) See Statistics in Focus 13/2013: 'Towards a "baby recession" in Europe?' Available at: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-SF-13-013.
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en.
([4]) See http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/edrp_2_2012.pdf based on a 2011 Eurobarometer.
([5]) See http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html
([6]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1731.
([7]) See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:068:0013:0020:EN:PDF.
([8]) See http://europa.eu/epic/index_en.htm
([9]) See COM(2013) 83.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004183/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Acesso dos consumidores à justiça em litígios transnacionais

Considerando que:

— É fundamental fortalecer a confiança dos consumidores e das empresas nas compras transnacionais, ajudando-os, assim, a usufruir plenamente das potencialidades do mercado único europeu;

— Está em vigor, desde 2009, o regulamento que estabelece o processo europeu para as ações de pequeno montante, no quadro do qual as decisões proferidas são diretamente aplicáveis nos países das partes condenadas;

Pergunto à Comissão: passados quatro anos desde a sua entrada em vigor, que análise faz a Comissão da aplicação prática deste regulamento?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(27 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta parlamentar E-007960/2012. Nessa resposta, a Comissão confirmou que está ciente da necessidade de reforçar a eficácia do processo europeu para ações de pequeno montante e recordou o conjunto de ações adotadas e previstas para alcançar este objetivo.

A Comissão está a preparar o relatório sobre a aplicação prática do regulamento que estabelece um procedimento europeu para as ações de pequeno montante, que será apresentado ao Parlamento Europeu, ao Conselho e ao Comité Económico e Social Europeu até 1 de janeiro de 2014, tal como previsto no artigo 28.° do regulamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004183/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Consumer access to justice in cross-border disputes

Given that:

— It is crucial to increase the confidence of consumers and businesses in cross-border purchases, thereby helping them to make full use of the potential of the European single market;

— Since 2009, the European Small Claims Procedure Regulation has been in force, the decisions of which are directly applicable in the country of the losing party;

Four years since it came into force, what is the Commission's assessment of the practical application of this regulation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2013)

The Commission wishes to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to parliamentary Question E-007960/2012, where it confirmed its awareness of the need to increase the effectiveness of the European Small Claims Procedure and pointed out the actions taken and planned to achieve it.

The Commission is in the course of preparation of the report on practical implementation of the regulation establishing the European Small Claims Procedure, which will be presented to the European Parliament, to the Council and to the European Economic and Social Committee by 1 January 2014, as provided for in Article 28 of the regulation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004184/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: UE investiga Mastercard por violação da concorrência

A Comissão Europeia iniciou os procedimentos formais para investigar eventuais violações das leis da concorrência por parte da MasterCard nos pagamentos com cartões de débito e de crédito, designadamente, no que se refere ao facto de algumas das taxas interbancárias e outras cobradas pela MasterCard poderem violar os princípios da concorrência.

O pagamento com cartões de débito e de crédito, que representa mais de 40 % dos pagamentos na União Europeia que não são feitos em dinheiro, reveste-se de importância central no mercado interno europeu, nomeadamente nas compras internacionais ou através da Internet.

Pergunto, por isso, à Comissão: em que termos prevê que se estabeleça a regulação das comissões interbancárias aplicáveis ao pagamento com cartões em todo o espaço da União, a ser proposta pela Comissão Europeia antes do próximo verão?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2013)

Em 9 de abril de 2013, a Comissão abriu um processo por infração contra a MasterCard ([1]).

A Comissão tinha adotado uma decisão de proibição em 2007 ([2]), contra as comissões interbancárias transfronteiriças da MasterCard (MIFs) aplicadas no EEE. A MasterCard apresentou recurso desta decisão e, em 24 de maio de 2012, o Tribunal Geral rejeitou o recurso da MasterCard ([3]). A MasterCard interpôs recurso desta decisão para o Tribunal de Justiça da União Europeia.

A Comissão deu início a um processo infração contra a Visa em março de 2008 e emitiu uma comunicação de objeções em abril de 2009 ([4]). A empresa Visa Europe propôs compromissos para limitar as MIFs, tendo a Comissão tornado esses compromissos obrigatórios em dezembro de 2010 ([5]). O processo relativo às MIFs aplicáveis ao cartão de crédito «consumidor» contínua em curso. Em 31 de julho de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma comunicação de objeções suplementar dirigida à empresa Visa Europe, que alargou o âmbito do processo à aquisição transfronteiriça.

A Comissão adotou um Livro Verde em 11 de janeiro de 2012 ([6]), que avalia a situação atual no setor dos pagamentos por cartão, Internet e telemóvel na UE e identifica os desfasamentos entre a situação atual e o conceito de um mercado totalmente integrado. Em 3 de outubro de 2012, a Comissão adotou o Ato para o Mercado Único II ([7]), que propõe um conjunto de medidas destinadas a continuar a desenvolver o mercado único. Identificou-se uma eventual proposta legislativa que aborde a questão da MIFs para os pagamentos por cartão como uma das prioridades previstas para o segundo trimestre de 2013.

Como parte da avaliação de impacto que acompanha eventuais propostas legislativas, a Comissão está atualmente a analisar as possíveis vantagens e desvantagens das várias opções consideradas, tratando das questões identificadas e do seu impacto no bem-estar das partes interessadas, incluindo dos bancos, dos prestadores de serviços de pagamento, dos retalhistas e dos consumidores.

([1]) O inquérito incidirá sobre (i) os aspetos lidados às comissões interbancárias cobradas em relação aos pagamentos efetuados por parte dos titulares dos cartões de países não pertencentes ao EEE, uma vez que existem possibilidades de que possam restringir a concorrência, desacelerar a atividade transfronteiriça e prejudicar os consumidores da UE (ii) as regras relativas à «aquisição transfronteiriça» que limitem a possibilidade de um operador comercial beneficiar de melhores condições oferecidas por bancos estabelecidos noutro local do mercado interno e (iii) as regras ou práticas de negócio da MasterCard, que amplificam as preocupações de concorrência da Comissão (como o «honour all cards rule», que obriga um operador comercial a aceitar todos os tipos de os cartões MasterCard). Consultar IP/13/314.
([2]) Consultar IP/07/1959 e MEMO/07/590.
([3]) Consultar IP/07/1959 e MEMO/07/590.
([4]) Consultar MEMO/09/151.
([5]) Consultar IP/10/1684.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/payments/cim/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/smact/index_pt.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004184/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: EU investigates MasterCard for breaching competition law

The Commission has begun formal proceedings to investigate potential breaches of competition law by MasterCard regarding debit- and credit-card payments, specifically in relation to the fact that some of the interbank and other charges levied by MasterCard could violate competition principles.

Debit- and credit-card payments account for over 40% of payments in the EU that are not made in cash, and play a key role in the European internal market, particularly international or online purchases.

Can the Commission state under what terms it envisages establishing the regulation of the interbank charges applicable to card payments throughout the EU, to be proposed by the Commission by next summer?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

On 9 April 2013 the Commission opened proceedings against MasterCard ([1]).

The Commission had adopted a prohibition decision in 2007 ([2]) against MasterCard's cross border inter-bank fees (MIFs) within the EEA. MasterCard appealed this decision and on 24 May 2012, the General Court rejected MasterCard's appeal ([3]). MasterCard has appealed this judgment to the ECJ.

The Commission opened proceedings against Visa in March 2008 and issued a Statement of Objections in April 2009 ([4]). Visa Europe offered commitments to cap its debit card MIFs which the Commission made binding in December 2010 ([5]). The proceedings regarding consumer credit MIFs continue. On 31 July 2012 the Commission adopted a Supplementary Statement of Objections addressed to Visa Europe which extended the scope of the proceedings to cross-border acquiring.

The Commission adopted a Green Paper on 11 January 2012 ([6]), assessing the current landscape for cards, Internet and mobile payments in the EU and identifying the gaps between the current situation and the vision of a fully integrated market. On 3 October 2012 the Commission adopted the Single Market Act II ([7]), proposing a set of actions to further develop the Single Market. A possible legislative proposal addressing the issue of MIFs for card payments was identified as one of the priorities with a target date of the second quarter of 2013.

As part of the impact assessment accompanying possible legislative proposals, the Commission is currently analysing the possible advantages and disadvantages of the various options, in terms of addressing the issues identified and their impact on the welfare of stakeholders, including banks, payment providers, retailers and consumers.

([1]) The investigation will focus on (i) inter-bank fees in relation to payments made by cardholders from non-EEA countries aspects, as it has concerns that they may restrict competition, slow down cross-border business and harm EU consumers (ii) rules on 'cross-border acquiring' that limit the possibility for a merchant to benefit from better conditions offered by banks established elsewhere in the internal market and (iii) related business rules or practices of MasterCard which amplify the Commission's competition concerns (like the 'honour all cards rule' which obliges a merchant to accept all types of MasterCard cards). See IP/13/314.
([2]) See IP/07/1959 and MEMO/07/590.
([3]) See IP/07/1959 and MEMO/07/590.
([4]) See MEMO/09/151.
([5]) See IP/10/1684.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/payments/cim/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/smact/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004185/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Microsoft e Nokia apresentam queixa contra Google na Comissão Europeia

Considerando que:

— Um grupo que reúne 17 empresas tecnológicas, entre as quais a Microsoft, a Nokia e a Oracle, apresentaram uma queixa junto da Comissão Europeia, em que acusam a Google de tirar partido da posição dominante do sistema operativo Android para promover outros produtos e serviços da empresa e monopolizar o mercado da publicidade em dispositivos móveis;

— A Google permite que qualquer fabricante use o Android sem ter de pagar por isso (por exemplo, o sistema concorrente da Microsoft, o Windows Phone, é fornecido às marcas de telemóvel mediante um sistema de licenciamento), mas obriga-os a integrar no sistema as aplicações e serviços da própria Google;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Confirma a queixa apresentada?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão confirma que foi apresentada por uma associação industrial denominada Fairsearch uma denúncia formal em 25 de março de 2013, alegando a existência de comportamento anticoncorrencial pela Google no que diz respeito ao sistema operativo Android.

A Comissão está atualmente a examinar as questões levantadas na denúncia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004185/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Microsoft and Nokia report Google to the Commission

Given that:

— A group including 17 technology companies, including Microsoft, Nokia and Oracle, have lodged a complaint with the Commission accusing Google of taking advantage of the Android operating system's dominance to promote the company's other products and services, and to monopolise the advertising market on mobile devices;

— Google allows any manufacturer to use Android without charge (for example, Microsoft uses a licensing system to supply its competing system, Windows Phone, to mobile telephony companies), but obliges them to incorporate Google's own applications and services into the system;

Can the Commission confirm that this complaint has been lodged?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission confirms that a formal complaint alleging anticompetitive conduct by Google with regard to the Android operating system was filed on 25 March 2013 by an industry association named Fairsearch.

The Commission is currently looking into the issues raised in the complaint.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004186/13
ao Conselho
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Armas químicas na Síria

Considerando que:

— Com base nos últimos documentos do departamento de informações dos Estados Unidos sobre a situação na Síria, o presidente do Comité de Informações da Câmara dos Representantes, afirmou recentemente existirem «grandes probabilidades de uso de armas químicas na Síria»;

— A situação na Síria, apesar de todas as medidas de contenção para travar o conflito, tem vindo a piorar, com mais de 70 000 mortos, um milhão de refugiados e um número maior de deslocados internos, depois de quase três anos de guerra civil entre as forças rebeldes e as do regime;

Pergunto: qual a posição do Conselho relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta
(11 de setembro de 2013)

O Conselho tem repetidamente manifestado grande preocupação perante a possível utilização de armas químicas na Síria e tem instado a Síria a não utilizar os seus arsenais, em circunstância alguma, e a armazenar as armas em condições de segurança, até que sejam destruídas sob verificação independente.

A missão nomeada pelo Secretário-Geral Ban-Ki Moon, de que fazem parte membros da Organização para a Proibição de Armas Químicas (OPAQ) e da Organização Mundial da Saúde (OMS) vai procurar investigar se foram utilizadas armas químicas na Síria de acordo com alegações específicas levadas ao conhecimento do Secretário-Geral por vários membros das Nações Unidas, a fim de apurar os factos e apresentar um relatório sobre os resultados. O Conselho exortou o regime sírio a cooperar plenamente com a equipa de investigação, facultando-lhe pleno acesso, sem demora e sem restrições, a todo o país.

A UE continuará a acompanhar esta questão de muito perto em consulta com os seus parceiros.

O Conselho apoia o processo político que está a ser desenvolvido em resposta à iniciativa do Secretário Kerry e do Primeiro-Ministro Lavrov no sentido da realização de uma conferência de paz baseada nos princípios do Comunicado de Genebra aprovado em junho de 2012.

Desde o início da crise, foi mobilizada uma verba de 561 milhões de EUR (200 milhões da ECHO e 361 milhões dos Estados-Membros) para responder às carências humanitárias no interior da Síria e nos países vizinhos. A ONU considerou que no primeiro semestre de 2013 seria necessário um montante total de 1,5 mil milhões de USD para dar resposta às necessidades de 1 milhão de refugiados, 4 milhões de pessoas a precisar de apoio e 2 milhões de deslocados no interior da Síria. No princípio de maio verificava-se que apenas um pouco mais de 55 % destas necessidades tinham sido satisfeitas.

Nas suas conclusões de 27 de maio, o Conselho declarava o seguinte: A UE insta todas as partes a garantirem que as organizações que prestam assistência àqueles que dela precisam possam aceder, em segurança e sem restrições, a todas as regiões da Síria. Lamenta profundamente que tenham sido colocados entraves à prestação da ajuda humanitária e chama a atenção de todas as partes, em especial do Governo da Síria, para a premência de os remover. Realça a necessidade de todas as partes sírias, em especial as autoridades do país, cooperarem plenamente com as Nações Unidas e as organizações humanitárias relevantes. Haverá que facilitar a prestação de ajuda de emergência por todas as vias humanitárias possíveis, inclusive para lá das fronteiras e das linhas de conflito, para a fazer chegar a todos aqueles que dela necessitem.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004186/13
to the Council
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Chemical weapons in Syria

Given that:

— On the basis of the latest documents from the US intelligence agencies on the situation in Syria, the Chair of the House of Representatives Intelligence Committee recently stated that there is a 'high probability that chemical weapons have been used in Syria';

— Despite containment efforts to halt the conflict, the situation in Syria has been worsening, with over 70 000 dead, 1 million refugees and a higher number of internally displaced persons, following almost three years of civil war between rebel forces and those of the regime;

What is the Council's position on this issue?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

The Council has repeatedly expressed serious concern at the possible use of chemical weapons in Syria and has called on Syria not to use its stockpile under any circumstances and to store the weapons securely pending independently verified destruction.

The mission appointed by SG Ban-Ki Moon, which includes members of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), seeks to investigate whether chemical weapons were used in Syria in accordance with specific allegations brought to the attention of the Secretary General by several UN Member States, in order to ascertain the facts of the matter and to report the results. The Council has called on the Syrian regime to cooperate fully with the investigation and allow it full and unfettered access throughout the country without delay.

The EU will continue to monitor this matter very closely in consultation with its partners.

The Council supports the political process which is being conducted in response to the initiative by Secretary Kerry and Foreign Minister Lavrov for hold a peace conference based on the principles of the Geneva Communiqué agreed in June 2012.

Since the beginning of the crisis, a total of EUR 561 million (EUR 200 million from ECHO and EUR 361 million from Member States) have been allocated to address humanitarian needs inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. For the first six months of 2013, a total of USD 1.5 billion was identified by the UN as being needed to address the needs of 1 million refugees, 4 million people in need of assistance and 2 million IDPs inside Syria. As of the beginning of May, only slightly more than 55% of these needs have been met.

In its conclusions of 27 May, the Council stated that the 'EU demands that all parties ensure safe and unimpeded access for aid organisations to those in need in all areas of Syria. It deplores the obstacles to the provision of humanitarian assistance and underlines to all parties, in particular the Government of Syria, the urgent need to remove them. It emphasises the need for all parties in Syria, and in particular the Syrian authorities, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and relevant humanitarian organisations. The provision of emergency assistance must be facilitated through all possible humanitarian channels, including across borders and across conflict lines, in order to reach all those in need'.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-004187/13
à la Commission
Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(12 avril 2013)

Objet: Aide européenne à la modernisation du système énergétique polonais

Le 7 mars 2013, *Le Monde* ([1]) publiait un article indiquant qu'Électricité de France (EDF) contestait la décision de la Commission de juillet 2012 concernant l'allocation transitoire de quotas d'émission à titre gratuit au secteur énergétique polonais ainsi que le plan national d'investissements connexe.

Dans sa décision, la Commission a rejeté l'idée d'inclure la centrale au charbon d'EDF de Rybnik dans le plan national d'investissements, car elle ne contribuerait pas à moderniser le système énergétique polonais. Cette décision empêche la centrale de Rybnik de bénéficier d'un programme d'aides d'État pour un montant de 7 100 000 000 euros.

1. La Commission confirme-t-elle qu'EDF lui a demandé de revenir (en partie) sur sa décision de juillet 2012 concernant l'allocation transitoire de quotas d'émission à titre gratuit au secteur énergétique polonais, notamment en ce qui concerne la centrale au charbon de Rybnik?

2. Des représentants de la France ont-ils approché la Commission au sujet de la centrale électrique de Rybnik?

3. Des représentants de la Pologne ont-ils approché la Commission au sujet de la centrale électrique de Rybnik?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(19 juin 2013)

La Commission confirme qu'elle a été contactée par EDF, ainsi que par des représentants de la France et de la Pologne au sujet de sa décision du 13 juillet 2012, qui est en vigueur.

([1]) http://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2013/03/07/un-rapport-denonce-la-nocivite-des-centrales-au-charbon_1844620_3244.html — «La Commission européenne a refusé en 2012 l'inscription de la nouvelle unité à Rybnik dans la liste des bénéficiaires des aides pouvant être accordées par l'État polonais dans le cadre du plan national d'investissements pour moderniser et diversifier la production d'électricité. EDF, qui a déjà investi 100 millions d'euros dans les études préparatoires pour construire cette unité, conteste cette décision».

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004187/13
to the Commission
Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: European aid for the modernisation of the Polish energy system

On 7 March 2013, *Le Monde* ([1]) published an article reporting that Electricité de France (EDF) is contesting the Commission's decision of July 2012 regarding transitional free allocation of emission allowances to the Polish power sector, and the related National Investment Plan.

In its decision, the Commission rejected the idea of including EDF's coal-fired power plant 'Rybnik' in the National Investment Plan because it would not contribute to the modernisation of the Polish energy system. This decision prevents the Rybnik plant from benefiting from a state aid package of EUR 7.1 billion.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether it has been approached by EDF with a request to (partly) reverse its decision of July 2012 on transitional free allocation to the Polish power sector, in particular regarding the Rybnik coal plant?

2. Have representatives of France approached the Commission regarding the Rybnik power plant?

3. Have representatives of Poland approached the Commission regarding the Rybnik power plant?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

The Commission confirms that it has been approached by EDF, representatives of France and of Poland on its decision of 13 July 2012 in force.

([1]) http://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2013/03/07/un-rapport-denonce-la-nocivite-des-centrales-au-charbon_1844620_3244.html — 'La Commission européenne a refusé en 2012 l'inscription de la nouvelle unité à Rybnik dans la liste des bénéficiaires des aides pouvant être accordées par l'Etat polonais dans le cadre du plan national d'investissements pour moderniser et diversifier la production d'électricité. EDF, qui a déjà investi 100 millions d'euros dans les études préparatoires pour construire cette unité, conteste cette décision'.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004189/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Alcohol advertising and sponsorship

In view of the growing societal and domestic problems associated with the lack of restrictions and regulations governing the advertising and sponsorship of alcohol in Ireland at present:

1. Is the Commission aware of these problems ?

2. If so, is it prepared to act on the matter?

3. If so, what types of restrictions, levies or regulations does the Commission propose to implement?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) ([1]) lays down rules on audiovisual commercial communications for alcoholic beverages.

As mentioned in the first report on the application of the AVMSD ([2]), the Commission monitors advertising practices in the Member States on a rotating basis. In the Member States monitored during the reference period, alcohol advertising represented between 0.8% and 3% of overall advertising activity on audiovisual media services based on the total number of spots broadcast over the monitored period. As regards the application of the relevant provision of the AVMSD, very few cases of clear infringements have been found.

However, a significant proportion, more than 50%, of the advertising spots contained elements which appeal to minors, although in view of the detailed requirements of the AVMSD, they fell short of constituting a clear cut infringement. In implementing the AVMSD requirements on alcohol advertising, 22 Member States, including Ireland, have put in place stricter rules for alcohol advertising involving channels, advertised products or time slots ([3]).

The Commission deemed that further investigations are required to assess the impact of commercial communications, especially for alcoholic beverages, on minors as regards exposure and consumption behaviour, and the effectiveness of the directive's restrictions in achieving requisite protection, while taking account of the benefit/cost ratio of monitoring activities. The Commission will initiate the necessary research in 2013 and the results should become available by the end of 2014.

([1]) Directive 2010/13/EU.
([2]) COM/2012/0203 final.
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/reg/tvwf/contact_comm/35_table_1.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004190/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Sandblasted jeans and the 'clean clothes' campaign

Sandblasting is a process long practised in the global garment industry, especially in the 'fast fashion' industry, to give denim products a 'worn-out' look. The practice has long been linked to the fatal lung disease silicosis, which is caused by inhalation of dust containing free crystalline silica and which, according to the World Health Organisation, kills thousands of people each year.

Sandblasting was traditionally used in the mining and construction industries, but has been restricted in these industries since the ILO/WHO International Programme on the Global Elimination of Silicosis was launched in 1995. While miners and construction workers could be expected to develop silicosis after 15 to 20 years of exposure, the lack of regulations or health and safety standards and the intensity of production mean that silicosis has been diagnosed in garment workers after as little as six months of exposure.

In order to improve conditions for workers in factories in garment-producing countries and to examine retail policies and business practices that affect these workers, and further to its answer of 14 December 2011 to Written Question E-009447/2011, what action has the Commission taken, or what action is it considering, to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in order to protect workers in the global garment industry.

What steps have been or are being taken by the Commission to include the global garment industry in the ILO/WHO International Programme on the Global Elimination of Silicosis?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E/P-11345/12 ([1]). The projects referred to aimed at supporting partner countries in developing systematic approaches of Occupational Health and Safety at national level with strong involvement of social partners, and strengthening labour inspectorates.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004191/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela dei dati personali: ulteriori e idonee misure europee

Nel 2010 il Programma di Stoccolma stabilisce le priorità dell'UE a proposito di giustizia, libertà e sicurezza per il periodo 2010-2014. Il Programma mira a rafforzare le misure per la sicurezza dei cittadini, con particolare attenzione alla tutela dei dati personali. La legislazione europea al riguardo è concepita tenendo in considerazione le sfide della globalizzazione e il ruolo e il costante uso della tecnologia nella vita quotidiana. I principi cardine del Programma sono la trasparenza del trattamento dei dati personali e il conseguente obbligo di notifica in caso di violazioni, per consentire ai cittadini di esercitare un maggiore controllo sui propri dati. È inoltre sottolineata la necessità di istituire un regime completo di tutela in tutti gli Stati membri, al fine di facilitare gli interventi e il contrasto alla criminalità transfrontaliera. Nonostante tali progressi, i dati personali non sono ancora tutelati completamente. Recentemente, sei delle più grandi società dell'Unione che si occupano di tutela di dati decidono di intraprendere un'azione comune nei confronti di un noto motore di ricerca per indurlo a modificare le prassi in materia di trattamento dei dati personali. La decisione rappresenta il risultato di uno studio iniziato nell'ottobre del 2012, che ha dimostrato come il motore di ricerca non rispettasse le norme europee. Secondo tali norme, attualmente in corso di revisione, è probabile che la società inadempiente sia obbligata a versare un'ingente somma come risarcimento per l'utilizzo scorretto di dati.

Alla luce di quanto affermato e considerando evidente che la tutela dei dati personali sia uno dei diritti umani fondamentali indispensabili per prevenire l'insorgere di numerosi problemi, può la Commissione precisare:

1. quali aspetti della vigente legislazione potrebbero essere ulteriormente integrati e aggiornati dal punto di vista dei diritti umani?

2. quali misure aggiuntive potrebbero essere necessarie? Quali suggerimenti si potrebbero formulare per aumentare ulteriormente la consapevolezza dei cittadini sui loro diritti e prevenire un uso scorretto dei dati personali nei diversi contesti della vita quotidiana?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2013)

Nel 2012 la Commissione ha proposto un'importante riforma del quadro giuridico dell'UE in materia di protezione dei dati personali ([1]). Le proposte della Commissione aggiornano e modernizzano i principi sanciti dalla direttiva del 1995 sulla protezione dei dati ([2]) per garantire efficacemente i diritti di protezione dei dati.

Gli atti legislativi proposti — attualmente in fase di discussione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio — mirano a rafforzare il diritto fondamentale alla protezione dei dati personali, offrendo alle persone interessate strumenti efficaci e operativi atti a garantire che queste siano pienamente informate su quanto accade ai loro dati personali e a permettere un più efficace esercizio dei loro diritti. Il regolamento proposto ovvierà alla frammentazione dei regimi giuridici di 27 Stati membri. Allo stesso tempo, aumenta e adegua i poteri delle autorità di protezione dei dati e prevede meccanismi di cooperazione rafforzata per garantire un'applicazione coerente delle norme.

([1]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio concernente la tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali e la libera circolazione di tali dati (regolamento generale sulla protezione dei dati), COM(2012)11 final. Proposta di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio concernente la tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali da parte delle autorità competenti a fini di prevenzione, indagine, accertamento e perseguimento di reati o di esecuzione di sanzioni penali, e la libera circolazione di tali dati, COM(2012)10 final.

([2]) Direttiva 95/46/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 ottobre 1995, relativa alla tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali, nonché alla libera circolazione di tali dati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004191/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Personal data protection: suitable further European measures

In 2010 the Stockholm Programme established the European Union's priorities for the area of freedom, security and justice for the period 2010-2014. It aimed at strengthening the measures for the security of citizens, with a major focus on personal data protection. The EU legislation concerned has been shaped taking into account the challenges of globalisation and the role and constant use of technologies in daily life. The main tenets were the principle of transparent processing of personal data, and the related obligation to notify breaches so as to enable people to exercise better control over their data. The need for a comprehensive protection scheme in all Member States in order to facilitate operations and fight crossborder crime was also highlighted. In spite of these advances, personal data are still not fully protected. Recently, six of the EU's biggest data protection companies decided to take out a joint action against a famous search-engine company in order to make it change the way it handles personal data. This decision is the result of a study initiated in October 2012 which has provided evidence of the company's failure to abide by the European rules. These rules are currently being revised, and under them it appears that the company found in breach is likely to be forced to pay a huge sum in compensation for its mishandling of data.

In view of the above and considering that it stands to reason that the right to data protection is a fundamental human right which needs to be enforced in order to prevent the emergence of numerous problems, can the Commission state:

1. which aspects of the existing legislation could be further integrated and updated from the perspective of human rights;

2. what further action could be necessary and what suggestions could be voiced in order to further raise citizens' awareness of their rights and prevent personal data being misused in the different contexts of everyday life?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

In 2012, the Commission proposed a major reform of the EU legal framework on the protection of personal data ([1]). The Commission's proposals update and modernise the principles enshrined in the 1995 EU Data Protection Directive ([2]) to effectively guarantee data protection rights in the future.

The aim of the proposed legislative acts, which are currently being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council, is to strengthen the fundamental right to personal data protection, by giving individuals efficient and operational means to make sure they are fully informed about what happens to their personal data and to enable them to exercise their rights more effectively. The proposed Regulation will do away with the fragmentation of legal regimes across 27 Member States. At the same time, it increases and aligns the powers of data protection supervisory authorities and provides for strengthened cooperation mechanisms to guarantee a consistent enforcement of the rules.

([1]) COM(2012) 11 final, Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation); COM(2012) 10 final, Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and the free movement of such data.

([2]) Directive 95/46/EC, Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004192/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sviluppi relativi alla concorrenza delle assicurazioni auto e moto in Italia

Rispondendo alla mia interrogazione E-009589/2011, la Commissione sottolineava come il differenziale di prezzo delle polizze assicurative fosse dovuto alle differenze delle strutture di rischio e dei costi di risarcimento: negli ultimi dieci anni in Italia, come in Europa, sono fortunatamente diminuiti gli incidenti stradali, ma questo non si è rispecchiato, ad esempio, in una riduzione dei costi, bensì in un loro sproporzionato aumento.

Negli ultimi mesi è divenuto emblematico e paradossale il caso riferibile all'assicurazione per ciclomotori, che in alcuni casi e in determinate zone d'Italia può addirittura essere superiore al costo del ciclomotore stesso.

Questa situazione contribuisce alla crisi di un settore, quello della produzione e vendita di motocicli, in cui l'Italia è sempre stata all'avanguardia; e che vede nella regione Toscana la sede dal principale produttore europeo.

Per citare un solo esempio, il costo medio di assicurazione di uno scooter 125, stesso modello e stessa marca, riferibile a un profilo di uomo sui 35 anni, varia dai 150 euro di Germania e Francia, a una forbice in Spagna tra 95 e 360 euro, fino ad arrivare all'Italia, dove il premio può variare dai 450 agli oltre 1500 euro annui; bisogna sottolineare per completezza di informazione che i costi di acquisto per lo stesso scooter hanno differenze minime nei diversi paesi, dai 3400 euro circa della Spagna ai circa 3900 della Germania, con Italia e Francia attorno ai 3600-3800.

Si tratta di dati che sembrano mostrare come in Italia non vi sia in realtà una vera concorrenza ma piuttosto un «cartello», come sottolineato del resto anche da un'indagine dell'antitrust, che riferisce inoltre come non sia neanche semplice cambiare compagnia assicurativa, anche a causa della figura da noi poco sviluppata dell'agente plurimandatario.

Questa situazione insostenibile ha portato inoltre, negli ultimi mesi, a un considerevole aumento di polizze false, con gli evidenti rischi del caso.

Alla luce di tutto questo, intende la Commissione rivedere la posizione espressa nel dicembre 2011, secondo la quale in Italia non vi era alcun problema legato alla concorrenza in questo settore?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(17 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente dell'andamento dei prezzi delle assicurazioni degli autoveicoli in Italia e al riguardo collabora con l'autorità italiana garante della concorrenza e del mercato (AGCM), nonché con altre autorità nazionali garanti della concorrenza, nell'ambito della rete europea di tali autorità (European Competition Network, ECN). A tale scopo, la Commissione ha istituito la rete del settore assicurativo dell'ECN costituita da esperti di tutte le 27 autorità nazionali garanti della concorrenza.

L'AGCM ha anche la facoltà di applicare direttamente in Italia le norme dell'UE in materia di concorrenza, precisamente gli articoli 101 e 102 del TFUE. Inoltre, poiché i mercati assicurativi sono prevalentemente nazionali, le autorità nazionali garanti della concorrenza sono generalmente nella posizione migliore per affrontare eventuali questioni in materia di concorrenza.

Recentemente l'AGCM ha concluso un'indagine sul mercato delle assicurazioni di autoveicoli in Italia ([1]) in cui osserva che dal 2007 al 2010 i premi medi delle assicurazioni degli autoveicoli sono aumentati in misura considerevole e che nello stesso tempo anche il costo del risarcimento dei sinistri ha avuto un incremento. L'indagine non ipotizza che ci sia stata una violazione delle norme UE in materia di concorrenza nel mercato italiano delle assicurazioni di autoveicoli riconducibile a un accordo di cartello tra concorrenti.

Tuttavia, l'AGCM ha individuato ambiti di intervento per migliorare il funzionamento di questo mercato e incentivare la mobilità della clientela da una compagnia assicurativa a un'altra:

— gli assicuratori dovrebbero differenziare i clienti in base ai rispettivi profili di rischio e non in base al fatto che si tratti di assicurati già clienti o nuovi;

([1]) http://www.agcm.it/trasp-statistiche/doc_download/3632-ic42-testo-indagine.html

— i clienti dovrebbero disporre di strumenti online di comparazione dei preventivi delle diverse compagnie.

L'AGCM ha anche raccomandato di apportare modifiche alle procedure di rimborso dei sinistri nonché degli sconti offerti agli assicurati in caso di accettazione di alcune clausole (per esempio, la riparazione del veicolo presso autofficine selezionate dalle compagnie di assicurazione).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004192/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Developments relating to competition in the car and motorcycle insurance sector in Italy

In its answer to my Question E-009589/2011, the Commission stressed that price differences in insurance policies were due to the differences in risk structures and costs of claims. Over the past 10 years in Italy, as in Europe, the number of road accidents has fortunately fallen sharply, but this has led to a disproportionate increase in prices rather than a reduction.

In recent months, motorcycle insurance has become emblematic and paradoxical, costing even more than the motorcycle itself in certain cases and in certain areas of Italy.

This situation is contributing to a crisis in the manufacture and sale of motorcycles, in which Italy has always been at the forefront, with Tuscany the leading European manufacturer.

To give just one example, the average cost for a man, approximately 35 years old, to insure a 125cc scooter (same make and model) varies from EUR 150 in Germany and France, to between EUR 95 and EUR 360 in Spain, reaching between EUR 450 and EUR 1500 in Italy for an annual policy; it should be stressed, in order to provide a fuller picture, that there are minimal differences in the purchase costs of the same scooter in the various countries, from EUR 3 400 in Spain to approximately EUR 3 900 in Germany, and around EUR 3 600 to EUR 3 800 in Italy and France.

These data appear to show that in Italy there is no true competition but rather a 'cartel', as highlighted, moreover, by an investigation by the Italian competition authority, which also reports that it is difficult for people even to change their insurance company, particularly because the independent insurance broker sector is so underdeveloped in Italy.

In recent months this unsustainable situation has also resulted in a substantial rise in fake policies, with the obvious risks these entail.

In light of the above, does the Commission intend to revise its position of December 2011, according to which there was no problem with competition in this sector in Italy?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of price developments in Italian motor insurance and cooperates in this matter with the Italian competition authority (AGCM), as well as with other national competition authorities (NCAs), within the European Competition Network (ECN). For that purpose, the Commission has set up the insurance network of the ECN, consisting of experts from all 27 NCAs.

The AGCM also has the power to apply EU competition rules directly in Italy, namely Articles 101 and 102 TFEU. Because insurance markets are largely national, NCAs are normally best placed to address possible competition issues.

The AGCM recently concluded an inquiry into the motor insurance market in Italy ([1]).

In the report the AGCM notes that from 2007 to 2010 average prices of motor insurance in Italy have increased significantly. At the same time, the cost of reimbursing a claim for damages has also gone up. The inquiry does not suggest that there is a violation of the EU competition rules in the Italian motor insurance market due to a cartel agreement between competitors.

Nonetheless, the AGCM identified areas for improving the functioning of this market and encouraging customers' mobility from one insurance company to another:

— Insurers should differentiate customers on the basis of their risk profiles, but not on whether they are old or newly acquired customers.

([1]) http://www.agcm.it/trasp-statistiche/doc_download/3632-ic42-testo-indagine.html

— Customers should have online comparison tools to compare quotes from different companies.

The AGCM also recommended changes to the procedures for reimbursing claims and for discounts for insured drivers if they accept certain clauses (e.g. to repair cars at repair shops selected by the insurance companies).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004193/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Iniqua distribuzione del reddito nella filiera ortofrutticola

L'Italia è il principale produttore di frutta nell'UE, con una quota del 30 %. Nel 2011 l'intero settore, comprendente anche il comparto agrumi, ha fatturato 11,5 miliardi di euro (dato CSO), con una produzione complessiva, comprendente anche i prodotti ortofrutticoli da industria, pari a 25 milioni di tonnellate. A seguito della crisi mondiale anche in Italia il settore frutta attraversa un periodo difficile. I prezzi al produttore sono diminuiti del 40 % nel 2009, mentre quelli al consumatore sono rimasti praticamente stabili.

La causa principale della debolezza dei prezzi alla produzione è rappresentata da un lato dalla frammentazione dell'agricoltura, e dall'altro dallo scarso potere contrattuale all'interno della filiera commerciale. Nella composizione del prezzo al dettaglio il costo d'origine s'aggira attorno al 25 per cento. Il prezzo alla produzione non è determinato dalla domanda dei consumatori. Si possono avere fino a otto passaggi dal produttore al consumatore. La grande distribuzione esercita un potere dominante sul mercato e condiziona i prezzi alla produzione, tanto da non permettere ai contadini coltivatori diretti di pagare i costi. Un esempio concreto: nel 2011 il costo delle pesche Piemonte era pari a 0,42 centesimi, mentre l'incasso del produttore era di 0,16 centesimi. La conseguenza è il fallimento delle imprese e la diminuzione della produzione di frutta con la conseguente perdita di occupazione nel settore, tendenza che contrasta con il necessario aumento dei consumi auspicato dalle autorità sanitarie per ragioni dietologiche.

Di fronte a questa situazione, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se è in grado di confermare la diminuzione dei prezzi al produttore?

2. In caso affermativo, se nell'Unione si verifica lo stesso trend?

3. Se, nell'analisi dei vari aspetti della PAC, risulta questa diminuzione e in che misura, eventualmente?

4. Se ha proposte e suggerimenti da dare per limitare l'egemonia della grande distribuzione e per consentire una libera contrattazione tra produttori e filiere commerciali?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2013)

Nel settore ortofrutticolo l'andamento dei prezzi varia a seconda dei prodotti e della varietà.

Le fluttuazioni del reddito dovute alla volatilità dei prezzi, la variabilità del calendario agricolo e del volume di produzione, l'aumento dei costi dei fattori di produzione e la posizione dominante occupata da grandi distributori, sono oggi tra le principali sfide che i produttori ortofrutticoli si trovano a dover affrontare.

Nell'intento di risolvere tali problemi, l'organizzazione comune dei mercati (OCM) dell'UE nel settore degli ortofrutticoli ha riconosciuto particolare importanza alle organizzazioni di produttori (OP), il cui obiettivo è di concentrare l'offerta e di pianificare e lanciare sul mercato la produzione dei propri membri, sostenendoli nell'ottenimento di prezzi più elevati.

La Commissione intende migliorare il potere contrattuale degli agricoltori nella filiera alimentare inserendo nelle sue proposte per la riforma della PAC la necessità di facilitare il riconoscimento delle organizzazioni di produttori. Inoltre, la Commissione ha proposto di stanziare ulteriori finanziamenti all'innovazione e di mantenere il sostegno all'investimento e al cambiamento strutturale previsto dalla politica di sviluppo rurale.

Nell'ambito del forum di alto livello per un migliore funzionamento della filiera alimentare sono in corso iniziative per migliorare la trasparenza dei prezzi ed eliminare le pratiche sleali nella filiera alimentare. Per attuare questi principi il forum ha sviluppato un codice di condotta e un quadro di autoregolamentazione che verranno adottati quest'anno su base volontaria da rappresentanti della filiera alimentare. Nel giugno 2013 la Commissione valuterà i risultati di questo regime volontario e gli esiti di tale procedura rappresenteranno un contributo importante per la valutazione di impatto sulle pratiche sleali nelle relazioni contrattuali. Prima della fine dell'anno e sulla base dell'esperienza ottenuta e del lavoro svolto fino ad oggi, la Commissione enuncerà la strategia da seguire per affrontare il problema delle pratiche sleali nelle relazioni tra imprese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004193/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Unequal income distribution in the fruit and vegetable sector

Italy is the largest fruit producer in the EU, accounting for 30% of production. In 2011, the industry as a whole, including the citrus sector, had a turnover of EUR 11.5 billion (source: CSO), with a total production, including fruit and vegetables for the food-processing industry, of 25 million tonnes. As a result of the global crisis, the fruit sector in Italy is going through a difficult period. Producer prices fell by 40% in 2009, while consumer prices remained virtually unchanged.

The main causes of low producer prices are the fragmentation of agriculture and the lack of bargaining power in the supply chain. Production costs account for about 25% of the retail price. The producer price is not determined by consumer demand. There can be up to eight steps from producer to consumer. Major retailers dominate the market, unilaterally deciding on producer prices, to the extent that local farmers can no longer cover costs. A concrete example: in 2011, the cost of Piedmont peaches was EUR 0.42, while the producer received EUR 0.16. This leads to farms going out of business and falling fruit production with resultant job losses in the sector, a trend that contrasts with the increased fruit consumption advocated by health authorities for dietary reasons.

1. Can the Commission confirm that producer prices have fallen?

2. If so, is there a similar trend throughout the EU?

3. When analysing the various aspects of the common agricultural policy, has this fall in prices come to light and, if so, to what extent?

4. Does the Commission have any suggestions or proposals to limit the dominance of large retailers and to enable free bargaining to take place between producers and supply chains?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The price evolution is different for each product and variety in the fruit and vegetables sector.

Income variability due to price volatility, production volume and calendar variability, increasing input costs and a dominant position of big retailers are among the main challenges faced by fruit and vegetable growers today.

To address these challenges, the EU's common market organisation (CMO) for the fruit and vegetables sector has focused on producer organisations (POs), which aim to concentrate supply and plan and market the production of their members, allowing them to achieve higher prices.

The Commission aims at improving the bargaining power of farmers in the food chain by proposing facilitated recognition of producer organisations in its CAP reform proposals.

Moreover, the Commission proposed further financing for innovation and to maintain support to investment and structural change under the Rural Development policy.

Work on better price transparency and the elimination of unfair practices in the food chain is ongoing in the framework of the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain. The Forum has developed a Code of conduct and a self-regulatory framework for the implementation of these principles, which will be put in practice on a voluntary basis by food chain representatives during this year. The Commission will evaluate the success of the voluntary scheme in June 2013. The results of this exercise are an important contribution to the impact assessment on unfair practices in contractual relations. Before the end of the year, the Commission will announce a way forward on tackling unfair practices in business to business relations, based on the experience and work done so far.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004194/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Rapporto tra sport, salute e sfera sociale: quale futuro

In seguito a un recente studio effettuato su 2395 ragazzi, è stato possibile dedurre che i giovani che fanno assiduamente sport saranno soggetti a un numero minore di fratture in età adulta. In effetti gli 808 adolescenti che per un periodo di sei anni hanno dedicato quaranta minuti di tempo allo sport ogni giorno hanno acquisito una maggiore densità ossea; tra questi sono stati registrati 72 casi di fratture, contro i 143 del gruppo di 1500 ragazzi che hanno fatto sport per una sola ora alla settimana. Questo dimostra quanto lo sport sia un fattore determinante per la salute. Secondo i dati statistici attualmente a disposizione, negli Stati membri dell'Unione europea il 45 % dei giovani pratica almeno uno sport; di questi, in Italia, il 21,9 % lo fa in modo continuativo, mentre per il 10,2 % di essi si tratta di un'abitudine saltuaria. Resta elevato il numero dei ragazzi europei con uno stile di vita prevalentemente sedentario (39,8 %). Poiché lo sport non soltanto giova alla salute ma contribuisce alla realizzazione personale e allo sviluppo dei rapporti sociali, negli ultimi anni non sono mancati progetti europei atti a promuoverne l'importanza. In Italia sono state intraprese alcune iniziative legislative per sostenere lo sport economicamente e sviluppare una nuova cultura sportiva nelle scuole.

Quest'ultima aumenta il senso civico degli studenti e migliora le loro capacità di aggregazione, integrazione e socializzazione. A livello europeo, nel maggio 2011 è stato approvato il primo Piano di lavoro per lo sport (2011-2014). Alcuni mesi dopo, nel novembre 2011, la Commissione ha approvato il finanziamento di dodici progetti transnazionali volti ad affrontare, da un lato, il problema della violenza e dell'intolleranza in ambito sportivo e, dall'altro, il rafforzamento dell'organizzazione dello sport in Europa.

Considerato che:

— lo sport è un'abitudine essenziale per chi desidera tutelare al meglio la propria salute;

— quest'ultimo può contribuire alla realizzazione degli obiettivi della Strategia Europa 2020 ai fini di una crescita che sia al contempo inclusiva, sostenibile e intelligente e che preveda l'esaltazione dei valori sociali dello sport (salute, educazione sociale e educazione in generale);

sono a chiedere alla Commissione:

1. se intenda appoggiare ricerche volte ad approfondire le conoscenze riguardanti i benefici dello sport sul corpo umano;

2. se ritenga opportuno promuovere ulteriori progetti in campo sportivo che sensibilizzino i cittadini, in particolare i giovani, in merito al ruolo che lo sport ricopre nelle nostre vite.

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La Commissione condivide le affermazioni dell'onorevole deputato sull'importante ruolo che lo sport e l'attività fisica svolgono nella promozione della salute, dell'inclusione sociale e dello sviluppo personale. Questo è il motivo per cui negli anni passati la Commissione ha adottato diverse iniziative strategiche e quadri finanziari per promuovere ulteriormente i valori salutistici, sociali ed educativi dello sport.

In linea con la competenza complementare sancita nel trattato, la Commissione prosegue il suo impegno a sviluppare la dimensione europea dello sport e le tematiche sportive europee. Il nuovo capitolo sullo sport contenuto nella proposta del programma «Erasmus per tutti» (2014-2020) è destinato a promuovere progetti transnazionali in ambito sportivo. Esso offrirà opportunità di cooperazione agli stakeholder al fine di affrontare le minacce transnazionali, promuovere la buona gestione del settore dello sport e le carriere parallele degli atleti, oltre a incoraggiare l'inclusione sociale, le pari opportunità e l'attività fisica con finalità salutistiche grazie a una maggiore partecipazione allo sport.

Nel contesto della tematica sanitaria del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico la Commissione ha finanziato diversi progetti di ricerca che promuovono l'attività fisica quale strumento per una salute migliore ([1]). La Commissione sta inoltre negoziando tre progetti volti ad applicare approcci innovativi per ridurre i comportamenti sedentari e accrescere il livello di attività fisica tra la popolazione.

([1]) Cfr., ad esempio, METAPREDICT http://metapredict.eu/; REPOPA http://www.repopa.eu; PAPA www.projectpapa.org.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004194/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Future of the relationship between sport, health and social life

According to a recent study of 2 395 young people, those who play sport on a regular basis will suffer fewer fractures in adulthood. The 808 teenagers who, for a period of six years, spent 40 minutes a day playing sport had greater bone density. There were 72 cases of fractures in this group, compared with 143 in the group of 1 500 young people who played sport for only one hour a week. This shows that sport is decisive for health. According to figures currently available, 45% of young people in the EU Member States play at least one sport; of these, in Italy, 21.9% do so on a regular basis, while it is an occasional activity for 10.2% of them. The number of young Europeans with a predominantly sedentary lifestyle remains high (39.8%). Since sport is not only good for health but also contributes to personal fulfilment and development of social relations, there have been a number of EU projects in recent years designed to promote its importance. In Italy, legislative initiatives have been undertaken to provide financial support for sport and develop a new sports culture in schools.

This increases pupils' sense of social responsibility and improves their ability to come together, integrate and socialise. In the EU, the first Work Plan for Sport 2011-2014 was adopted in May 2011. A few months later, in November 2011, the Commission approved funding for 12 transnational projects to tackle the problem of violence and intolerance in sport and to improve how sport is organised in Europe.

Sport is essential for those who want to protect their health as best they can.

Sport can contribute to achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, with a view to growth that is inclusive, sustainable and smart and underlines the social benefits of sport (health, social education and education in general).

1. Will the Commission support research to increase knowledge of the benefits of sport for the human body?

2. Does it think it should promote more projects in the sports sector and raise awareness, particularly among young people, about the role that sport plays in our lives?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's view on the important role that sport and physical activity play in promoting health, social inclusion and personal development. This is why over the past years the Commission has taken different policy and funding initiatives to promote the health-enhancing, social and educational values of sport further.

In line with the EU's supporting competence in the Treaty, the Commission stays committed to developing the European dimension in sport and promoting European sporting issues. The new Sport Chapter of the Erasmus for All programme proposal (2014-2020) is designed to promote transnational projects in the field of sport. It will provide cooperation opportunities for stakeholders which aim at tackling transnational threats, supporting good governance in sport and dual careers of athletes as well as promoting social inclusion, equal opportunities and health-enhancing physical activity through increased participation in sport.

In the context of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development's health theme the Commission has been funding several research projects that promote physical activity as a means to improved health ([1]). Furthermore, the Commission is currently negotiating three projects implementing innovative approaches to reduce sedentary behaviour and enhance the level of physical activity in the population.

([1]) See as examples METAPREDICT http://metapredict.eu/; REPOPA http://www.repopa.eu; PAPA www.projectpapa.org.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004195/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Il futuro della normativa europea sulle disabilità: quali prospettive per un'efficace attuazione

La disponibilità d'informazioni statistiche sulle disabilità è presupposto fondamentale per una corretta attuazione delle norme e per l'assegnazione di risorse adeguate; ciononostante in Europa non si è ancora giunti a raccogliere un insieme organico e completo di dati sui diversi aspetti della disabilità (motoria, sensoriale, intellettiva). In tutta Europa si contano 80 milioni di disabili, di cui 2 milioni e 600mila solo in Italia. L'articolo 26 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea riconosce il diritto delle persone disabili di beneficiare di misure intese a garantirne l'autonomia, l'inserimento sociale e professionale e la partecipazione alla vita di comunità. La tecnologia ha contribuito ad eliminare le barriere che si frappongono all'esercizio di tali diritti: ad esempio, grazie ad alcune applicazioni per dispositivi informatici, quali la compilazione di certi moduli online, è stato consentito un accesso agevolato alle zone a traffico limitato. In Italia inoltre è stata ideata una Carta dei diritti per venire incontro alle particolari esigenze dei disabili durante i loro periodi di degenza in ospedale.

Considerato che:

— la Strategia europea sulla disabilità (2010-2020) prevede risoluzioni in ambiti d'azione mirati, quali accessibilità, partecipazione, uguaglianza, istruzione, salute e protezione sociale;

— recentemente si è parlato anche di introdurre misure volte a favorire gli spostamenti di queste persone da uno Stato membro a un altro dove vi sono maggiori opportunità di trovare un impiego;

sono a chiedere alla Commissione:

1. come intende procedere per raggiungere al più presto gli obiettivi stabiliti dalla Strategia;

2. se intende appoggiare un piano operativo che consenta di aggiornare e integrare di continuo le informazioni sul progresso nell'integrazione della disabilità nelle politiche dell'UE per sopperire all'attuale carenza di dati certi e discordanti;

3. quali azioni intende intraprendere al fine di creare una mappatura comune a tutti gli Stati membri dell'intera normativa europea sulla disabilità; quali azioni indica per migliorare l'attuazione del piano d'azione dell'UE per la disabilità e della Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

La Commissione sta preparando una relazione sui primi anni di applicazione della Strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020 che intende pubblicare entro la fine dell'anno. La lista delle azioni della Strategia sarà adattata e aggiornata sulla base dei risultati della relazione.

Nel quadro della Strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020, la Commissione svolge anche azioni di raccolta dei dati riguardanti la situazione delle persone disabili; un esempio è il recente modulo ad hoc ai fini dell'indagine sulle forze di lavoro e dell'indagine sulla salute e l'inclusione sociale. I risultati di tali indagini saranno pubblicati nel 2013 e nel 2014 in autunno.

Su richiesta della Commissione la rete accademica di esperti europei in disabilità (ANED) conduce il progetto DOTCOM (*Disability Online Tool of the Commission*) ([1]) che fornisce regolarmente una panoramica aggiornata dei principali strumenti, anche legislativi, per l'applicazione della Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità (UNCRPD), e in larga misura anche della strategia europea sulla disabilità, sia a livello dell'UE che in tutti gli Stati membri. Tale strumento è utilizzato per facilitare l'accesso alle buone pratiche e per individuare le lacune esistenti che necessitano ulteriori interventi.

([1]) http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004195/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: The future of European disability legislation: prospects for effective implementation

Statistics on disability are vital for properly implementing the rules and for allocating sufficient resources. However, no systematic and comprehensive database has yet been set up in Europe to cover the various aspects of disability (physical, sensory, intellectual). Across Europe, there are 80 million disabled people, including 2.6 million in Italy alone. Article 26 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union recognises the right of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community. Technology has helped to eliminate barriers to the exercise of those rights: for example, some IT applications, such as filling in forms online, have led to easier access to restricted traffic zones. In addition, Italy has drawn up a Charter of Rights to meet the special needs of disabled people when they are hospitalised.

— The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 provides solutions in targeted action areas, such as accessibility, participation, equality, education, health and social protection.

— There has also recently been talk of introducing measures to facilitate the movement of disabled people from one Member State to another where there are better employment opportunities.

1. How will the Commission achieve the objectives set out by the strategy in as short a time as possible?

2. Will it support an operational plan to continuously update and supplement information on progress regarding the integration of disability into EU policies, to make up for the current lack of reliable data and for conflicting data?

3. What action will it take to create a comprehensive overview of EU legislation on disability for all Member States? How will it improve implementation of the EU action plan for disability and of the United Nations Convention?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

A report by the Commission on the first years of the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 is under preparation for publication later this year. On the basis of the report's findings the list of actions under the strategy will be adapted and updated.

As part of the EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020, the Commission also carries out data collection actions with regard to the situation of persons with disabilities, like the recent special ad hoc module of Labour Force Survey (LFS-AHM) and the European Health and Social Inclusion Survey (EHSIS). The results of these surveys will become available in the autumn of 2013 and 2014.

At the request of the Commission, the Academic Network of European Disability Experts (ANED) has constructed the Disability Online Tool of the Commission (DOTCOM) ([1]). The DOTCOMprovides a regularly updated overview of the main instruments, including legislation, put in place for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) — and to a large extent also of the European Disability Strategy — both at the level of the EU and of all its Member States. This tool is used to facilitate access to good practices and to identify existing gaps requiring further action.

([1]) http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004196/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Far fronte all'emergenza tubercolosi: quali misure

La tubercolosi è una malattia infettiva a localizzazione prevalentemente polmonare, che colpisce ogni anno 9 milioni di persone. Nel 2008 si contavano 139 casi ogni 100.000 abitanti a livello mondiale, di cui 7,6 nella sola in Italia. Il 50 % di questi ultimi era costituito da persone nate in Paesi dove il rischio di contrarre la malattia era molto alto, come in Europa dell'Est, Asia e Africa. La povertà costituisce, infatti, il presupposto ideale per il diffondersi di focolai di tubercolosi: malnutrizione, mancanza di sistemi igienici e sanitari adeguati e scarsa qualità della vita in generale non permettono più all'organismo di difendersi e le difese immunitarie non sono sufficienti.

Negli ultimi anni sono stati compiuti notevoli progressi in materia di cura e prevenzione della tubercolosi, tali che, a livello europeo, secondo il *Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2013*, nel 2011 si registra una diminuzione del 4 % dei casi rispetto al 2010. Nonostante questo, i membri dell'OMS, il Fondo mondiale per la lotta alla tubercolosi (che fornisce il 90 % delle risorse per la lotta alla malattia) sostengono che per il triennio 2014-2016 mancano 1,6 miliardi di dollari per le cure nei Paesi più disagiati.

Considerato che:

— i progressi in campo medico permettono cure immediate e complete per il malato e trattamenti antibiotici preventivi (chemioprofilassi) alle persone che sono state a contatto con un malato contagioso, ma che non hanno una malattia tubercolare in atto;

— i progressi in campo medico sono stati notevoli ma anziani e persone con una malattia cronica di base restano i più esposti al rischio di contrazione della tubercolosi;

— dal 1990 al 2011 la mortalità sia diminuita del 41 %, secondo l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità ogni giorno si contano 1.000 casi di tubercolosi in Europa;

sono a chiedere alla Commissione:

1. se ritenga importante promuovere una campagna informativa rivolta al personale sanitario, ai pazienti e a chi li assiste, che illustri con un linguaggio comprensibile e preciso i nuovi trattamenti disponibili;

2. se ritiene prioritaria la cura preventiva di questa malattia, in modo da ridurre l'impatto sociale ed economico che potrebbe determinare un'epidemia negli Stati europei e nel mondo;

3. se ritiene possibile stabilire un percorso al fine di giungere ad un accesso gratuito alle cure mediche contro la tubercolosi in tutti gli Stati membri, soprattutto in quelli in cui è fondamentale attuare campagne preventive per tale patologia;

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

La Commissione ritiene che un'informazione chiara all'indirizzo degli operatori sanitari sulle questioni legate alla tubercolosi sia d'importanza cruciale, compresa anche l'informazione sulle nuove terapie. Su richiesta della Commissione, nel 2008 il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (ECDC) ha messo a punto il «Framework Action Plan to fight TB in the EU» (piano d'azione quadro per combattere la TBC nell'UE) che definisce quattro principi fondamentali per assicurare la prevenzione e il controllo della tubercolosi nell'Unione europea. Questi quattro principi prefigurano i seguenti obiettivi: (i) assicurare un'assistenza tempestiva e di qualità per tutti, (ii) rafforzare la capacità dei sistemi sanitari, (iii) sviluppare nuovi strumenti, tra cui una comunicazione chiara ed efficiente all'indirizzo degli operatori sanitari e (iv) costituire partenariati e collaborazioni con i paesi e gli stakeholder ([1]).

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/publications/0803_spr_tb_action_plan.pdf

I passi da compiere ulteriormente per assicurare il libero accesso alle terapie rientrano nelle responsabilità delle autorità nazionali come anche le campagne di prevenzione; tuttavia la quinta relazione su «Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2013» (sorveglianza e monitoraggio della tubercolosi in Europa 2013) preparata congiuntamente dall'ECDC e dall'Ufficio regionale per l'Europa dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità consolida in modo estremamente chiaro i dati forniti dai paesi della Regione europea ([2]), tra cui le informazioni in merito alle terapie. La relazione è stata presentata il 20 marzo 2013 sotto l'egida del Parlamento europeo in occasione della Giornata mondiale della tubercolosi e ha messo in luce due ambiti di lavoro fondamentali: la necessità di rafforzare i sistemi sanitari nazionali per far sì che tutti i malati di tubercolosi nell'UE ricevano un trattamento adeguato e la necessità di occuparsi dei settori vulnerabili della società che sono quelli maggiormente colpiti.

([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004196/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Measures to deal with the tuberculosis crisis

Tuberculosis is an infectious disease that primarily attacks the lungs and affects 9 million people each year. In 2008, there were 139 cases per 100 000 people worldwide, with 7.6 per 100 000 in Italy alone. Of the latter cases, 50% involved people born in countries where the risk of contracting the disease was very high, such as in eastern Europe, Asia and Africa. Poverty creates the ideal conditions for outbreaks of tuberculosis: malnutrition, a lack of adequate sanitation and poor quality of life in general prevent the body from defending itself, leaving immune defences unable to cope.

In recent years, there has been considerable progress in treating and preventing tuberculosis, such that, according to the *Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2013* report, there was a 4% fall in the number of cases in Europe in 2011 compared with 2010. Despite this, members of World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (which provides 90% of the resources to combat the disease) claim that USD 1.6 billion are still needed for the years 2014-2016 for tuberculosis treatment in the world's poorest countries.

— Medical advances mean that immediate and comprehensive treatment for the sick and preventive antibiotics (chemoprophylaxis) for people who have come into contact with a contagious individual, but who do not have active tuberculosis, are available.

— Despite the significant medical progress that has been made, the elderly and people suffering from an underlying chronic disease remain at the greatest risk of contracting tuberculosis.

— From 1990 to 2011, mortality has fallen by 41%, while, according to the WHO, there are 1 000 new cases of tuberculosis in Europe every day.

1. Does the Commission think it is important to launch an information campaign aimed at health professionals, patients and their carers, to illustrate in clear, everyday language what new treatments are available?

2. Does it consider preventive care of tuberculosis to be a priority, in order to reduce its social and economic impact, which could lead to an epidemic in EU Member States and around the world?

3. Does it think it is possible to establish a way forward with a view to providing free access to medical treatment for tuberculosis in all Member States, especially in those where it is essential to conduct tuberculosis prevention campaigns?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission considers clear information to health professionals on issues related to tuberculosis to be of crucial importance, including information on new treatments. Upon request of the Commission in 2008 the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) provided the 'Framework Action Plan to fight TB in the EU' that defines four principles that are key to securing tuberculosis prevention and control in the European Union. These four principles (i) ensure prompt and quality care for all, (ii) strengthen capacity of health systems, (iii) develop new tools, including clear and efficient communication to the health professionals, and (iv) build partnerships and collaboration with countries and stakeholders ([1]).

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/publications/0803_spr_tb_action_plan.pdf

The way forward on providing free access to medical treatments falls under the responsibility of the national authorities, as well as preventive campaigns; however the fifth report on 'Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2013' jointly prepared by ECDC and the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organisation consolidates in a very clear way the data provided by the Countries of the European Region ([2]), including information related to medical treatments. The report was presented under the patronage of the European Parliament on 20 March 2013 on the occasion of World Tuberculosis Day and it highlighted two essential areas of work: the need to reinforce the national health systems so that all tuberculosis patients in the EU receive adequate treatment and the need to address vulnerable sectors of society, which are the most affected.

([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004197/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Affrontare l'emergenza degli psicofarmaci prescritti ai bambini: quali misure negli Stati membri

Pare che prescrivere psicofarmaci a minori, spesso bambini in età di sviluppo, stia diventando una consuetudine assai diffusa nei Paesi europei: recenti statistiche riportano che, nel 2011, in Germania, l'ADHD (Sindrome deficit di attenzione e iperattività) sarebbe stata diagnosticata a 750.000 bambini; in Italia l'83 % dei bambini iperattivi o affetti da patologie psichiche assume psicofarmaci, mentre negli USA le prescrizioni sono incrementate del 46 % in un decennio. È opinione comune che questi farmaci vengano promossi e pubblicizzati attraverso la loro presentazione a congressi scientifici volti ad affermare l'emergenza ADHD e per mezzo di siti Internet che spiegano come affrontare la malattia, stimolando così nei genitori l'interesse per le possibili terapie farmacologiche per il trattamento della personalità dei loro figli. Questi farmaci riducono i sintomi ma per un brevissimo lasso temporale e possono, invece, avere anche gravi effetti collaterali permanenti, che influenzano significativamente lo sviluppo integrato delle funzioni fisiologiche e cognitive del bambino. Questi disagi dovrebbero invece essere trattati con terapie psicoterapeutiche mirate per l'età dello sviluppo, affiancate dalla supervisione di un medico neuropsichiatra. Questa strategia è un *business*, che consiste in una vera e propria medicalizzazione dei comportamenti dei minori, a discapito della salute dei più deboli, ovvero i bambini.

Considerato che:

— l'assunzione di psicofarmaci comporta gravi effetti collaterali quali danni al fegato, scompensi cardiaci, sincopi, allucinazioni, comportamenti violenti e talvolta anche il suicidio;

— le norme europee non sono restrittive per quanto riguarda la registrazione di un farmaco, se questo è già autorizzato in un altro Paese europeo;

— la crisi economica e la crescente incertezza che ne deriva hanno contribuito ad aumentare la disoccupazione, il numero di divorzi e il malessere degli adulti, dunque di riflesso anche quello dei loro figli;

sono a chiedere alla Commissione:

1. quali provvedimenti ritenga opportuni per tutelare e normare la prescrizione di psicofarmaci ai minori negli Stati membri;

2. se intenda sensibilizzare, tramite una campagna informativa, i genitori europei riguardo a quali siano i farmaci adatti per i loro bambini e quali siano dannosi per la salute umana.

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

La legislazione farmaceutica dell'Unione europea stabilisce norme rigorose per l'autorizzazione dei medicinali.

In forza di tali norme l'autorizzazione ad immettere in commercio qualsiasi prodotto è subordinata alla dimostrazione della qualità, della sicurezza e dell'efficacia del prodotto stesso.

Qualora in seguito a nuove informazioni insorgano dubbi riguardo alla sicurezza di un prodotto autorizzato si procede a valutare le nuove informazioni con il sostegno dell'Agenzia europea per i medicinali nell'intento di raggiungere conclusioni vincolanti in tutti gli Stati membri.

Riguardo alla prescrizione di psicofarmaci l'articolo 71 della direttiva 2001/83/CE ([1]) autorizza gli Stati membri ad assoggettare tali prodotti a prescrizione medica limitativa.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:311:0067:0128:it:PDF.

Dal momento che le campagne informative cui ha fatto riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare sono prevalentemente di responsabilità nazionale, la Commissione non intende condurne alcuna. Il programma dell'Unione per la salute (EU Health Programme) cofinanzia tuttavia un'azione congiunta sulla salute e sul benessere mentale, uno dei cui pacchetti di lavoro riguarda il «Benessere mentale nelle scuole» (Mental health at schools). Nell'ambito di tale pacchetto si formuleranno linee guida per promuovere la salute mentale e sostenere gli alunni affetti da problemi in questo campo, incluso il disturbo da deficit di attenzione e iperattività (ADHD). Le associazioni dei genitori sono coinvolte in queste attività. La realizzazione del progetto di azione congiunta inizierà a febbraio 2013 e durerà tre anni.

La Commissione promuove infine progetti sulla salute mentale dei bambini, come il progetto nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro WE-STAY ([2]) per ridurre l'abbandono scolastico.

([2]) http://www.we-stay.eu/index.php/it/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004197/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Dealing with the emergency of psychotropic drugs being prescribed to children: measures in the Member States

It is becoming common practice in EU countries to prescribe psychotropic drugs to minors, often to children who are still developing: according to recent statistics, 750 000 children were diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) in Germany in 2011; in Italy, 83% of hyperactive children or those with mental illness take psychotropic drugs, while in the US prescriptions have gone up by 46% in a decade. It is widely felt that these drugs are being promoted and advertised through presentations at scientific congresses with the aim of reinforcing the idea that there is an ADHD crisis, and through websites that explain how to deal with the condition, thus arousing interest among parents in potential drug treatments for their children's personality disorders. These drugs alleviate the symptoms, but only for a very brief period of time and may, instead, have serious permanent side effects, significantly affecting the integrated development of a child's cognitive and physiological functions. By contrast, children's problems should be treated with psychotherapy specifically tailored to developing children, under the supervision of a neuropsychiatrist. The current strategy is purely a business, which treats the behaviour of children as a genuine medical problem, compromising the health of the most vulnerable members of society, namely children.

— Taking any psychotropic drug involves serious side effects such as liver damage, heart failure, syncope, hallucinations, violent behaviour and sometimes even suicide.

— EU rules are not strict with regard to the registration of a drug, if it is already authorised in another EU country.

— The economic crisis and the resultant growing uncertainty have contributed to increased unemployment, more divorces and greater anxiety among adults, and indirectly, therefore, among their children.

1. What measures does the Commission think should safeguard and regulate the prescription of psychotropic drugs to children in the Member States?

2. Does it intend to conduct an information campaign to raise awareness among European parents as to which medications are suitable for their children and which are harmful to human health?

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

The Union's pharmaceutical legislation provides for very strict rules for the authorisation of medicinal products. They require that the quality, safety and efficacy of every product is demonstrated before a marketing authorisation is granted.

Where on the basis of new information doubts are expressed as regards the safety of an authorised product, procedures apply to assess this new information with the support of the European Medicines Agency and to agree on conclusions that are binding in all Member States.

As far as the prescription of medicinal products that contain a psychotropic substance is concerned, Article 71 of Directive 2001/83/EC ([1]) empowers Member States to make those products subject to restricted prescription schemes.

The Commission has no plans for conducting an information campaign as referred to by the Honourable Member as this issue falls under primary national responsibility. It is however co-funding from the EU Health Programme a Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being, which has 'Mental health at schools' as one of its work packages. This work package will develop recommendations on promoting mental health and supporting pupils with mental health problems at schools, including the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Parents' associations are involved in the work package. The implementation of the Joint Action began in February 2013, and it will continue over three years.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:311:0067:0128:en:PDF.

Finally, the Commission is supporting projects on the mental health of children, such as the WE STAY project ([2]) to reduce school truancy under the Seventh Framework Programme.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/public-health/health-promotion-and-disease-prevention/projects/we-stay_en.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004198/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(12 april 2013)

Betreft: Grenscriminaliteit Zuid-West-Vlaanderen

Zoals de Commissie in haar antwoord op vraag E-001754/2013 reeds aangaf, kunnen grenscontroles enkel worden heringevoerd wanneer er sprake is van een ernstige dreiging van de openbare orde of van de binnenlandse veiligheid.

In de grensstreek van Zuid-West-Vlaanderen werden in 2012 minstens 96 zware criminele feiten gepleegd — waaronder ramkraken, home- en carjackings — die rechtstreeks in verband worden gebracht met grensoverschrijdende criminaliteit, waarbij ook al dodelijke slachtoffers vielen. Ook in de eerste maanden van 2013 werd de regio regelmatig geteisterd door dergelijke gewelddadige overvallen.

Is de Commissie het er mee eens dat dergelijke cijfers aantonen dat grenscriminaliteit een ernstige bedreiging vormt voor de binnenlandse veiligheid en de openbare orde in Zuid-West-Vlaanderen?

Is de Commissie het er mee eens dat dit dus de toepassing van tijdelijke grenscontroles aan de betrokken binnengrenzen kan rechtvaardigen — ten volle beseffend dat dit een maatregel is die beperkt is in de tijd — in afwachting van structurele ingrepen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(12 juni 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op zijn vorige vraag E-001754/2013. De Commissie beschikt niet over voldoende informatie om dit antwoord verder uit te werken.

Daarnaast verwijst de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid naar haar voorstel voor een verordening van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende het Agentschap van de Europese Unie voor samenwerking en opleiding op het gebied van rechtshandhaving (Europol), dat op 27 maart 2013 is bekendgemaakt en dat op de bestrijding van grensoverschrijdende misdaad is gericht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004198/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Cross-border crime in South-West Flanders

As the Commission has already stated in its answer to Question E-001754/2013, border controls can only be reintroduced where there is a serious threat to public order or internal security.

At least 96 serious criminal offences were committed in the South-West Flanders border region in 2012 (including ram-raids, homejacking and carjackings), for which a direct link has been established with cross-border criminality. Some of these crimes even cost lives. The region has also been regularly plagued by violent raids of this kind over the first few months of 2013.

Does the Commission agree that such figures prove that cross-border crime poses a serious threat to internal security and public order in South-West Flanders?

Does the Commission agree that this situation can therefore justify the implementation of temporary border controls at the internal borders involved — whilst remaining fully aware that this will be a temporary measure, pending structural change?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to his previous Question E-001754/2013. The information available to the Commission does not provide a basis to expand on this reply.

The Commission further refers the Honourable Member to its proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation and Training (Europol), published on 27 March 2013 and aimed at fighting cross-border crime.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004199/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(12 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Finansowanie działań na rzecz innowacji i rozwoju

Innowacyjność jest jednym z filarów nowoczesnej gospodarki opartej na wiedzy. W Unii Europejskiej funkcjonują trzy główne źródła finansowania badań: Siódmy Program Ramowy (FP7), Program Ramowy na rzecz Konkurencyjności i Innowacji (CIP) oraz Europejski Instytut Innowacji i Technologii (EIT).

Zwracam się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. W jaki sposób koordynowana jest działalność wspomnianych wyżej programów, aby zmaksymalizować zyski dla społeczeństwa?

2. Czy wyniki finansowanych przez te programy projektów są wykorzystywane komercyjnie, a jeśli tak, to w jakiej części?

3. Jaka część projektów powstaje w ramach partnerstwa z przedsiębiorstwami prywatnymi, a jaka z uczelniami i jednostkami badawczymi?

4. Ile projektów jest obecnie realizowanych w każdym z państw członkowskich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Máire Geoghegan-Quinn w imieniu Komisji
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

1. 7PR, CIP i EIT ([1]) prowadzą różne, ale uzupełniające się wzajemnie działania napędzające proces innowacji z korzyścią dla społeczeństwa. Programy prac są przyjmowane po przeprowadzeniu konsultacji. Wnioskodawcy mogą uzyskać pomoc dzięki różnym systemom na szczeblu krajowym ([2]) lub unijnym ([3]). „Horyzont 2020" ([4]) skupia w jednym programie całe finansowanie unijne w zakresie badań i innowacji, kładąc silny nacisk na znalezienie rozwiązań dla wyzwań społecznych.

2. W ramach 7PR wspierane są działania demonstracyjne i projekty pilotażowe ([5]), które przygotowują podłoże pod rozwiązania komercyjne. Program „Horyzont 2020" będzie wspierać działalność zbliżoną do rynku. CIP zapewnia usługi wspierające działalność gospodarczą, a także lepszy dostęp do finansowania. Ponad jedna trzecia jego budżetu przeznaczana jest na instrumenty finansowe ([6]) umożliwiające szybko rozwijającym się innowacyjnym MŚP rozwój lub rozszerzanie działalności i opracowywanie opłacalnych rozwiązań. Kolejna duża część budżetu przeznaczona jest na pomoc MŚP ([7]).

([1]) Siódmy program ramowy w zakresie badań, rozwoju technologicznego i demonstracji (7PR), Program ramowy na rzecz konkurencyjności i innowacji (CIP) i Europejski Instytut Innowacji i Technologii (EIT).
([2]) w tym krajowe punkty kontaktowe dla 7PR i Europejska Sieć Przedsiębiorczości dla działań CIP.
([3]) na przykład poprzez praktyczny przewodnik po funduszach UE na badania i innowacje, zapewniający wsparcie zainteresowanych stron, dostępny na stronie internetowej CORDIS: http://cordis.europa.eu/eu-funding-guide/home_pl.html
([4]) „Horyzont 2020" to kolejny program UE w zakresie badań naukowych i innowacji na okres 2014-2020.
([5]) takie działania są wspierane poprzez specjalne systemy finansowania innowacyjnych zamówień.
([6]) poprzez wykorzystanie instrumentów finansowych, w tym gwarancji kredytowych oraz inwestycji na niepublicznym rynku kapitałowym.
([7]) poprzez pośredników, w szczególności Europejską Sieć Przedsiębiorczości.

3, 4. 7PR został stworzony w celu wspierania szerokiej grupy uczestników, w tym uczelni wyższych, organów publicznych, MŚP i naukowców. Przyczynił się on do realizacji 18 507 projektów we wszystkich państwach członkowskich UE, w których zaangażowanych było około 86 602 uczestników, w tym 18 589 MŚP. W Internecie dostępne są mapy profilów krajowych, zawierające informacje o uczestnikach i wkładzie UE w podziale na państwa członkowskie ([8]). Wspólnoty wiedzy i innowacji EIT ([9]) mają 17 ośrodków w Europie, łączą ponad 282 partnerów ([10]) i przyczyniły się do powstania ponad 150 pomysłów biznesowych, 40 nowych przedsiębiorstw, 80 działań w zakresie transferu wiedzy i 30 nowych produktów. Projekty nie są głównym przedmiotem działań CIP. Uniwersytety i ośrodki badawcze nie są głównymi adresatami programu, bo nie odnosi się on do etapu badań i rozwoju. Sprawozdania z realizacji CIP i wykaz jego beneficjentów są dostępne w Internecie ([11]).

([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm?pg=country-profile

([9]) Trzy istniejące wspólnoty wiedzy i innowacji (WWiI) EIT działają w dziedzinie łagodzenia zmiany klimatu i przystosowania się do niej (WWiI „Climate"), zrównoważonej energii (WWiI „InnoEnergy") oraz przyszłego społeczeństwa informacyjno-komunikacyjnego (WWiI „ICT Labs").

([10]) dane z 2011 r., w tym: 82 najważniejszych partnerów, 113 przedsiębiorstw, instytucje szkolnictwa wyższego, 64 ośrodki badawcze, 24 miasta.

([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/cip/documents/implementation-reports/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004199/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Funding of innovation and development measures

Innovation is one of the pillars of a modern knowledge-based economy. There are three main sources of research funding in the European Union: the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).

Can the Commission state:

1. How are measures under the abovementioned programmes coordinated in order to ensure the maximum benefit to society?

2. Are the outcomes of the projects funded under these programmes used commercially, and if so, to what extent?

3. How many projects originate in partnership with private enterprises, and how many with universities and research bodies?

4. How many projects are currently being implemented in each of the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

1. FP7, CIP and EIT ([1]) have distinct but complementary activities that contribute in driving forward the innovation process for the benefit of society. Work programmes are adopted following consultation. Applicants are facilitated by support services distributed at national level ([2]) and Union level ([3]). Horizon 2020 ([4]) brings together, in a single programme, all of the Union's funding for research and innovation with a strong focus on finding solutions for societal challenges.

2. FP7 supports activities, such as demonstrations and pilot projects ([5]), which prepare the ground for commercial solutions. Horizon 2020 will support close-to-market actions. CIP delivers business support services and better access to finance. More than a third of its budget is allocated to financial instruments ([6]) enabling high-growth innovative SMEs to create or expand their businesses and develop commercially viable solutions. Another important part is used to assist SMEs ([7]).

3, 4. FP7 is designed to support a wide range of participants including universities, public authorities, SMEs and researchers. FP7 has contributed to 18.507 projects in all EU Member States (MS) bringing together some 86.602 participants, of which 18.589 SMEs. Country profile maps showing participants and EU contribution per MS are available online ([8]). The EIT KICs ([9]) have 17 centres in Europe, link more than 282 partners ([10]) and have contributed to more than 150 business ideas, 40 start-ups, 80 knowledge-transfer activities and 30 new products. CIP does not primarily work with a project approach. Because it does not address the research and development phase, universities and research bodies are not the main targets of the programme. CIP implementation reports and beneficiaries are available online ([11]).

([1]) The Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7), the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).
([2]) Including the National Contact Points for FP7 actions and the Enterprise Europe Network for CIP actions.
([3]) For instance through the Practical Guide to EU Funding Opportunities for Research and Innovation providing support to research and innovation stakeholders and which is available online on the CORDIS website: http://cordis.europa.eu/eu-funding-guide/home_en.html
([4]) Horizon 2020 is the next Union programme for research and innovation for the period from 2014 to 2020.
([5]) Such activities are supported by dedicated innovation procurement funding schemes.
([6]) Through the use of financial instruments including loan guarantees and private equity.
([7]) This done through intermediaries, notably the Enterprise Europe Network.
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm?pg=country-profile
([9]) The existing three EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) are in the fields of climate change mitigation and adaptation (Climate-KIC), sustainable energy (KIC InnoEnergy) and the future information and communication society (EIT ICT Labs).
([10]) 2011 data, including: 82 core partners 113 companies, higher education institutions, 64 research centres, 24 cities.
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/cip/documents/implementation-reports/

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004200/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(12 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sytuacja syryjskich kobiet w jordańskich obozach dla uchodźców

Docierają do nas informacje o tragicznej sytuacji kobiet z Syrii szukających schronienia w jordańskich obozach dla uchodźców. Dochodzi tam do molestowania seksualnego kobiet i dziewczynek poniżej 14. roku życia. Zamożni mężczyźni, przede wszystkim z sąsiednich krajów oraz Zatoki Perskiej, poprzez zawarcie „czasowych małżeństw" mogą zgodnie z prawem wykorzystywać seksualnie kobiety i dziewczynki, by następnie, nierzadko jako ciężarne, szybko je porzucić. Rodziny „panien młodych" wyrażają zgodę na takie praktyki w zamian za pomoc finansową.

Zwracam się z prośbą do Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy i jakie działania zamierza podjąć Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel, aby przyczynić się do likwidacji procederu wykorzystywania kobiet i dziewczynek w obozach dla uchodźców syryjskich w Jordanii?

2. Jakie działania podejmuje Unia Europejska, aby poprawić los uchodźców syryjskich?

3. Czy Unia monitoruje przestrzeganie praw człowieka i funkcjonowanie uchodźców syryjskich w obozach, szczególnie w Jordanii?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Kristalinę Georgijewą w imieniu Komisji
(17 czerwca 2013 r.)

UE jest liderem w pomocy humanitarnej w odpowiedzi na kryzys w Syrii i do 14 maja uruchomiła środki w kwocie ponad 626 mln EUR w ramach pomocy humanitarnej dla osób potrzebujących, zarówno w Syrii, jak i w krajach sąsiadujących, Jordanii, Libanie, Turcji i Iraku. Środki te, przekazywane przez partnerów UE, tj. Czerwony Krzyż/Czerwony Półksiężyc, podmioty należące do ONZ oraz organizacje pozarządowe pozwoliły na sfinansowanie ratującej życie pomocy nadzwyczajnej dla całej ludności dotkniętej tym kryzysem, w tym dla uchodźców z Syrii przebywających w obozach i na obszarach miejskich.

UE stale monitoruje lokalną sytuację humanitarną oraz podniosła ostatnio kwotę środków przeznaczonych dla Jordanii z kwoty 43 mln EUR do 63 mln EUR, aby zaradzić pilnym potrzebom humanitarnym rosnącej liczby uchodźców, w zakresie ochrony zdrowia, żywności i artykułów pozażywnościowych, schronienia, wody i usług sanitarnych oraz ochrony.

W szczególności jeśli chodzi o ochronę kobiet-uchodźców w Jordanii, do tej pory Komisja wsparła Fundusz Ludnościowy ONZ (UNFPA) oraz międzynarodowy komitet na rzecz ochrony (IRC) łączną kwotą 2,6 mln EUR z budżetu na pomoc humanitarną. Finansowane operacje dotyczą głównie ochrony kobiet-uchodźców, zdrowia reprodukcyjnego, zapobiegania przemocy na tle płciowym oraz reakcji na problemy w obozie dla uchodźców Zaatri i w obszarach miejskich, w sześciu guberniach Jordanii. Fundusz UNFPA, finansowany z pomocy humanitarnej UE, w dniu 15 kwietnia otworzył „Kompleksowe centrum kobiet" w obozie Zaatri, aby zapewnić ochronę, opiekę zdrowotną i doradztwo dla syryjskich kobiet-uchodźców. UE niedawno zwiększyła swoją pomoc humanitarną dla UNFPA w Syrii o kwotę 1 mln EUR dotacji na rzecz ochrony kobiet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004200/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation of Syrian women in Jordanian refugee camps

Information has reached us about the tragic situation of Syrian women seeking refuge in Jordanian refugee camps, where women and girls, some under 14 years of age, are being sexually abused by wealthy men, many of whom come from neighbouring countries and the Persian Gulf and who are legally able to enter into 'temporary marriages' with these women and girls and then abandon them soon afterwards, not infrequently leaving them pregnant. The families of the 'brides' agree to this in exchange for money.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take any action to help put a stop to the abuse of women and girls in Jordanian camps for Syrian refugees, and if so what?

2. What steps is the European Union taking to improve the situation of Syrian refugees?

3. Is the EU monitoring the human rights situation and the experiences of Syrian refugees in camps, in particular in Jordan?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2013)

The EU has been at the forefront of humanitarian response to the Syria crisis and, as of 14 May, has mobilised over EUR 626 million in humanitarian assistance to people in need, both in Syria and in neighbouring countries, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq. These funds, channelled through EU partners, i.e. the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, the UN family and INGOs, have financed life-saving emergency assistance to all affected populations, including Syrian refugees in camps and urban areas.

The EU constantly monitors the humanitarian situation on the ground and has recently raised its allocation to Jordan from over EUR 43 million to EUR 63 million to address the urgent humanitarian needs of the increasing number of refugees, in terms of health, food and non-food items, shelter, water and sanitation and protection.

In particular, concerning the protection of women refugees in Jordan, the Commission has so far supported the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) with the total amount of EUR 2.6 million from the humanitarian budget. The funded operations focus on women refugees' protection, reproductive health, gender-based violence prevention and response in Zaatri refugee camp and in urban areas, in six Jordanian governorates. Financed by EU's humanitarian assistance, on 15 April, UNFPA inaugurated a 'Comprehensive Women Centre' in Zaatri camp to provide protection, healthcare and counselling for Syrian refugee women. The EU has recently extended its humanitarian support to UNFPA in Syria with EUR 1 million grant for the protection of women.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004201/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(12 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Traktowanie uchodźców Rohingya w Tajlandii

W związku z marcowymi informacjami o otwarciu ognia przez żołnierzy tajskich do uchodźców z mniejszości Rohingya i, w następstwie, śmierci co najmniej 2 osób, zwracam się z następującymi pytaniami do Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel:

1. Czy i jakie kroki zamierza podjąć Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel w tej sprawie?

2. Czy Unia Europejska w kontaktach z rządem Tajlandii podkreśla wagę odpowiedniej polityki wobec uchodźców poszukujących pomocy w tym kraju, szczególnie pochodzących z Birmy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(29 maja 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca uważnie śledzi kwestię zwiększonych napływów ludności Rohingya przybywających na wybrzeże Tajlandii w drodze do Malezji od października 2012 r. Jeśli doniesienia prasy o strzałach oddanych przez Tajską Armię Królewską w kierunku członków mniejszości Rohingya w lutym 2013 r. są prawdziwe, stanowią powód do poważnych obaw. UE wyraziła swoje zaniepokojenie zwracając się do swoich partnerów w Ministerstwie Spraw Zewnętrznych oraz Radzie Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego. Premier Yingluck zadeklarowała podczas konferencji prasowej w lutym, iż zwrócono się o przeprowadzenie niezależnego dochodzenia w sprawie tych strzałów.

Komisja rozważa wsparcie dla Międzynarodowej Organizacji ds. Migracji ze środków budżetowych przeznaczonych na pomoc humanitarną w celu zapewnienia podstawowej pomocy członkom mniejszości Rohingya zatrzymanym w Tajlandii od stycznia 2013 r., którzy traktowani są przez królewski rząd Tajlandii jak nielegalni imigranci. Delegatura UE pozostaje w ścisłym kontakcie z Organizacją Narodów Zjednoczonych celem nadzorowania sposobu traktowania zatrzymanych członków mniejszości Rohingya przez królewski rząd Tajlandii, ze szczególną uwagą skupioną na tym, co będzie miało miejsce po upływie okresu sześciu miesięcy pobytu czasowego w sierpniu 2013 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004201/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Treatment of Rohingya refugees in Thailand

It was reported in March that Thai soldiers had opened fire against refugees belonging to the Rohingya minority, resulting in at least two deaths. I would like to ask the Vice-President/High Representative the following questions in this connection:

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative planning to take any action on this matter, and if so what?

2. In its contacts with the Thai Government, does the European Union emphasise the importance of an appropriate policy on refugees seeking aid in the country, in particular those from Burma?

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

The HR/VP has been closely following the issue of increased streams of Rohingya people arriving on Thailand's coast since October 2012, on their way to Malaysia. Press reports of the Royal Thai Army shooting at Rohingyas in February 2013, if correct, are cause for deep concern. The EU has expressed concern to its interlocutors at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Security Council and an independent investigation into the shooting has been requested, as pledged by Prime Minister Yingluck at a press event in February.

The Commission is considering support through the humanitarian aid budget to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for the provision of basic assistance to the Rohingya people who have been detained in Thailand since January 2013 and who are being treated as illegal migrants by the Royal Thai Government. The EU Delegation continues to be in close contact with United Nations (UN) Organisations to monitor the Royal Thai Government's treatment of the detained Rohingya, with particular attention to their plans once their six months of temporary stay expires in August 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004202/13
to the Commission
James Elles (ECR)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: UK High Speed 2 Rail (HS2)

Could the Commission clarify whether it is planning to bring forward new legislative measures between 2013 and 2015 on both tunnelling standards and noise from trains, in the context of the British Government's plan for a new high-speed rail route between London and Birmingham? Should this be the case, what information is currently available about the scope of such measures?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

As regards noise, the Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the Commission Decisions on Technical Specifications for Interoperability relating to Noise (TSI Noise) ([1]) and relating to high-speed rolling stock (TSI LOC and PAS) ([2]), which set out applicable specifications related to maximum level of noise that can be produced by conventional and high-speed trains.

TSI Noise is scheduled to be revised in 2014, with a planned merging of noise requirements for high-speed rolling stock and lowering of noise limits for conventional rail but not high-speed.

The Commission would also inform the Honourable Member that a number of other initiatives related to noise are planned and these include launch of a study to analyse 'Effective reduction of noise generated by railway freight wagons in use in the European Union' and the possibility of application of maximum noise levels according to the TSI Noise to existing wagons will be one of the options to be assessed.

Concerning the issue of tunnelling standards, the Commission informs the Honourable Member that the Commission Decision on Technical Specifications for Interoperability — Safety in railway tunnels ((TSI SRT) ([3]), regulating the standards to be applied for tunnels is currently in force.

In the second half of 2013, the Commission plans to present a proposed modification to the tunnel standards, based on a technical opinion received from the European Railway Agency (ERA). The revised decision will propose an extension of the scope for the SRT TSI; the proposal should be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council during the course of 2014.

([1]) Commission decision of 4 April 2011 concerning the technical specifications of interoperability relating to the subsystem 'rolling stock — noise' of the trans-European conventional rail system (2011/229/EU).

([2]) Commission decision of 21 February 2008 concerning a technical specification for interoperability relating to the 'rolling stock' sub-system of the trans-European high-speed rail system (2008/232/EC).

([3]) Commission decision of 20 December 2007 concerning the technical specifications of interoperability relating to 'safety in railway tunnels' in the trans-European conventional and high speed rail system (2008/163/EC).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004203/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Fin del bloqueo a Palestina

El ejército de Israel está llevando a cabo una política de exterminio del pueblo palestino que se encarna en un bloqueo criminal que está provocando el sufrimiento y padecimiento de casi un millón y medio de personas que son considerados unilateralmente por Israel como «población hostil», tratando a esta población civil como combatientes directos en el conflicto.

Este bloqueo económico que Israel lleva a cabo con toda la población palestina, pero especialmente con la población de la Franja de Gaza, resulta tener unas consecuencias desastrosas para la población de las que la comunidad internacional, y mucho menos la Unión Europea, se hace eco suficiente. Este bloqueo supone limitar el acceso a alimentos, medicinas, energía, el bloqueo de los recursos financieros del país, etc., en definitiva, supone el desmantelamiento del modo de vida de un pueblo.

Las consecuencias para la salud de los niños y las personas mayores, para los servicios que pueden prestar los hospitales, para la posibilidad de desarrollar actividades económicas, etc. son de una gravedad incalculable. No solo basta considerar los datos de defunciones, sino que debemos entender cómo afecta a los vivos y a sus respectivos estilos de vida. La política de apoyo la UE demuestra no ser efectiva, puesto que no basta con la ayuda económica si no se pone fin al bloqueo, que es la causa de la terrible situación que vive el pueblo palestino.

Este bloqueo se lleva prolongando en su fase más criminal, dado que la población de Palestina siempre ha visto limitada su relación con el exterior por la intervención de Israel, desde el año 2007, año en que el Gobierno israelí declaró la Franja de Gaza como «Territorio Hostil».

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la inmediata congelación del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel como medida de presión hasta que Israel termine el bloqueo con el que somete a la población palestina y especialmente a la de la Franja de Gaza?

¿Tiene conocimiento o estudia la UE los efectos negativos que el bloqueo provoca en Palestina y especialmente en la Franja de Gaza? ¿Piensa publicar dicha información?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de mayo de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta rechaza la sugerencia de que el ejército israelí esté llevando a cabo una política de exterminio del pueblo palestino. No obstante, está hondamente preocupada por la situación en la Franja de Gaza. La UE es consciente de los efectos negativos del bloqueo israelí y mantiene un estrecho seguimiento de la situación en la zona. La Oficina de las Naciones Unidas para la Coordinación de Asuntos Humanitarios elabora informes periódicos sobre la situación que pueden consultarse en su página de Internet www.ochaopt.org

Tal como muestran dichos informes, la situación sobre el terreno ha mejorado en cierta medida desde el alto el fuego en Gaza y el sur de Israel decretado el 21 de noviembre de 2012. Esa es la razón por la que la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta se ha sentido particularmente afectada por las violaciones del alto el fuego, en concreto, las que se produjeron en abril de 2013. La UE condena los ataques con misiles contra Israel. Es preciso que todas las partes respeten el alto el fuego de 21 de noviembre de 2012. La UE está decidida a aprovecharlo y trabajar con vistas a un cambio radical de la situación en la Franja de Gaza en beneficio de la población local. Los reiterados ataques con misiles y los ataques aéreos israelíes en represalia amenazan con socavar esta labor.

La posición de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta respecto a la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel figura en la respuesta a la anterior pregunta escrita E-10294/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004203/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — End to the blockade of Palestine

The Israeli army is pursuing a policy of exterminating the Palestinian people. This takes the form of a criminal blockade that is causing suffering and pain for nearly a million and a half people, unilaterally deemed by Israel to be a 'hostile population'. Israel is treating this civilian population as direct combatants in the conflict.

The economic blockade that Israel is pursuing against the entire population of Palestine, but in particular those living in the Gaza Strip, is having disastrous consequences for the population. The international community is not doing enough to speak up about this, much less the European Union. The blockade involves restricting access to food, medicine, energy, as well as the blockade of the country's financial resources, etc.; in short, it involves dismantling a people's way of life.

The consequences for the health of children and elderly people, for the services that hospitals can provide, for the possibility of carrying on economic activities, etc. are incalculably serious. It is not enough to look at the figures on deaths: we must understand how it is affecting the living and the way in which they live. The EU's policy of support has proven to be ineffective, because economic aid is not enough without putting an end to the blockade. It is the cause of the terrible situation in which the people of Palestine are living.

The blockade is now in its most criminal stage: the Palestinian people have always had their relations with the outside world restricted by Israel since 2007, when the Israeli Government declared the Gaza Strip to be 'hostile territory'.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative considering an immediate freeze on the EU-Israel Association Agreement to put pressure on Israel to put an end to the blockade it is inflicting on the Palestinian people, and in particular the people living in the Gaza Strip?

Is the EU aware of, or is it studying, the negative effects caused by the blockade in Palestine, and in particular in the Gaza Strip? Is it planning to publish that information?

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

The HR/VP does not accept the suggestion that 'the Israeli army is pursuing a policy of exterminating the Palestinian people'. The HR/VP is, however, deeply concerned by the situation in the Gaza Strip. The EU is aware of the negative effects caused by Israel's blockade and continues to monitor the situation there closely. Regular reports of the situation are made by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and can be consulted on its website: www.ochaopt.org.

As can be seen from these reports, there has been some improvement in the situation on the ground since the 21 November 2012 ceasefire in Gaza and southern Israel. The HR/VP has therefore been particularly concerned by breaches of the ceasefire, notably in April 2013. The EU condemns rocket attacks on Israel. All parties must respect the 21 November 2012 ceasefire. The EU is determined to build on the ceasefire and work towards a fundamental change in the situation of the Gaza Strip for the benefit of the local population. Repeated rocket attacks and Israeli retaliatory air strikes threaten to undermine this.

The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement was set out in the reply to previous Written Question E-010294/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004204/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Construcción de viviendas en los territorios ocupados de Palestina

El Gobierno de Israel continúa con su política de violación de los derechos humanos y del Derecho internacional en su actitud con respecto al pueblo palestino. Israel continúa con su política de construcción de colonias en los territorios ocupados, lo que genera obstáculos mayores a una salida al conflicto.

Durante el año pasado, el Gobierno de Israel aprobó varios proyectos de construcción de viviendas en el interior de los territorios ocupados de Cisjordania y Jerusalén Este que continúan construyéndose pese a significar una clara violación del Derecho internacional.

En la actualidad existen aproximadamente 340 000 colonos israelíes ocupando ilegalmente territorio en Cisjordania, 200 000 de ellos se sitúan en varios barrios situados en Jerusalén Este. Los colonos israelíes suponen una de las mayores amenazas para la paz en el conflicto Palestino-Israelí y, pese a ello, el Gobierno israelí continúa fomentado la colonización ilegal de territorio palestino, desoyendo a la comunidad internacional y violando repetidamente numerosos tratados internacionales así como los más fundamentales derechos del pueblo palestino.

La decisión unilateral de esta construcción de viviendas en los territorios ocupados solo puede agravar el conflicto y hacer más difícil una salida negociada del mismo. Israel continúa siendo la principal amenaza para la paz y la seguridad en la zona, y lo confirma, día tras día, con la absoluta indiferencia al Derecho internacional y a las decisiones de las Naciones Unidas. En su respuesta a mi pregunta E-010928/2012 la Sra. Ashton sostuvo sobre los asentamientos en Territorios Ocupados que «la UE se comprometió así mismo a seguir de cerca la situación y sus repercusiones generales, y a actuar en consecuencia».

¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante exigir a Israel que detenga la construcción de colonias en los territorios ocupados y que no autorice la construcción de ninguna vivienda más? ¿Qué medidas concretas piensa desarrollar para garantizar que no se produzca la llegada de más colonos de Israel a los Territorios Ocupados de Palestina? ¿Cómo va a «actuar en consecuencia» debido a la continuación de la construcción de estas viviendas? ¿Considera la posibilidad de denunciar a Israel por el incumplimiento sistemático del artículo 2 del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2013)

La UE sigue oponiéndose con firmeza a los asentamientos israelíes en Palestina y transmite regularmente este mensaje a sus homólogos israelíes a todos los niveles, así como en diversos foros internacionales.

Como indica Su Señoría, la UE reiteró este mensaje en las conclusiones acordadas el 10 de diciembre de 2012, en el contexto de los planes israelíes de ampliar sus asentamientos en Cisjordania, incluido Jerusalén Este, y, en especial, sus planes de construcción en la zona E1. Asimismo, declaró que seguiría muy atenta a la situación y a sus repercusiones más amplias y que actuaría en consecuencia. En la Declaración de la UE ante el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas de 24 de abril de 2013, la UE reiteró que las actividades de asentamiento israelíes, que son contrarias al Derecho internacional, constituyen un obstáculo para la paz y que van en detrimento de la viabilidad de la solución biestatal.

Por lo que se refiere a las relaciones entre la UE e Israel y el Acuerdo de Asociación entre ellos, la citada declaración del CSNU hizo hincapié en el vínculo entre estas relaciones y los avances en el proceso de paz al indicar lo siguiente:

«Si se alcanza un acuerdo que acabe por fin con este conflicto que dura desde hace décadas, se abriría la puerta a una profundización y mejora de la cooperación entre la Unión Europea y todos los países de la región, con los beneficios consiguientes para todas las partes interesadas, contribuyendo así a alcanzar una nueva era de paz y prosperidad en el Oriente Medio.»

La UE sigue haciendo todo lo posible para conseguir ese objetivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004204/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Construction of housing in the occupied Palestinian territories

The Israeli Government is continuing its policy of violating human rights and international law in its conduct towards the Palestinian people. Israel is pressing ahead with its policy of building settlements in the occupied territories, creating major obstacles to an end to the conflict.

Over the last year, the Israeli Government has approved several projects to build housing within the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and these are still being built, despite clearly being in breach of international law.

Currently there are approximately 340 000 Israeli settlers illegally occupying territory in the West Bank, 200 000 of whom are in various districts of East Jerusalem. The Israeli settlers pose one of the main threats to peace in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but nonetheless the Israeli Government is continuing to promote the illegal settlement of Palestinian territory, ignoring the calls of the international community and repeatedly violating numerous international treaties as well as the most fundamental rights of the Palestinian people.

The unilateral decision to build this housing in the occupied territories can only make the conflict worse and make it more difficult to achieve a negotiated end to it. Israel is still the main threat to peace and security in the region, and this is being borne out day after day by its total disregard for international law and the decisions taken by the United Nations. In her answer to my Question E-010928/2012, Baroness Ashton, referring to the settlements in the occupied territories, said that '[t]he EU also expressed its commitment to "closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and act accordingly".'

Is the Vice-President/High Representative planning to call on Israel to halt the building of settlements in the occupied territories and not to authorise the building of any more housing? What concrete measures does she plan to take to ensure that no more Israeli settlers arrive in the occupied Palestinian territories? How is she going to 'act accordingly' given that housing is still being built? Is she considering the possibility of taking action against Israel for systematic infringement of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement?

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

The EU remains firmly opposed to Israeli settlement activities in Palestine and regularly conveys this message to its Israeli counterparts at all levels as well as in various International fora.

As referred to by the Honourable Member, the EU, in the Conclusions agreed on 10 December 2012 reiterated this message in the context of the Israeli plans to expand settlements in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, and in particular plans to develop the E1 area. It stated that it would closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and that it would act accordingly. In the EU statement delivered in the UN Security Council on 24 April 2013, the EU reiterated that Israeli settlement activities, which are illegal under international law, constitute an obstacle to peace and undermine the viability of the two-state solution.

As regards the relations between the EU and Israel and the Association Agreement between the two, the abovementioned UNSC statement stressed the link between these relations and progress in the Peace Process when it stated that:

'If an agreement to finally end this conflict that has lasted for decades was reached, the door would open to a deepened and enhanced cooperation between the European Union and all the countries of the region, bringing benefits to all involved and contributing to the prospect of a new era of peace and prosperity throughout the Middle East.'

The EU continues to do its utmost to bring about such a development.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004205/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Violaciones de la política israelí de prisiones

El pasado 2 de abril murió el preso palestino Maysara Abu Hamdiye, retenido en las cárceles de Israel. Dicho preso padecía un cáncer de esófago cuyo tratamiento fue negado y retrasado por parte de los servicios de prisiones de Israel, según fuentes palestinas. Hamdiye es el preso palestino 202 que muere en cárceles israelíes.

La realidad de los presos palestinos en las cárceles de Israel ha sido denunciada por numerosas organizaciones, se han producido múltiples muertes entre sus muros, dejando a sus familias sin ningún tipo de explicación ni posibilidad de exigir responsabilidades. Este régimen carcelario, parecido al que ejerce EE.UU. en Guantánamo, fuera de cualquier tipo de respeto al Derecho internacional, ha sido denunciado en innumerables ocasiones, pero especialmente por los propios presos que, ante el abandono de su situación, realizan huelgas de hambre que ponen en peligro su propia vida. Sin embargo la mayor parte de la comunidad internacional continúa haciendo caso omiso a las denuncias y mantiene su férreo apoyo a Israel.

Esta política carcelaria parece ser respetada por la diplomacia europea, que premia al Estado de Israel considerándolo uno de los mayores aliados en la región. De esta forma los tratados firmados para fomentar relaciones con dicho país convierten a la Unión Europea en cómplice de la situación en estas cárceles en las que más allá de practicarse retenciones arbitrarias, se practican sistemáticas violaciones del Derecho internacional humanitario.

Numerosos palestinos salieron en protesta a las calles tras conocerse la muerte de Hamdiye condenando la clara violación de los derechos humanos por parte de las prisiones israelíes. En las protestas el Ejército de Israel asesinó a dos jóvenes palestinos, sumándose a larga cadena de víctimas de un Ejército que no respeta ningún tipo de convenio internacional.

¿Ha exigido la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante información sobre la muerte de Hamdiye al Gobierno de Israel? ¿Está investigando las numerosas denuncias que pesan sobre las cárceles israelíes de violación del Derecho internacional humanitario? ¿Considera que el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel ha mejorado la situación de los presos palestinos? ¿Piensa denunciar a Israel por el incumplimiento sistemático del artículo 2 de dicho Acuerdo?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de junio de 2013)

Las autoridades israelíes sí han proporcionado información sobre la muerte del Sr. Abu Hamdiye. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta considera que si algo se puede haber aprendido del trato y la atención médica recibidos por este preso, es que las medidas se deben tomar sin demora. La voluntad de la UE es seguir planteando estos asuntos al Gobierno de Israel.

En repetidas ocasiones, la UE ha expresado a las autoridades israelíes su preocupación por los presos palestinos, sobre todo por aquellos que realizan huelgas de hambre o se encuentran en situación de detención administrativa. Con frecuencia la UE recuerda a Israel, a todos los niveles, la situación de estos presos, incluso en el Consejo de Asociación. Durante los diálogos del grupo de trabajo informal UE-Israel sobre derechos humanos se plantea continuamente esta cuestión y, cuando resulta oportuno, también se solicita información relativa a casos particulares. Estos diálogos se basan en el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel y la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta no considera que Israel esté incumpliendo sistemáticamente el artículo 2 de dicho Acuerdo. La UE se muestra su satisfacción al saber que según el último informe sobre la aplicación de la Política Europea de Vecindad (PEV), en 2012 se redujo el número de palestinos en situación de detención administrativa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004205/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Israeli prison policy violations

On 2 April 2013, the Palestinian prisoner Maysara Abu Hamdiyeh died, having been held in prison in Israel. He was suffering from cancer of the oesophagus, but according to Palestinian sources treatment for this was denied and postponed by the Israeli prison services. Abu Hamdiyeh is the 202nd Palestinian prisoner to die in Israeli prisons.

Many organisations have complained about the situation of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, as many have died while incarcerated, leaving their families without any kind of explanation or any chance of holding anyone to account. There have been countless criticisms of this prison system, which is comparable with that run by the United States in Guantánamo, and operates without any respect for international law. Criticisms have come in particular from prisoners themselves who, faced with being abandoned to their fate, go on hunger strike, thus endangering their own lives. However, the complaints continue to go unheeded by most of the international community, which maintains strong support for Israel.

This prison policy seems to be accepted by EU diplomats, who back the State of Israel, considering it to be one of the EU's major allies in the region. The agreements signed to promote relations with Israel thus make the European Union complicit in the situation in Israeli prisons, where, in addition to arbitrary detentions, there are systematic violations of international humanitarian law.

Many Palestinians took to the streets in protest after learning of the death of Abu Hamdiyeh, to attack the clear violation of human rights by the Israeli prison system. During these protests the Israeli army killed two young Palestinians, who joined the long list of victims of an army that does not abide by international conventions of any kind.

Has the Vice-President/High Representative demanded information from the Israeli Government on Abu Hamdiyeh's death? Is she investigating the many complaints regarding international humanitarian law violations in the Israeli prison system? Does she believe that the EU-Israel Association Agreement has improved the situation of Palestinian prisoners? Will she condemn Israel for its systematic infringement of Article 2 of that agreement?

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

The Israeli authorities have provided information on Abu Hamdiyeh's death. The HR/VP takes the view that if there are lessons to be learnt from the manner in which he was treated and received medical care, they should be acted upon without delay. The EU will continue to raise these issues with the Government of Israel.

The EU has repeatedly drawn the attention of the Israeli authorities to its concerns regarding Palestinian detainees, notably with regard to hunger-strikers and to administrative detainees. The EU regularly raises the issue of Palestinian prisoners with Israel at all levels, including at the level of the Association Council. The question is regularly discussed in the EU-Israel informal human rights working group and information relating to individual cases is also sought as needed. The EU-Israel Association Agreement provides the basis for this dialogue. The HR/VP does not believe that Israel is infringing systematically Article 2 of that Agreement. The EU was pleased to note in the latest European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) progress report on Israel the reduction in 2012 in the number of Palestinians held in administrative detention.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004206/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Reconocimiento del Estado palestino

La situación de los Territorios Ocupados de Palestina ha venido degradándose, al incrementarse la violencia en el conflicto y reducirse cada vez más las oportunidades a una salida pacífica al conflicto. El objetivo de la creación definitiva del Estado palestino con las fronteras previas a 1967 es la única forma de garantizar una salida justa que permita terminar con el conflicto.

Persiste la permanente impunidad del Gobierno de Israel en sus acciones militares contra la población civil de los territorios ocupados. Sin el carácter de Estado de pleno Derecho, los territorios palestinos no pueden defender sus posiciones ni denunciar y llevar a cabo una persecución efectiva de los crímenes de guerra cometidos por Israel. Esta situación genera una desigualdad de partida donde los crímenes de uno y otro lado del conflicto son tratados de una manera diferente por la comunidad internacional, que llega a afirmar que la causa de la inestabilidad en la región es el Pueblo de Palestina. El reconocimiento y creación de un Estado palestino supondría un avance hacia el respeto universal a los derechos humanos y un paso más hacia el final de la impunidad de los crímenes de guerra en la región. Son muchas de las agresiones que en la actualidad están quedando totalmente impunes y que podrían ser perseguidas con el reconocimiento de un Estado palestino.

El reconocimiento de Palestina como miembro observador de la ONU, aprobado por mayoría absoluta en su Asamblea General en noviembre del pasado año, ha supuesto un impulso al pleno reconocimiento de una autoridad palestina. Si embargo las continuas violaciones del Derecho internacional en las que incurre Israel hace necesario acelerar dicho reconocimiento debido al genocidio al que está siendo sometida la población palestina.

En ese contexto de extrema violencia, la creación definitiva del Estado palestino con las fronteras del 67 y Jerusalén Este como capital, resulta la única solución legal y legítima que puede terminar con la violencia. En su respuesta a mi pregunta E-10928/2012 la Sra. Ashton sostuvo que «la UE ha trabajado sin tregua para alentar los esfuerzos de la Autoridad Palestina en favor de la creación de un Estado, y seguirá haciéndolo».

¿Podría enumerar qué medidas concretas componen ese «trabajo sin tregua» para el reconocimiento de Palestina como Estado de pleno derecho en las Naciones Unidas? ¿Considera la posibilidad de denunciar a Israel por el incumplimiento sistemático del artículo 2 del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel hasta que reconozca las fronteras del Estado palestino por el que «trabaja sin tregua»?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta ha rechazado con anterioridad la descripción por su Señoría de las políticas israelíes como consititutivas de genocidio, por ejemplo, en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-11010/2012 ([1]), y aprovecha esta ocasión para hacerlo una vez más con la máxima energía.

En su declaración en nombre de la Unión Europea de 29 de noviembre de 2012, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta indicó que solo una solución política del conflicto puede aportar una seguridad, paz y prosperidad duraderas a palestinos e israelíes. Una paz negociada global, que reviste interés fundamental para la UE y para las partes de la región, debe y puede alcanzarse sobre la base de la solución biestatal. A este respecto, la UE ha pedido a los dirigentes palestinos que usen con responsabilidad su nuevo estatuto resultante de la Resolución 67/19 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas y que no tomen medidas que agravarían la falta de confianza y alejarían más aún una solución negociada.

La UE ha trabajado de forma constante en apoyo de los esfuerzos de la Autoridad Palestina en favor del reconocimiento de su Estado y seguirá haciéndolo en el futuro. La Unión aporta una asistencia financiera cuantiosa y sostenida para la creación de las instituciones del futuro Estado palestino. En el marco de la política europea de vecindad, la Autoridad Palestina es el primer socio de la política de vecindad con quien se ha acordado un plan de acción de «nueva generación», por el que se recurrirá a todos los instrumentos de que dispone la UE para alcanzar los objetivos fijados en el mismo. Además, la UE ha desplegado dos misiones de la PCSD (EUPOL COPPS y EU BAM Rafah) y la primera de ellas ha contribuido concretamente de forma importante a mejorar el Estado de Derecho en Palestina.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta considera que Israel respeta el artículo 2 del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004206/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Recognition of the Palestinian State

The situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has been worsening, as the conflict becomes increasingly violent and the chances of a peaceful end to the conflict disappear. The definitive creation of the Palestinian State with pre-1967 borders is the only way to guarantee a fair outcome that will make it possible to put an end to the conflict.

The Israeli Government continues to enjoy permanent impunity for its military actions against the civilian population of the occupied territories. Without full statehood, the Palestinian territories cannot defend their positions or indict Israel and successfully prosecute war crimes committed by it. This situation gives rise to inequality from the outset, where the crimes of the two sides involved in the conflict are treated differently by the international community, which leads to the conclusion that the cause of the region's instability is the people of Palestine. The recognition and creation of a Palestinian State would constitute a step towards universal respect for human rights and another step towards the end of impunity for war crimes in the region. Many acts of aggression are currently going totally unpunished, but if a Palestinian State were to be recognised they could be prosecuted.

Palestine's recognition as an observer state at the United Nations, approved by an absolute majority at its General Assembly in November 2012, has provided the impetus for full recognition of a Palestinian authority. However, Israel's constant violations of international law mean that that recognition needs to happen quickly, because of the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people.

In this context of extreme violence, the definitive creation of the State of Palestine with pre-1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital, is the only legal and legitimate solution that can put an end to the violence. In her answer to my Question E-10928/2012, Baroness Ashton said that '[t]he EU has also consistently worked to advance the Palestinian Authority's state-building efforts and will continue to do so.'

Could she list the specific actions that make up this 'consistent work' for the recognition of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations? Is she considering the possibility of taking action against Israel for systematic infringement of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, until it respects the borders of the Palestinian State for which the EU 'is consistently working'?

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

The HR/VP has previously rejected the Honourable Member's description of Israeli policies as genocidal, for example in reply to Written Question E-11010/2012 ([1]), and takes this opportunity to do so once again in the strongest terms.

In her Declaration on behalf of the EU on 29 November 2012, the HR/VP stated that only a political solution to the conflict can bring lasting security, peace and prosperity to Palestinians and Israelis. A comprehensive negotiated peace, which is a fundamental interest of the EU, as well as the parties in the region, must and can be achieved on the basis of the two-state solution. In this context the EU has called on the Palestinian leadership to use responsibly Palestine's new status resulting from UNGA Resolution 67/19 and not to undertake steps which would deepen the lack of trust and lead further away from a negotiated solution.

The EU has consistently worked to advance the Palestinian Authority's state-building efforts and it will continue to do so. It provides high and sustained levels of financial assistance for building the institutions of a future Palestinian state. In the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Palestinian Authority is the first partner in the neighbourhood to have agreed a 'new generation' Action Plan which will mobilise all instruments available to the EU to achieve the goals set out therein. In addition, the EU has deployed two CSDP missions (EUPOL COPPS and EU BAM Rafah), with the former in particular having made a substantial contribution to improved Palestinian rule of law.

The HR/VP believes that Israel respects Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004207/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(12. April 2013)

Betrifft: Wirtschaftshilfe Guinea-Bissau

Sparsamkeit und Zweckprüfung in der EU fängt auch bei „kleinen" Geldposten an. Laut dem Länderstrategiepapier für Guinea-Bissau erhält dieses Land für den Zeitraum von 2008-2013 eine Summe von 100 000 000 EUR für verschiedene Zwecke von der EU. Wenngleich es ein sehr armes Land ist, sollte das alleine nicht die Basis allen Hilfsgedankens sein. Entscheidend ist doch auch der Wille, sich im Sinne der Staatengemeinschaft zu engagieren. Aber genau hier hat das arme Land starke Defizite: Es ist einer der Hauptdrogenumschlagplätze lateinamerikanischer Kartelle für den Kokaintransport nach Europa. Es ist ideal: Kaum internationale Aufmerksamkeit, kaum zivile Staatsmacht, kurze Entfernung nach Südamerika, diskrete Landebahnen und ein sehr hoher Korruptionsindex. Der „Staat" sorgt so für reibungslose Abwicklung, indem entscheidende Stellen bestochen werden. Das Geld der Kartelle schmiert den Apparat. Bekämpfung ist kaum möglich, da jene, die es wollen, es so zu vollziehen haben, dass das Militär und entscheidende Stellen nichts davon mitbekommen. Sie müssen also gegen zwei Gegner gleichzeitig kämpfen: Das kann nicht funktionieren. Haben sie Erfolg, werden sie entlassen.

Aus diesen eklatanten und absurden Missständen ergeben sich mehrere Fragen:

1. Wieso ist die Aufteilung der Hilfe von 100 Mio. EUR derart ausgestaltet, dass nur bestenfalls ein Viertel dieser Summe für die Korruptionsbekämpfung aufgewendet wird, obwohl dies doch eine sehr wichtige Voraussetzung für die richtige Verwendung der restlichen drei Viertel ist?

2. Wie kann man Geldmittelverwendung zur Bekämpfung von Korruption faktisch kausal verstehen? Wie funktioniert sie in Konkurrenz zu den viel gewaltigeren Geldmitteln der Drogenkartelle?

3. Gibt es mindestens zwei verschiedene Studien, die belegen, wie viel Prozent der Hilfsgelder wirklich dort ankommen, wo sie es sollen?

4. Sieht die Kommission Anlass — auf Basis dieses deutlichen Beispiels —, die internationalen EU-Hilfsanstrengungen zu überdenken, die sich scheinbar allein nach dem Gieskannenprinzip auf alle armen Länder konzentrieren, unabhängig davon, wie hoch die Aussichten sind, dass diese Gelder dort ankommen, wo sie ankommen sollen, oder auch unabhängig von dem Risiko, dass das betreffende Land bzw. seine „Führungselite" der EU auch noch Schaden zufügt (z. B. durch Rauschgift-Handel)?

5. Wie kann man den Anteil von 15 Mio. EUR an den 100 Mio. EUR Hilfe der EU für „Nichtschwerpunktbereiche" konkret verstehen?

6. Erachtet die Kommission es als möglich, dass Teile der Hilfen neben persönlicher Bereicherung auch noch für die Entwicklung der Infrastruktur des Drogenumschlags missbraucht wurden?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2013)

Der Kommission sind der Fluch der Korruption in Guinea-Bissau und die Verbindungen zwischen Korruption und Drogenhandel bewusst. Diese Probleme werden durch spezifische Maßnahmen angegangen. Da Korruption jedoch ein Querschnittsthema ist, umfasst jedes Projekt auch eine Komponente „Korruptionsbekämpfung". Indem die Kommission in dem Land weiterhin präsent und tätig ist, auch wenn es Aussetzungsmaßnahmen auf der Grundlage von Artikel 96 des Abkommens von Cotonou unterliegt, gewährleistet sie, dass die Mittel weiterhin für die direkte Unterstützung der Bevölkerung zur Verfügung stehen ([1]).

([1]) Aufgrund der Maßnahmen nach Artikel 96, die die Zusammenarbeit mit den nationalen Behörden aussetzen, ist die Zusammenarbeit auf eine direkte Unterstützung der Bevölkerung beschränkt, d. h. die Behörden können keine direkte Hilfe erhalten.

Wenn es um die Hilfe geht, die ein Land erhalten sollte, berücksichtigt die Kommission das Armutsniveau unter Abwägung seiner Leistungen im Bereich der Regierungsführung. Allerdings ist auch die Wirkung der EU-Hilfe im Sinne von Ergebnissen vor Ort ein Kriterium, das bei der Entscheidung über die vorläufige Mittelzuweisung berücksichtigt wird. Die Anwendung der Maßnahmen nach Artikel 96 gewährleistet, dass Mittel nicht missbräuchlich verwendet werden, da sie die Zusammenarbeit mit den nationalen Behörden aussetzen, die Kommission aber weiter mit der Zivilgesellschaft und internationalen Organisationen arbeiten kann, deren Mittelverwendung verfolgt und kontrolliert wird.

Hinzu kommt, dass Finanzkontrolle und Bewertungsverfahren für jedes Projekt einen Überblick darüber geben, was getan wird und wer was erhält, so dass die Begünstigten zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden können.

Die 15 Mio. EUR aus dem nationalen Richtprogramm für „Nichtschwerpunktbereiche“ zielen auf den Kapazitätsausbau nichtstaatlicher Akteure und auf die Unterstützung der Umsetzung der begrenzten Zusammenarbeit ab.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004207/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Economic aid for Guinea-Bissau

Economy and purpose-testing in the EU begins with 'small' monetary items, too. According to the Country Strategy Paper for Guinea-Bissau, for the 2008-2013 period, this country is to receive a sum of EUR 100 million from the EU for various purposes. Although Guinea-Bissau is a very poor country, we should not rely on that fact as the sole basis for all our decision-making when it comes to the aid it receives. What is also critical is our willingness to act in the sense of the community of states. But that is exactly where this poor country falls so short: It is one of the major transhipment points for Latin American cartels transporting cocaine into Europe. This is an ideal situation: Guinea-Bissau attracts hardly any international attention, its civil state hardly has any power to speak of, it is only a short distance away from South America and has tucked-away runways and a very high corruption index. The 'state' thus ensures a smooth-working system in which people in critical positions receive bribes. The money from the cartels lubricates the state apparatus. Combating corruption is hardly possible since those who are involved have sought to ensure that the military and people in critical positions know nothing of it. They, therefore, have to fight two enemies at the same time: this cannot work. If they succeed, they are dismissed.

Several questions arise from these blatant and absurd deficiencies:

1. Why has the aid sum of EUR 100 million been so allocated that, at best, only one quarter of this amount is spent on combating corruption, although this is a very important prerequisite for the proper use of the remaining three quarters?

2. How can we understand the de facto causal link between the use of EU funds and the combating of corruption? How do they compete with the much vaster financial resources of drug cartels?

3. Are there at least two different studies that show what percentage of aid money actually arrives where it is intended?

4. Does the Commission, on the basis of this clear example, have cause to rethink the EU's international aid efforts that seem to focus on all poor countries on the principle of indiscriminate distribution, regardless of how high the chances are that these funds will arrive where they are intended and regardless of the risk of the country in question and its 'ruling elite' causing damage to the EU on top of that (through drug trade, for example)?

5. How should we actually interpret the allocation of EUR 15 million from the EU's EUR 100 million towards 'non-focal areas'?

6. Does the Commission consider it possible that a certain proportion of the aid has been misused for the development of infrastructure for drugs transhipment in addition to personal enrichment?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the corruption curse in Guinea-Bissau and its links with drug trafficking. Those problems are addressed through specific actions, but, as corruption is a cross-cutting issue, each project also includes a 'fight against corruption' component. By remaining present and active even when the country is under suspension measures based on Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, the Commission ensures that funds remain available to give direct support to the population ([1]).

When it comes to the aid a country should receive, the Commission takes into account the level of poverty corrected by its governance performance. However, the impact of EU aid in terms of results on the ground is also a criterion that is taken into account in the indicative allocation decision. The application of Article 96 measures ensures that funds are not misused as it suspends the cooperation with the national authorities while allowing the Commission to work further with civil society and international organisations, whose use of funds are followed and controlled.

([1]) Due to Article 96 measures, which suspend the cooperation with national authorities, the cooperation is limited to a direct support to the population, meaning that no cooperation can be directed to the authorities.

Additionally, the financial control and assessment processes in force for every project provide an overview on what is done, and who receives what so that the financial beneficiaries are accountable.

The EUR 15 million allocated from the National Indicative Programme towards 'non-focal areas' now aim at reinforcing non-state actors' capacities and at supporting the implementation of the limited cooperation.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004208/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Καταγγελία Βέλγων Υπουργών κατά Γερμανίας για κοινωνικό dumping

Στις 19.3.2013, οι υπουργοί Οικονομικών και Εργασίας του Βελγίου, ανακοίνωσαν ότι θα υποβάλουν καταγγελία στην Επιτροπή κατά της Γερμανίας για κοινωνικό dumping. Οι υπουργοί καταγγέλλουν τη Γερμανία για «αναξιοπρεπείς πρακτικές» ειδικά στον τομέα της μεταποίησης κρέατος, όπου χρησιμοποιούνται κατά πλειοψηφία εργαζόμενοι «αποσπασμένοι» κυρίως από τη Βουλγαρία, τη Ρουμανία και την Ουκρανία μέσω εταιριών ενοικίασης εργαζομένων και οι οποίοι εργάζονται για 3 ευρώ την ώρα, 60 ώρες την εβδομάδα και χωρίς να τους προσφέρονται κοινωνικές παροχές.

Τα ζητήματα που έθεσαν οι υπουργοί του Βελγίου, δεν είναι άγνωστα στην Επιτροπή, καθώς και η ίδια έχει καταγράψει το ζήτημα στο έγγραφό της SWD(2012) 63 στις 21.3.2012. Σύμφωνα με το έγγραφο «τα Συνδικάτα αναφέρουν ότι στις μονάδες επεξεργασίας κρέατος ελάχιστοι είναι οι κανονικοί εργαζόμενοι, οι περισσότεροι είναι αποσπώμενοι από άλλη χώρα» οι οποίοι «εργάζονται σε υποβαθμισμένες συνθήκες εργασίας, με υπερβολικό φόρτο και εκτός ωραρίου» … «για μισθούς πολύ μικρότερους από αυτούς των ντόπιων (3 ευρώ την ώρα)». Το έγγραφο της Επιτροπής συνεχίζει ότι «οι πρακτικές αυτές χρονολογούνται από το 2000» … «Η απουσία κλαδικών συμβάσεων για τον τομέα του κρέατος στη Γερμανία δυσχεραίνει ιδιαίτερα την εφαρμογή της προστασίας στους εργαζομένους» … «γι αυτό ένα από τα βασικά αιτήματα των συνδικάτων στην βιομηχανία κρέατος είναι να καθιερωθεί κατώτατος μισθός σε εθνικό επίπεδο».

Ταυτόχρονα, δημοσιεύματα του Τύπου στη Γερμανία (Spiegel) αποκαλύπτουν ότι κυκλώματα εταιριών off shore, που δραστηριοποιούνται στις επενδύσεις ακινήτων, στη Γερμανία εκμεταλλεύονται τους εργαζομένους που προέρχονται από την ανατολική Ευρώπη, νοικιάζοντάς τους διαμερίσματα σε γερμανικές πόλεις έναντι υπέρογκων ποσών, π.χ. 700 ευρώ για 30 τετραγωνικά.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Υπάρχει ή όχι παραβίαση του κοινοτικού δικαίου από την Γερμανία; Εάν ναι, γιατί η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει μέτρα για να σταματήσει η απαράδεκτη αυτή κατάσταση, εφόσον γνώριζε τι ακριβώς συμβαίνει;

— Αν δεν υπάρχει παραβίαση, σημαίνει ότι είναι αποδεκτό αυτό το κοινωνικό μοντέλο για την Επιτροπή; Σε αυτή την περίπτωση, θα μπορούσαν να υιοθετηθούν ανάλογα εργασιακά μοντέλα για τις Ειδικές Οικονομικές Ζώνες, για τις οποίες υπάρχει πρόταση να δημιουργηθούν στην Ελλάδα, και για τις οποίες η Επιτροπή στην ερώτησή μου (E-008429/2011) απάντησε ότι «πρόκειται για ενδιαφέρουσα ιδέα που πρέπει να εξεταστεί με ιδιαίτερη σοβαρότητα»;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουνίου 2013)

Οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής εξετάζουν επί του παρόντος την καταγγελία που υποβλήθηκε από τη βελγική κυβέρνηση και αναλύουν τα θέματα που τέθηκαν, τα οποία έχουν σχέση, ιδίως, με την εφαρμογή στην πράξη της αρχής της ίσης μεταχείρισης και της απαγόρευσης των διακρίσεων και αφορούν ένα σύνθετο τεχνικό και νομικό πλαίσιο τόσο σε εθνικό επίπεδο όσο και σε επίπεδο Ένωσης.

Για να εκτιμηθεί κατά πόσον οι πρακτικές που αναφέρονται θα μπορούσαν να θεωρηθούν ότι συνιστούν παραβίαση του δικαίου της Ένωσης από τη Γερμανία, φαίνεται ότι είναι αναγκαίο να υπάρξει περαιτέρω διευκρίνιση και τεκμηρίωση των πραγματικών περιστατικών. Η Επιτροπή, επομένως, θα διερευνήσει τα διάφορα ζητήματα σε μεγαλύτερο βάθος και θα απευθυνθεί στις γερμανικές αρχές μέσω της κατάλληλης οδού.

Με την επιφύλαξη των ανωτέρω, η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να υπενθυμίσει ότι η παρακολούθηση και η εφαρμογή στην πράξη των διατάξεων σχετικά με τις συνθήκες εργασίας και απασχόλησης και την πραγματική αμοιβή εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004208/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Complaint of social dumping filed against Germany by Belgian Ministers

On 19 March 2013, the Belgian Ministers for Finance and Labour announced that they intended to file a complaint of social dumping against Germany with the Commission. The Ministers accuse Germany of 'undignified practices', especially in the meat-processing sector, the majority of whose workers are 'seconded' via employment agencies mainly from Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine and who work for EUR 3 per hour, 60 hours a week, with no social security benefits.

The issues raised by the Belgian Ministers are known to the Commission, which noted these issues itself in its document SWD(2012) 63 dated 21 March 2012. According to that document, trade unions have reported that the meat-processing industry has few regular workers and that most are seconded from other countries and work under below-par working conditions, with an increased workload and long working hours, for wages which are much lower than for domestic workers (EUR 3 per hour). The Commission document does on to state that these practices date back to 2000 and that the lack of any sectoral agreements in the meat sector in Germany is hampering efforts to protect workers, which is why a minimum national wage is one of the basic demands of trade unions in the meat industry.

At the same time, articles in the German press (*Spiegel*) report that organisations of offshore property investment companies are exploiting Eastern European workers in Germany, by renting apartments to them in German towns at extortionate rents, for example EUR 700 for 30 square metres.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

— Is Germany in breach of EC law or not? If it is, why has the Commission not taken steps to put a stop to this unacceptable situation, insofar as it knows exactly what is happening?

— If it is not in breach, does that mean that this social model is acceptable to the Commission? In that case, similar labour models could be adopted for the special economic zones proposed in Greece on which, in reply to my question (E-008429/2011), the Commission stated that that was an interesting idea which warranted serious examination.

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission services are currently examining the complaint lodged by the Belgian Government and analysing the issues raised, which concern in particular the application in practice of the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination and relate to a complex, technical legal framework at both national and Union level.

To assess whether or not the practices referred to could be considered to constitute a breach of Union law by Germany, further clarification and substantiation of the actual, factual circumstances appear necessary. The Commission will therefore investigate the various issues in greater depth and raise the allegations with the German authorities through the appropriate channels.

Notwithstanding the above, the Commission would like to recall that the monitoring and enforcement in practice of an employee's working and employment conditions and actual remuneration fall within the competence of the Member States.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004209/13
a la Comisión
Axel Voss (PPE), Timothy Kirkhope (ECR), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE) y Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(12 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Registro de nombres de pasajeros (PNR) — Convocatoria específica de propuestas

En diciembre de 2012, la Comisión publicó una convocatoria de propuestas referidas específicamente a la cofinanciación de la creación de unidades de información sobre pasajeros en los Estados miembros, para la recogida, el tratamiento, el análisis y el intercambio de datos del Registro de nombres de pasajeros (PNR) con miras a la prevención, detección, investigación y persecución de actos de terrorismo y delitos graves. El plazo de presentación de propuestas expiraba el 10 de abril de 2013.

¿Podría responder la Comisión a las preguntas siguientes?

1. ¿Cuántos Estados miembros tienen ya en vigor una legislación relativa al PNR, están trabajando en su elaboración o disponen de normas específicas para materias afines, como es el caso de Francia?

2. ¿Cuántos Estados miembros han manifestado su interés respondiendo a la convocatoria?

3. ¿Podría facilitar la Comisión la lista de los Estados miembros que han respondido?

4. ¿Qué ha decidido la Comisión con respecto a esta convocatoria?

5. ¿Pueden influir los resultados de esta convocatoria en las negociaciones que se desarrollan en el Parlamento acerca de la propuesta de la Comisión de establecer un sistema común de PNR en la Unión Europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de junio de 2013)

1. Dentro de la UE, el Reino Unido dispone de un sistema de tratamiento automático de los datos del Registro de nombres de los pasajeros (*Passenger Name Record*, PNR), mientras que otros utilizan los datos del PNR a efectos policiales de forma no sistemática, de conformidad con la legislación aduanera o en virtud de poderes generales conferidos a las fuerzas de seguridad.

2. La Comisión ha recibido solicitudes de 16 Estados miembros en respuesta a la convocatoria de propuestas específica dirigida a crear Unidades de Información sobre Pasajeros en los Estados miembros para el tratamiento de los datos del PNR.

3. Han presentado solicitudes Bulgaria, Estonia, España, Francia, Chipre, Letonia, Lituania, Hungría, los Países Bajos, Austria, Portugal, Rumanía, Eslovenia, Eslovaquia, Finlandia y Suecia.

4. Evaluadores internos y externos están examinando las solicitudes en este momento.

5. La convocatoria de propuestas es una acción de financiación independiente dentro del programa ISEC (Prevención y Lucha contra la Delincuencia) y no está relacionada directamente con las negociaciones entre el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo sobre la propuesta de la Comisión de Directiva PNR de la UE ([1]). La Comisión remite a sus respuestas a las preguntas P-000343/2013 y E-000385/2013. Las solicitudes recibidas por la Comisión indican que un número considerable de Estados miembros está tomando medidas a escala nacional para establecer un sistema de PNR, lo que incide en la necesidad de un planteamiento coherente en lo que respecta al tratamiento de los datos del PNR en la EU. Únicamente un enfoque coherente en lo relativo al tratamiento de los datos del PNR como el presentado por la Comisión en la propuesta de Directiva PNR de la UE, permitirá una cooperación eficaz entre los Estados miembros en la lucha contra el terrorismo y los delitos graves, además de garantizar una protección de datos adecuada y coherente en el tratamiento de la información del PNR en la EU.

([1]) COM(2011) 32 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004209/13
an die Kommission
Axel Voss (PPE), Timothy Kirkhope (ECR), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE) und Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(12. April 2013)

Betrifft: Fluggastdatensystem (PNR) — gezielte Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen

Im Dezember 2012 hat die Kommission eine gezielte Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen mit dem Ziel veröffentlicht, die Einrichtung von Stellen für die Sammlung, Weiterverarbeitung, Analyse und den Austausch von Fluggastdaten (PNR) in den Mitgliedstaaten zu ko-finanzieren, um so Terroranschlägen und schweren Verbrechen vorzubeugen, oder diese effizient untersuchen und strafrechtlich verfolgen zu können. Die Frist für die Einreichung lief am 10. April 2013 aus.

Die Kommission wird um folgende Auskünfte ersucht:

1. In wie vielen Mitgliedstaaten sind bereits PNR-Bestimmungen in Kraft? Wie viele arbeiten an entsprechenden Rechtsvorschriften oder haben spezifische einschlägige Rechtsvorschriften, wie in Frankreich?

2. Wie viele Mitgliedstaaten haben Interesse daran geäußert, auf diese gezielte Aufforderung zu reagieren?

3. Kann die Kommission eine Liste aller Mitgliedstaaten vorlegen, die geantwortet haben?

4. Welche Entscheidung trifft die Kommission in Bezug auf diese Aufforderung?

5. Könnten die Ergebnisse dieses Aufrufs die aktuellen Verhandlungen des Parlaments in Bezug auf den Kommissionsvorschlag zur Einrichtung eines gemeinsamen EU-Systems zur Verwendung von Fluggastdatensätzen (PNR) beeinflussen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(7. Juni 2013)

1. Innerhalb der EU verfügt das Vereinigte Königreich über ein System für die automatische Verarbeitung von Fluggastdatensätzen (PNR-Daten), während andere Mitgliedstaaten PNR-Daten unsystematisch zur Rechtsdurchsetzung verwenden — auf der Grundlage der Zollbestimmungen oder im Rahmen allgemeiner Befugnisse der Strafverfolgungsbehörden.

2. Die Kommission hat als Reaktion auf ihre gezielte Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen für die Einrichtung von Stellen zur Weiterverarbeitung von PNR-Daten in den Mitgliedstaaten Anträge aus 16 Mitgliedstaaten erhalten.

3. Diese Anträge stammen aus Bulgarien, Estland, Spanien, Frankreich, Zypern, Lettland, Litauen, Ungarn, den Niederlanden, Österreich, Portugal, Rumänien, Slowenien, der Slowakei, Finnland und Schweden.

4. Die Anträge werden derzeit von internen und externen Evaluatoren bewertet.

5. Die Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen ist eine Einzel-Finanzierungsmaßnahme innerhalb des ISEC-Programms und steht in keinem direkten Zusammenhang zu den Verhandlungen zwischen dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat über den Vorschlag der Kommission für eine EU-weite PNR-Richtlinie ([1]). Die Kommission verweist auf ihre Beantwortung der Fragen P-000343/2013 und E-000385/2013. Die bei der Kommission eingegangenen Anträge lassen jedoch erkennen, dass eine beträchtliche Anzahl von Mitgliedstaaten auf nationaler Ebene Maßnahmen zur Einrichtung eines PNR-Systems ergreift. Dies unterstreicht die Notwendigkeit eines kohärenten Ansatzes für die Weiterverarbeitung von PNR-Daten in der EU. Nur ein kohärenter Ansatz für die Verarbeitung von PNR-Daten, wie er von der Kommission mit ihrem Vorschlag für eine EU-weite PNR-Richtlinie vorgelegt wurde, wird eine wirksame Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten bei der Bekämpfung von schwerer Kriminalität und Terrorismus ermöglichen und ein angemessenes und konsistentes Datenschutzniveau für die Weiterverarbeitung von PNR-Daten in der EU gewährleisten.

([1]) KOM(2011)32 endg.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004209/13
aan de Commissie
Axel Voss (PPE), Timothy Kirkhope (ECR), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE) en Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(12 april 2013)

Betreft: Persoonsgegevens van passagiers (PNR-gegevens) — Gerichte uitnodiging tot het indienen van voorstellen

In December 2012 heeft de Commissie een gerichte oproep tot het indienen van voorstellen gepubliceerd met als doel de cofinanciering van de opzet van „passagiersinformatie-eenheden in de lidstaten voor de verzameling, verwerking, analyse en uitwisseling van persoonsgegevens van passagiers (PNR-gegevens) voor het voorkomen, opsporen, onderzoeken en vervolgen van terroristische misdrijven en zware criminaliteit". De deadline voor het indienen van voorstellen was 10 april 2013.

Kan de Commissie antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. In hoeveel lidstaten is reeds wetgeving met betrekking tot PNR-gegevens van kracht? Hoeveel lidstaten werken aan desbetreffende wetgeving of beschikken over doelgerichte wetgeving, zoals in het geval van Frankrijk?

2. Hoeveel lidstaten hebben belangstelling getoond om op deze oproep te reageren?

3. Kan de Commissie een lijst verstrekken van alle lidstaten die op de oproep hebben gereageerd?

4. Welk besluit heeft de Commissie met betrekking tot deze oproep genomen?

5. Zouden de resultaten van deze oproep van invloed kunnen zijn op de lopende onderhandelingen in het Parlement met betrekking tot het voorstel van de Commissie om een gemeenschappelijk PNR-systeem van de EU in te voeren (COM(2011)0032)?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(7 juni 2013)

1. In de EU beschikt het Verenigd Koninkrijk over een systeem voor de geautomatiseerde verwerking van persoonsgegevens van passagiers (*Passenger Name Record* — PNR), terwijl andere lidstaten PNR-gegevens op een niet-systematische wijze gebruiken voor wetshandhaving op basis van douanewetgeving of uit hoofde van algemene bevoegdheden die aan rechtshandhavingsinstanties zijn verleend.

2. De Commissie heeft van 16 lidstaten aanvragen ontvangen als antwoord op de gerichte uitnodiging tot het indienen van voorstellen voor de oprichting van passagiersinformatie-eenheden voor de verwerking van PNR-gegevens.

3. Bulgarije, Estland, Spanje, Frankrijk, Cyprus, Letland, Litouwen, Hongarije, Nederland, Oostenrijk, Portugal, Roemenië, Slovenië, Slowakije, Finland en Zweden hebben aanvragen ingediend.

4. De aanvragen worden op dit moment door interne en externe beoordelaars onderzocht.

5. De uitnodiging tot het indienen van voorstellen is een autonome financieringsactie binnen het ISEC-programma en houdt niet rechtstreeks verband met de onderhandelingen tussen het Europees Parlement en de Raad met betrekking tot het voorstel van de Commissie voor een EU-richtlijn inzake PNR-gegevens ([1]). De Commissie verwijst naar haar antwoorden op de vragen P-000343/2013 en E-000385/2013. De aanvragen die de Commissie heeft ontvangen, geven aan dat een aanzienlijk aantal lidstaten maatregelen nemen op nationaal niveau om een PNR-systeem op te richten. Dit benadrukt de noodzaak van een samenhangende aanpak van de verwerking van PNR-gegevens in de EU. Enkel een samenhangende aanpak van de verwerking van PNR-gegevens, zoals de aanpak die de Commissie in haar voorstel voor een richtlijn inzake PNR-gegevens heeft gepresenteerd, garandeert een effectieve samenwerking tussen lidstaten op het gebied van de bestrijding van zware criminaliteit en terrorisme en een geschikt en consistent niveau van gegevensbescherming bij de verwerking van PNR-gegevens in de EU.

([1]) COM(2011) 32 definitief.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004209/13
to the Commission
Axel Voss (PPE), Timothy Kirkhope (ECR), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE) and Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Passenger name records (PNR) — targeted call for proposals

In December 2012, the Commission published a targeted call for proposals aiming to co-finance the setting-up of 'passenger information units in Member States for the collection, processing, analysis and exchange of passenger name record (PNR) data for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime'. The deadline for proposals was 10 April 2013.

Could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How many Member States already have PNR legislation in force; are working on corresponding legislation; or have purpose-specific legislation in place, as in the case of France?

2. How many Member States have expressed an interest in replying to this call?

3. Could the Commission provide a list of all Member States which have replied?

4. What is the Commission's decision on this call?

5. Could the results of this call influence the ongoing negotiations in Parliament with regard to the Commission's proposal to establish a common EU PNR system (COM(2011)0032)?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

1. Within the EU, the United Kingdom has a system in place for the automated processing of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data, while other Member States use PNR data for law enforcement purposes in a non-systematic way on the basis of customs legislation or under general powers granted to law enforcement authorities.

2. The Commission received applications from 16 Member States in reply to the targeted call for proposals to set up Passenger Information Units in Member States for the processing of PNR data.

3. Applications have been submitted by Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, France, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

4. The applications are currently being assessed by internal and external evaluators.

5. The call for proposals is a stand-alone funding action within the ISECprogramme and is not directly linked to the negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council on the Commission proposal for an EU PNR Directive ([1]). The Commission refers to its answers to Question P-000343/2013 and Question E-000385/2013. The applications received by the Commission indicate that a considerable number of Member States is taking action at national level to set up a PNR system, which underlines the need for a coherent approach to the processing of PNR data in the EU. Only a coherent approach to the processing of PNR data, as presented by the Commission with the proposal for an EU PNR Directive, will allow for effective cooperation between Member States in the fight against serious crime and terrorism, and will ensure an adequate and consistent level of data protection for the processing of PNR data in the EU.

([1]) COM(2011) 32 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004210/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Violazione dei diritti umani in Tibet e il preoccupante fenomeno dei suicidi di protesta

Il Tibet, occupato fin dal 1950 dall'esercito cinese, rappresenta oggi uno dei paesi ove il rispetto dei diritti umani fondamentali è maggiormente a rischio. A riprova delle drammatiche condizioni di vita della popolazione tibetana, si sono verificati, dal 2010 a oggi, almeno 110 casi di persone che si sono date fuoco, quasi sempre con conseguenze fatali, in segno di protesta contro il comportamento delle autorità cinesi nei confronti della popolazione tibetana.

Poiché il riconoscimento ed il rispetto dei diritti umani costituiscono uno dei cardini culturali e politici dell'Unione europea, tali segnali di profondo malessere sociale, sebbene provenienti da un'area geograficamente così remota, non possono essere ignorati: chiediamo pertanto alla Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quale linea politica essa intenda adottare in merito alla questione tibetana, con particolare riguardo alla tutela dei diritti umani fondamentali.

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente condivide le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole deputato circa la situazione dei diritti umani in Tibet. La difesa e la promozione dei diritti umani in tutto il mondo sono uno dei pilastri della politica estera dell'UE. Nel corso del 2012 l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha pertanto prestato particolare attenzione a questo tema e al Tibet, come ha dimostrato con il discorso pronunciato il 12 giugno 2012 al Parlamento europeo e con la dichiarazione del 14 dicembre 2012 sull'autoimmolazione di cittadini tibetani. La situazione nelle aree abitate da tibetani è stata discussa diverse volte al Consiglio dell'ONU sui diritti umani e all'Assemblea generale dell'ONU. L'UE ha inoltre espresso le proprie preoccupazioni in occasione di incontri bilaterali.

L'Unione europea ha invitato ripetutamente le autorità cinesi ad assicurare il rispetto dei diritti civili, politici, economici, sociali e culturali dei tibetani, compresi il diritto alla libertà di espressione e di riunione e la possibilità di coltivare la loro cultura, praticare la loro religione e usare la loro lingua. Questo impegno sarà ribadito nel 2013. L'UE intende sfruttare le opportunità in programma quest'anno — in particolare il 16° vertice UE-Cina — per delineare i futuri sviluppi delle relazioni con Pechino. La questione tibetana è sollevata periodicamente nel quadro del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani. L'UE continuerà a rinnovare, nei contesti opportuni, l'invito alle parti interessate a riprendere un dialogo serio ed è determinata a seguire da vicino la situazione generale dei diritti umani in Cina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004210/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Violation of human rights in Tibet and the worrying phenomenon of protest suicides

Tibet, occupied since 1950 by the Chinese army, is today among the countries most at risk of violations of fundamental human rights. In confirmation of the terrible living conditions of the Tibetan people, at least 110 people have set fire to themselves since 2010, almost always with fatal consequences, in protest against the behaviour of the Chinese authorities towards the Tibetan population.

Although these signals pointing to deep social malaise come from such a distant geographical area, they cannot be ignored since the recognition of and respect for human rights constitute one of the EU's cultural and political cornerstones: we would therefore ask the Vice-President/High Representative what policy it intends to adopt with regard to the issue of Tibet, with particular reference to the protection of fundamental human rights.

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

The HR/VP shares the Honourable Member's concern over the human rights situation in Tibet. The defence and promotion of human rights around the world is indeed a key component of the EU's foreign policy. Throughout 2012, the HR/VP therefore paid particular attention to this topic and to Tibet, as shown by her speech before the European Parliament on 12 June 2012 and the statement on Tibetan self-immolations of 14 December 2012. The situation in Tibetan-inhabited areas was raised several times at the UN Human Rights Council and General Assembly of the UN. The EU also raised its concerns during bilateral meetings.

The EU has repeatedly called upon the Chinese authorities to ensure that the civil, political, economic, as well as social and cultural rights of the Tibetan people are respected, including their right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, as well as to enjoy their own culture, to practise their own religion and to use their own language. This commitment will be maintained in 2013. The EU is intending to use the opportunities of engagement this year — not least at the 16th EU-China Summit — to map out the further course of the relationship. Within the framework of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, the situation of the Tibetan people is regularly raised. The EU will keep reiterating, in the appropriate fora, its call to the concerned parties to resume a meaningful dialogue, and is determined to continue monitoring closely the overall human rights situation in China.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004211/13
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(12 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Strategie de abordare globală a problematicii fumatului în rândul tinerilor

12 ani de la adoptarea Directivei privind produsele din tutun, consumul de tutun rămâne cel mai mare risc pentru sănătate care poate fi evitat și fumatul ucide în fiecare an 700 000 de persoane în Europa.

Întrucât tutunul prezintă un potențial mare de dependență, este important ca tinerii să nu înceapă să consume produse din tutun. În prezent, 70% dintre fumători încep să fumeze înainte de vârsta de 18 ani și 94% înainte de vârsta de 25 de ani.

Propunerea Comisiei de revizuire a Directivei privind produsele din tutun vizează întărirea politicii Uniunii Europene în materie de control al tutunului, pentru a asigura un nivel înalt de sănătate publică și a preveni și reduce fumatul în rândul tinerilor.

Propunerea vizează aspecte (interzicerea aromelor, standardizarea pachetelor de țigări, etc.) care se preconizează să aibă un impact asupra consumului de tutun în general și al tinerilor în mod special.

Pentru a potența și maximaliza acest impact, înțelegerea și abordarea cauzelor pentru care tinerii încep și continuă să fumeze sunt esențiale (informarea insuficientă, presiunea socială a grupului, normele sociale, modelele mass-media, modelul părinților, dorința de a părea mai maturi, etc.).

Consideră Comisia ca fiind oportună o strategie la nivelul Uniunii Europene de abordare globală multifactorială a problematicii fumatului în rândul tinerilor pentru obținerea unor schimbări durabile în mentalitatea și comportamentul acestora în ceea ce privește fumatul?

Intenționează Comisia ca, folosind toate mijloacele de comunicare posibile, să însoțească intrarea în vigoare a noilor măsuri de reglementare a produselor de tutun cu desfășurarea unor ample campanii de sensibilizare, informare și educare anti-fumat care să se adreseze atât tinerilor, cât și persoanelor care sunt responsabile de educația și bunăstarea lor?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2013)

Astfel cum a evidențiat distinsul membru, unul dintre obiectivele propunerii de revizuire a directivei privind produsele din tutun este acela de a descuraja tinerii să înceapă să fumeze.

Pentru a-și atinge obiectivele sale generale, legislația propusă cuprinde o serie de măsuri și urmărește soluționarea provocărilor determinate de evoluțiile pieței, ale științei și ale contextului internațional. Măsurile propuse includ dispoziții privind ingredientele, ambalarea și etichetarea, produsele din tutun nefumigene, țigaretele electronice, vânzările transfrontaliere prin internet și comerțul ilicit.

Comisia consideră că, pentru a reduce fumatul și pentru a descuraja tinerii să înceapă să consume produse din tutun, sunt necesare măsuri suplimentare de control al acestor produse. Ele includ, de exemplu, modificarea prețurilor, măsuri fiscale, interzicerea publicității, restricționarea accesului la produsele din tutun, crearea unor spații fără fum de tutun, precum și campanii educaționale și de sensibilizare a opiniei publice. Comisia s-a implicat activ în mai multe dintre aceste domenii, în limitele competențelor sale ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/introduction/index_en.htm

Campaniile de sensibilizare privind consumul de produse din tutun reprezintă un element important al vastei politici a Comisiei vizând controlul produselor din tutun. Campania „HELP", care s-a derulat în perioada 2005 — 2010, s-a concentrat asupra prevenirii fumatului, asupra abandonării fumatului și asupra fumatului pasiv, vizând în special tinerii europeni cu vârste între 15 și 25 de ani. Actuala campanie de sensibilizare, cu o durată de 3 ani, intitulată „EX-FUMĂTORII SUNT DE NEOPRIT" ([2]), care a fost lansată în iunie 2011, încurajează tinerii adulți cu vârste între 25 și 34 de ani să renunțe la fumat și utilizează diverse instrumente de comunicare, incluzând mijloace de comunicare socială, aplicații pentru telefoane mobile și clipuri TV.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/ex_smokers_are_unstoppable/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004211/13
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Strategy for global approach to tackling the problem of smoking among young people

Twelve years after the Tobacco Products Directive was adopted, tobacco consumption is still the biggest health risk which can be avoided, with smoking accounting for 700 000 deaths in Europe every year.

Given the great potential tobacco has for encouraging dependency, it is important for young people not to start smoking tobacco products. At the moment, 70% of smokers start smoking before the age of 18, and 94% before the age of 25.

The aim of the Commission's proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive is to tighten EU policy on tobacco control in order to ensure a high level of public health, and prevent and reduce smoking among young people.

The proposal is targeting aspects (banning the use of flavourings, standardising cigarette packets and others) which are expected to have an impact on tobacco consumption in general and on young people in particular.

With a view to boosting and maximising this impact, it is vital to understand and tackle what causes young people to start and continue smoking (lack of information, group social pressure, social norms, models in media, example from parents, desire to seem more mature, etc.).

Does the Commission think that it is the right time to devise an EU-level strategy for a global, cross-cutting approach to tackling the issue of smoking among young people, in order to achieve a lasting change in their attitude and behaviour towards smoking?

Does the Commission intend, using every possible means of communication available, to support the implementation of the new measures regulating tobacco products by launching extensive campaigns aimed at raising awareness, providing information and education against smoking, targeted at both young people and those responsible for their education and welfare?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

As pointed out by the Honourable Member, one of the aims of the proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive is to discourage young people from taking up smoking.

In order to achieve its overall objectives, the proposed legislation covers a range of measures and aims at responding to challenges in terms of market, scientific and international developments. The proposed measures include provisions on ingredients, packaging and labelling, smokeless tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, cross border Internet sales and illicit trade.

The Commission believes that in addition to the provisions proposed, additional tobacco control measures are required to reduce smoking and to discourage young people from starting to consume tobacco products. These include for instance pricing and tax measures, ban of advertising, restrictions of access to tobacco products, creation of smoke-free environments, as well as educational and awareness campaigns. The Commission has been actively involved in several of these areas within the limits of its competency ([1]).

Tobacco awareness campaigns are an important element of the Commission's comprehensive tobacco control policy. The 'Help' campaign which ran from 2005 to 2010 focused on smoking prevention, smoking cessation and passive smoking and targeted, in particular, young Europeans between 15 and 25 years old. The current 3 year awareness raising campaign 'EX-SMOKERS ARE UNSTOPPABLE' ([2]), which has been launched in June 2011, encourages smoking cessation among young adults in the 25-34 year age group and uses various communication tools including social media, mobile app, and TV clips.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/introduction/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/ex_smokers_are_unstoppable/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004212/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υπερσυσσώρευση κρατουμένων στις φυλακές

Αναμφίβολα, ο υπερπληθυσμός κρατουμένων καθίσταται ως το βασικότερο πρόβλημα των ευρωπαϊκών φυλακών, το οποίο και εντείνεται συνεχώς σε χώρες — όπως η Ελλάδα — που εμφανίζουν σημαντική αύξηση στον αριθμό των κρατουμένων. Σύμφωνα με όλες τις σχετικές επιστημονικές μελέτες αλλά και τη διεθνή εμπειρία, η υπερσυσσώρευση κρατουμένων υπονομεύει την αποτελεσματικότητα της σωφρονιστικής διαδικασίας και δυσχεραίνει τις συνθήκες κράτησης, επιφέροντας ιδιαίτερα δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις, αφενός στη διαβίωση των τροφίμων, και αφετέρου στο έργο των σωφρονιστικών υπαλλήλων, ενώ ταυτόχρονα εγκυμονεί σοβαρούς κινδύνους για την υγεία τους, κυρίως μέσα από τη μετάδοση μολυσματικών ασθενειών.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει συγκεντρωτικά στατιστικά στοιχεία για τις διαστάσεις του υπερπληθυσμού των φυλακών στα κράτη μέλη (αριθμός κρατουμένων σε σχέση με τη χωρητικότητα των φυλακών);

2. Διαπιστώνεται διασύνδεση ανάμεσα στο φαινόμενο του υπερπληθυσμού των κρατουμένων και των υποτροπών σε παραβατικές συμπεριφορές ή την αύξηση του ποσοστού των αυτοκτονιών των εγκλείστων;

3. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη ώστε να εφαρμόσουν ένα συγκεκριμένο ευρωπαϊκό πρότυπο ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης και προληπτικής ιατρικής για την αποφυγή της εξάπλωσης μολυσματικών νοσημάτων στις φυλακές;

4. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα κονδύλια για την Ελλάδα από τα Ευρωπαϊκά Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία που μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για την αναβάθμιση των συνθηκών υγιεινής και κράτησης στα σωφρονιστικά καταστήματα, καθώς και το συνολικότερο εκσυγχρονισμό της λειτουργίας τους;

5. Σκοπεύει να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών προκειμένου να αναδειχθούν οι πλέον αποτελεσματικοί και κοινωνικά αποδεκτοί τρόποι αποσυμφόρησης των φυλακών, με δεδομένο και το υψηλότατο κόστος κατασκευής και συντήρησής τους;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δίνει ιδιαίτερη σημασία στον σεβασμό των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων των κρατουμένων στις φυλακές της ΕΕ. Ωστόσο, οι συνθήκες κράτησης εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών. Το 2011 η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε Πράσινη Βίβλο για την ενίσχυση της αμοιβαίας εμπιστοσύνης στον τομέα της κράτησης ([1]). Περίληψη των σχετικών απαντήσεων είναι διαθέσιμη στο Διαδίκτυο ([2]).

Στατιστικά στοιχεία για τον βαθμό υπερσυσσώρευσης κρατουμένων στις φυλακές των κρατών μελών περιέχονται στο «SPACE I Statistics» του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης ([3]). Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες για πιθανή σχέση του υπερπληθυσμού των φυλακών με την υποτροπή σε παραβατική συμπεριφορά ή την αύξηση του ποσοστού αυτοκτονιών των εγκλείστων.

Τα κράτη μέλη δεσμεύονται από τα υφιστάμενα πρότυπα του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης που ισχύουν στον τομέα της κράτησης, όπως οι Ευρωπαϊκοί Σωφρονιστικοί Κανόνες του 2006. Στο Μέρος ΙΙΙ των κανόνων αυτών υπάρχουν λεπτομερείς διατάξεις σχετικά με την υγεία, περιλαμβανομένης της υγειονομικής περίθαλψης και των καθηκόντων των ιατρών.

Οι επενδύσεις στις φυλακές δεν συμβάλλουν ιδιαίτερα στην ανάπτυξη και τη διαρθρωτική αναπροσαρμογή των περιφερειών (άρθρο 176 της ΣΛΕΕ) και, ως εκ τούτου, δεν μπορούν να θεωρηθούν ως επενδύσεις σε υποδομές που θα μπορούσαν να λάβουν χρηματοδότηση από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ).

([1]) Πράσινη Βίβλος για την ενίσχυση της αμοιβαίας εμπιστοσύνης στον ευρωπαϊκό δικαστικό χώρο — Πράσινη Βίβλος για την εφαρμογή της ενωσιακής ποινικής νομοθεσίας στον τομέα της κράτησης, COM/2011/0327 τελικό.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm
([3]) Πληροφορίες για τον αριθμό κρατουμένων στα διάφορα κράτη μέλη την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2012 υπάρχουν στη διεύθυνση: http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/space/space-i/test/

Η Επιτροπή σχεδιάζει να διοργανώσει συνεδρίαση στις αρχές του 2014 για ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών με τα εθνικά όργανα παρακολούθησης των συνθηκών κράτησης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004212/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Overcrowding in prisons

Without doubt, overcrowding is the main problem faced by European prisons and it is getting consistently worse in countries — like Greece — where there has been a significant increase in the number of prisoners. According to all the relevant scientific studies and international experience, overcrowding in prisons undermines the effectiveness of the correctional system and causes prison conditions to deteriorate. This has very adverse repercussions in terms of the survival of inmates, on the one hand, and the work of prison officers, on the other hand. At the same time, it harbours serious health risks, in particular from the transmission of infectious diseases.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have summary statistics on the extent of overcrowding in prisons in the Member States (number of prisoners compared with capacity of prisons)?

2. Has a link been established between overcrowding in prisons and repeat offences or an increase in the suicide rate among inmates?

3. Does it intend to recommend that the Member States apply a specific European standard of medical and pharmaceutical care and preventive medicine, in order to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in prisons?

4. Are there any funds available from the European structural funds which Greece could use in order to improve sanitation and detention conditions in correctional facilities and modernise them overall?

5. Does it intend to promote an exchange of best practices between the Member States in order to highlight the most effective and socially acceptable methods of reducing congestion in prisons, given the high cost of constructing and maintaining them?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission attaches great importance to the respect of the fundamental rights of those in detention in the EU. However, detention conditions come under the competence of Member States. In 2011 the Commission published a Green Paper on strengthening mutual trust in the field of detention ([1]). A summary of the replies is available online ([2]).

Statistics on the extent of overcrowding in prisons in the Member States are provided by the SPACE I Statistics of the Council of Europe ([3]). The Commission has no information on a possible link between overcrowding in prisons and repeat offences or an increase in the suicide rate among inmates.

Member States are bound by the existing Council of Europe standards in the field of detention, such as the European Prison Rules of 2006. Part III of these rules contains detailed provisions on Health, including healthcare and duties of medical practitioners.

Investments in prisons do not particularly contribute to the development and structural adjustment of regions (Article 176 TFEU) and hence, they cannot be considered as investments in infrastructure which could benefit of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) support.

The Commission plans to organise a meeting to exchange best practices with the national bodies monitoring detention conditions in the beginning of 2014.

([1]) Green Paper Strengthening mutual trust in the European judicial area — A Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention, COM/2011/0327 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm
([3]) Information on the prison stock in the different Member States on 1st January 2012 can be found on http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/space/space-i/test/.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004213/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παιδική θνησιμότητα στην ΕΕ και στην Ελλάδα

Η προστασία των δικαιωμάτων των παιδιών και των βασικών τους αναγκών είναι αναπόσπαστο μέρος του έργου της ΕΕ στην Ευρώπη. Η μείωση της παιδικής θνησιμότητας απαιτεί βελτιώσεις σε διάφορους τομείς, ιδιαίτερα στη διατροφή, το νερό και την υγιεινή, την εκπαίδευση και την υγειονομική περίθαλψη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συλλέγει στοιχεία αναφορικά με τα ποσοστά της παιδικής θνησιμότητας και των κύριων αιτών της στην ΕΕ; Ποια είναι τα συμπεράσματα και πώς εξελίσσεται; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

2. Αποδίδει αποτελέσματα ο τρόπος με τον οποίο η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή αντιμετωπίζει το ζήτημα της παιδικής υγείας στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, μέσω της Eurostat, συλλέγει στοιχεία σχετικά με τα ποσοστά θνησιμότητας παιδιών κάτω των 15 ετών ανά 100 000 κατοίκους ([1]). Το 2010, στην ΕΕ, το κύριο αίτιο θανάτου για την εν λόγω ηλικιακή ομάδα ήταν ειδικές παθήσεις προερχόμενες από την περιγεννητική περίοδο (ποσοστό: 13,7 ανά 100 000 κατοίκους, ακολουθούμενο, μεταξύ άλλων, από συγγενείς δυσπλασίες, παραμορφώσεις και χρωμοσωμικές ανωμαλίες (8,7), εξωγενή αίτια (4), και καρκίνους (2,6).

Το 2010, το ποσοστό για όλα τα αίτια θανάτου παιδιών στην ΕΕ ήταν 40,4 ανά 100 000 κατοίκους, με τα ποσοστά των κρατών να κυμαίνονται από 24,8 έως 101 ([2]). Το ποσοστό της Ελλάδας, 38,8, ήταν χαμηλότερο από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ. Το εν λόγω ποσοστό μειώνεται από το 1999 όταν ήταν 57,7 στην ΕΕ των 27 και 52,4 στην Ελλάδα.

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τα κράτη μέλη στην παροχή ευκαιριών για τον προσδιορισμό και την ανταλλαγή ορθών πρακτικών, μεταξύ άλλων, μέσω κοινών δράσεων και των έργων που πραγματοποιούνται στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος για την υγεία. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει την αποτελεσματική προαγωγή της υγείας και την πρόληψη των ασθενειών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της υγιεινής διατροφής κατά την παιδική ηλικία, της σωματικής άσκησης, της προστασίας των παιδιών από τις βλάβες που προκαλεί το αλκοόλ και το κάπνισμα, και του εμβολιασμού κατά την παιδική ηλικία.

Προκειμένου να υποστηριχθούν τα κράτη μέλη στην αντιμετώπιση των προβλημάτων ψυχικής υγείας των παιδιών, η Επιτροπή συγχρηματοδοτεί, μέσω του προγράμματος για την υγεία, κοινή δράση για την ψυχική υγεία, η οποία θα προωθήσει συστάσεις για συνεργασία των σχολείων και του τομέα της υγείας.

([1]) Αίτια θανάτου ανά περιφέρειες NUTS 2 — Ακαθάριστο ποσοστό θνησιμότητας (ανά 100 000 κατοίκους) (Ετήσια στοιχεία). http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_acdr&lang=en

([2]) Αίτια θανάτου — Απόλυτος αριθμός (Ετήσια στοιχεία). http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_acdr&lang=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004213/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Child mortality in the EU and Greece

Protection for the rights of children and their basic needs is an integral part of the work of the EU in Europe. Improvements are needed in various sectors, in particular diet, water and sanitation, education and healthcare, if child mortality is to be reduced.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it collating data on the rate of child mortality and the main causes of it in the EU? What conclusions have been drawn and is the rate changing? How does Greece rate?

2. Is the way in which the Commission deals with the issue of child health in the EU bringing about results?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The European Commission, via Eurostat, collects data on the rates of death for children below the age of 15 per 100 000 inhabitants ([1]). In 2010, in the EU, the first cause of death for this age group were specific conditions originating in the perinatal period (rate: 13.7 per 100 000 inhabitants) followed, *inter alia*, by congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities (8.7); external causes (4); and cancers (2.6).

In 2010, the rate for all causes of death in children was 40.4 in the EU for 100 000 inhabitants, with national rates varying from 24.8 to 101 ([2]). Greece was below EU average with a rate of 38.8. This rate has been decreasing since 1999 when it was 57.7 in EU-27 and 52.4 in Greece.

The Commission supports Member States in providing opportunities for the identification and exchange of good practice, *inter alia* through joint actions and projects under the Health Programme. The Commission further advocates effective health promotion and disease prevention, including healthy nutrition in childhood, physical exercise, protecting children from alcohol related harm and smoking, and adequate childhood vaccination coverage.

In order to support Member States in addressing mental health problems in children, the Commission is co-financing, via the Health Programme, a Joint Action on Mental health which will develop recommendations for cooperation between schools and the health sector.

([1]) Causes of death by NUTS 2 regions — Crude death rate (per 100,000 inhabitants) (Annual data). http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_acdr&lang=en

([2]) Causes of death — Absolute number (Annual data). http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_anr&lang=en

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004214/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανθρωποκτονίες στην ΕΕ και Europol

Οι ανθρωποκτονία αποτελεί τη σοβαρότερη μορφή εγκλήματος. Στην ΕΕ η Europol συμβάλλει στην προσπάθεια αντιμετώπισης εγκλημάτων κατά της ζωής, ιδίως όταν αυτές προκύπτει ότι προκαλούνται από διεθνή ή διακρατικά εγκληματικά κυκλώματα.

1. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή για την εξέλιξη των δεικτών εγκλήματος που αφορούν τις ανθρωποκτονίες στην ΕΕ;

2. Διαπιστώνει πως η καλύτερη συνεργασία των αστυνομικών αρχών των κρατών μελών και της Europol έχει αποδώσει καρπούς όσον αφορά την αύξηση των εξιχνιάσεων των εγκλημάτων κατά ανθρώπινων ζωών;

Απάντηση από την κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουνίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην έκθεση που εξέδωσε η Eurostat το 2012 με τίτλο «Crime and Criminal Justice, 2006-2009» ([1]), όπου περιλαμβάνεται πίνακας σχετικά των καταγεγραμμένων από τις αστυνομικές αρχές ανθρωποκτονιών (2003-2009).

2. Όπως ορίζεται στο άρθρο 4 της απόφασης 2009/371/ΔΕΥ (απόφαση για την ίδρυση Ευρωπαϊκής Αστυνομικής Υπηρεσίας, Ευρωπόλ), οι ανθρωποκτονίες δεν εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα της Ευρωπόλ. Η Ευρωπόλ δεν είναι συνεπώς σε θέση να παράσχει συνολικά στατιστικά δεδομένα εν προκειμένω, σε ενωσιακή κλίμακα.

Στο πλαίσιο της εντολής της, η Ευρωπόλ υποστηρίζει τις πρωτοβουλίες της «Europol Homicide Working Group» (ομάδας εργασίας της Ευρωπόλ για τις ανθρωποκτονίες, EHWG), μια άτυπης ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων που συστήθηκε το 2002. Η ομάδα πραγματεύεται κυρίως ανθρωποκτονίες που σχετίζονται με το οργανωμένο έγκλημα, κατά συρροή δολοφονίες, ειδικούς τρόπους δράσης και πιθανά νέα εργαλεία ερευνών.

Όσον αφορά τις ανθρωποκτονίες, λειτουργεί από το 2011 η Ευρωπαϊκή πλατφόρμα για εμπειρογνώμονες (Europol Platform for Experts, EPE)· πρόκειται για ασφαλές εικονικό περιβάλλον που διευκολύνει την ανταλλαγή απόψεων μεταξύ εμπειρογνωμόνων. Η Ευρωπόλ, σε συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Αστυνομική Ακαδημία (CEPOL), την τεχνική βοήθεια και ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών (TAIEX) ([2]) και την Ένωση ανώτερων αξιωματικών της Αστυνομίας του ΗΒ (UK Association of Chief Police Officers) διοργάνωσε και φιλοξένησε, το 2012, την πρώτη διάσκεψη ανώτερων αξιωματικών, αρμόδιων για έρευνες ανθρωποκτονιών, αποβλέποντας, μεταξύ άλλων, στην προώθηση της χρήσης της εν λόγω πλατφόρμας. Στην εκδήλωση συμμετείχαν ανώτεροι ειδικοί από όλα τα κράτη μέλη, τις χώρες προσχώρησης και χώρες της πολιτικής γειτονίας της ΕΕ.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-12-006/EN/KS-SF-12-006-EN.PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/taiex/what-is-taiex/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004214/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Homicide in the EU and Europol

Homicide is the most serious form of crime. In the EU, Europol supports efforts to deal with crimes against human life, especially where they are committed by international or cross-border criminal organisations.

1. Is the Commission able to provide data on changes in the crime figures for homicide in the EU?

2. Has it found that better cooperation between the police forces of the Member States and Europol has been fruitful in terms of increasing the number of crimes against human life which are brought to book?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

1. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the 2012 Eurostat report on 'Crime and Criminal Justice, 2006-2009' ([1]), which contains a table on homicides (2003-2009) as recorded by the police.

2. Not all homicide cases fall within Europol's competence, as set out in Art 4 of Council Decision 2009/371/JHA (Europol Council Decision). Europol is therefore not able to provide any comprehensive statistical data regarding the phenomenon across the EU.

However, within its mandate, Europol supports the initiatives of the 'Europol Homicide Working Group' (EHWG), an informal expert group established in 2002. Its focus has been mainly on killings related to organised crime, serial killings, specific modi operandi and possible new investigative tools.

A dedicated Europol Platform for Experts (EPE) on homicide, which is a secure virtual environment facilitating the exchange of views among experts, has been running since 2011. Europol, in cooperation with the European Police College (CEPOL), TAIEX ([2]) and the UK Association of Chief Police Officers organised and hosted the first Senior Investigating Officers' Conference on homicide in 2012, in part with a view to stimulating greater use of this platform. Senior specialists representing all Member States, accession States and countries of the EU neighbourhood policy participated in the event.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-12-006/EN/KS-SF-12-006-EN.PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/taiex/what-is-taiex/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004215/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εμπόριο επικίνδυνων φαρμάκων στο διαδίκτυο

Η κατακόρυφη και διαρκής αύξηση των διαδικτυακών πωλήσεων και συναλλαγών έχει οδηγήσει και σε αύξηση των κρουσμάτων απάτης αναφορικά με φαρμακευτικά προϊόντα και σκευάσματα, πολλά εκ των οποίων κρίνονται επικίνδυνα για την υγεία των πολιτών. Σε πολλά κράτη μέλη απαγορεύεται το εμπόριο φαρμάκων μέσω του διαδικτύου, ωστόσο, πολλά σκευάσματα είναι διαθέσιμα και προσβάσιμα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία ή έχουν καταγραφεί φαρμακευτικά σκευάσματα που διακινούνται παράνομα μέσω του διαδικτύου; Ποιες κατηγορίες κυρίως αφορούν;

2. Εντοπίζονται και ελέγχονται σε ικανοποιητικό βαθμό οι διαδικτυακές αυτές σελίδες που πωλούν μη εγκεκριμένα σκευάσματα; Έχουν επιβληθεί πρόστιμα;

3. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το μέγεθος των οικονομικών απωλειών των κρατών μελών από τις παράνομες αυτές δραστηριότητες;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει λεπτομερή στοιχεία σχετικά με τις ποσότητες και τις κατηγορίες των φαρμακευτικών προϊόντων που πωλούνται παράνομα στο διαδίκτυο. Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες από την Παγκόσμια Οργάνωση Υγείας (ΠΟΥ) ([1]), σε πάνω από το 50% των περιπτώσεων, τα φάρμακα που αγοράζονται μέσω διαδικτύου από παράνομους δικτυακούς τόπους είναι ψευδεπίγραφα.

2. Τα κράτη μέλη είναι υπεύθυνα για την επιβολή της εφαρμογής της ισχύουσας εθνικής και ενωσιακής νομοθεσίας και για τον καθορισμό των κανόνων για τις κυρώσεις.

3. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στοιχεία σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό.

([1]) http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs275/en/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004215/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Online sales of dangerous drugs

The persistent spiralling increase in online sales and transactions has resulted in an increase in cases of fraud involving pharmaceutical products and preparations, many of which are considered dangerous to public health. Numerous Member States have banned online sales of drugs; however, numerous preparations are available and accessible.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any data or records on pharmaceutical preparations being sold illegally online? What are the main categories involved?

2. Have the websites on which unapproved preparations are being sold been identified and are they being controlled? Have any fines been imposed?

3. Does it have data on the extent of the financial losses caused to the Member States by these illegal activities?

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

1. The Commission does not have detailed data on the volume or on the categories of medicinal products sold illegally online. According to information from the World Health Organisation (WHO) ([1]), in over 50% of cases medicines purchased over the Internet from illegal sites are falsified.

2. Member States are responsible for the enforcement of applicable national and EU legislations and for laying down rules on penalties.

3. The Commission does not have data on this issue.

([1]) http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs275/en/

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004216/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιστροφή καταθέσεων στο ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα

Οι σημαντικές μεταρρυθμίσεις που προωθούνται στην Ελλάδα και η ικανοποιητική πορεία ανακεφαλαιοποίησης των ελληνικών τραπεζών αποκαθιστούν σταθερά την εμπιστοσύνη των καταθετών και των επενδυτών στο ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα. Δεδομένου ότι την διετία 2010-2011 αποχώρησαν από το ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα δεκάδες δισ. καταθέσεων εξαιτίας της ανασφάλειας που επικρατούσε εκείνο το διάστημα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Διαθέτει πρόσφατα μετρήσιμα στοιχεία που να αποτυπώνουν τη μεταστροφή του κλίματος και την επιστροφή καταθέσεων από το εξωτερικό;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Στοιχεία που έχουν σχέση με καταθέσεις στο ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα συγκεντρώνονται και παρακολουθούνται από την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος. Μπορείτε να βρείτε τις πληροφορίες που ζητάτε στον ιστότοπο της Τράπεζας, στην έκθεση με τίτλο: *«Ανάλυση καταθέσεων ανά τομέα»* ([1]). Με βάση τα στοιχεία αυτά, παρατηρείται πράγματι τελευταία μια αύξηση των καταθέσεων κατοίκων λοιπών χωρών της ζώνης ευρώ. Το χαμηλότερο ύψος των καταθέσεων αυτών καταγράφηκε τον Ιούνιο του 2012. Πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι από τον Ιανουάριο του 2010 οι καταθέσεις των νοικοκυριών και των επιχειρήσεων λοιπών χωρών της ζώνης ευρώ μειώθηκαν κατά 28%. Από τον Ιούνιο του 2012, ωστόσο, αυτές οι καταθέσεις έχουν αυξηθεί κατά περίπου 15%.

([1]) http://www.bankofgreece.gr/Pages/en/Statistics/monetary/deposits.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004216/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Return of deposits to the Greek banking system

The important reforms being pushed through in Greece and the satisfactory progress being made in recapitalising Greek banks are gradually restoring the trust of depositors and investors in the Greek banking system. In light of the fact that deposits amounting to tens of billions were removed from the Greek banking system over the two years from 2010 to 2011 due to the uncertainty prevailing at that time, will the Commission say:

Does it have recent quantifiable information mapping the change in climate and the return of deposits from abroad?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Data pertaining to deposits of the Greek banking system are compiled and monitored by the Bank of Greece (BoG). This information can be found on the BoG's website, under the report titled: 'Deposits held with credit institutions, breakdown by sector' ([1]). From this data series, one can indeed observe a recent increase in deposits from other euro-area residents. The low point for these deposits was recorded in June 2012, whereby, since January 2010, household and corporate deposits from other euro-area residents decreased by 28%. Since June 2012 however, these deposits have increase by approximately 15%.

([1]) http://www.bankofgreece.gr/Pages/en/Statistics/monetary/deposits.aspx.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004217/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παιδική ευημερία στην ΕΕ

Η πολυετής οικονομική κρίση που επηρεάζει πολλά από τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ έχει αναμφίβολα επιδεινώσει τις συνθήκες αλλά και την ποιότητα διαβίωσης των παιδιών στην Ευρώπη. Η Unicef, εξάλλου, σε πρόσφατη έκθεση, σημείωσε πως η επιδείνωση αυτή παρατηρείται σε διάφορους τομείς όπως η εκπαίδευση, οι σχολικές επιδόσεις, η διατροφή, η ποιότητα περιβάλλοντος, η στέγαση και η υλική ευημερία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι τα πλέον πρόσφατα στοιχεία της Επιτροπής αναφορικά με την παιδική ευημερία στην ΕΕ; Παρατηρείται αύξηση της «σχετικής παιδικής φτώχειας»; Ποια είναι η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

2. Εκτιμά η Επιτροπή ότι τα κράτη μέλη αξιοποιούν επαρκώς και ικανοποιητικά τους πόρους από τα κοινοτικά διαρθρωτικά ταμεία, και ιδίως από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουνίου 2013)

1. Στην έκθεσή της, δελτίο αριθ. 11, η Unicef ορίζει την καλή διαβίωση των παιδιών ως πολύ ευρεία έννοια, χρησιμοποιώντας πάνω από 50 δείκτες μεταξύ των οποίων η παιδική φτώχεια. Η Eurostat παρουσιάζει ετήσιες στατιστικές σχετικά με τον κίνδυνο της παιδικής φτώχειας, τις υλικές στερήσεις και την πολύ χαμηλή ένταση απασχόλησης του νοικοκυριού. Το ποσοστό των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα που ζουν στο όριο της φτώχειας παρέμεινε σταθερό στο 23,7 μεταξύ 2009 και 2011, ποσοστό ελαφρώς μεγαλύτερο από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ των 27, το οποίο αυξήθηκε από 19,8 σε 20,6%. Το ποσοστό των παιδιών που αντιμετωπίζουν σοβαρή υλική στέρηση στην Ελλάδα αυξήθηκε από 12,2% το 2009 σε 16,4% το 2011 και το ποσοστό στην ΕΕ των 27 αυξήθηκε από 9,3% σε 10%. Το ποσοστό των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα που ζουν σε νοικοκυριά με πολύ χαμηλή ένταση απασχόλησης αυξήθηκε από 2,7% το 2009 σε 7,2% το 2011 και ο μέσος όρος στην ΕΕ των 27 αυξήθηκε από 8,0 σε 8,8% ([1]) ([2]).

2. Μέσω της δέσμης κοινωνικών επενδύσεων ([3]), η Επιτροπή ζητά από τα κράτη μέλη να εντείνουν τις προσπάθειές τους για την καταπολέμηση της παιδικής φτώχειας και να αξιοποιήσουν το ΕΚΤ για την υποστήριξη πολιτικών όπως η προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα, τον συνδυασμό επαγγελματικής και προσωπικής ζωής, την ένταξη στην αγορά εργασίας των μόνων γονέων, την ισότιμη πρόσβαση στις κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες και την αποϊδρυματοποίηση των παιδιών στη φροντίδα σε επίπεδο τοπικής κοινότητας.

3. Τον περασμένο Απρίλιο, η Ελλάδα έλαβε το 46,4% του συνολικού κονδυλίου του ΕΚΤ (ως προκαταβολές και ενδιάμεσες πληρωμές για την περίοδο 2007-2013), ενώ ο μέσος όρος στην ΕΕ ήταν 53,6% ([4]). Οι δαπάνες του ΕΚΤ για τα παιδιά ηλικίας 0-17 ετών ήταν συγκριτικά χαμηλές, ιδίως σε κράτη μέλη με υψηλό ποσοστό παιδικής φτώχειας. Η Επιτροπή προτείνει κατά την επόμενη περίοδο προγραμματισμού 2014-2020 να διατεθεί τουλάχιστον το 25% των πόρων της πολιτικής της συνοχής στο ΕΚΤ και τουλάχιστον 20% του εν λόγω ποσού στην κοινωνική ένταξη. Οι επενδύσεις στον στεγαστικό τομέα και στη φροντίδα των παιδιών στην τρέχουσα και μελλοντική περίοδο μπορούν επίσης να χρηματοδοτηθούν από το ΕΤΠΑ.

([1]) Βλ. ΓΔ EMPL, «Απασχόληση και Κοινωνικές Εξελίξεις στην Ευρώπη 2012», το παράρτημα με τους δείκτες κοινωνικής ένταξης.
([2]) http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/iwp_2013_1.pdf (σελ. 42-46).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([4]) Τα τελευταία αριθμητικά στοιχεία σχετικά με την απορρόφηση των κονδυλίων του ΕΚΤ για την περίοδο 2007-2013 από τα κράτη μέλη είναι διαθέσιμα στη διεύθυνση http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catid=464&langid=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004217/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Child welfare in the EU

The economic crisis which has affected numerous EU Member States for many years is, without doubt, exacerbating the living conditions and standards of children in Europe. In a recent report, Unicef noted that this deterioration is visible in various sectors, such as education, school results, diet, environmental quality, housing and material welfare.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What are the most recent Commission statistics on child welfare in the EU? Has there been an increase in 'relative child poverty'? What is the current situation regarding Greece?

2. Does the Commission think that the Member States are making sufficient and satisfactory use of resources from the EU structural funds, in particular the European Social Fund?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

1. In Report Card 11, Unicef defines child well-being as a very wide concept using more than 50 indicators including child poverty. Eurostat presents annual statistics on the risk of child poverty, material deprivation and very low work intensity of the household. The share of Greek children at risk of poverty remained constant at 23.7 between 2009 and 2011, slightly above the EU 27 average, which went from 19.8 to 20.6%. The share of severely materially deprived children in Greece rose from 12.2% in 2009 to 16.4% in 2011, the EU-27 share went from 9.3% to 10%. The share of Greek children living in a very low work intensity household increased from 2.7% in 2009 to 7.2% in 2011, the EU-27 average went from 8.0 to 8.8% ([1]) ([2]).

2. Through its Social Investment Package ([3]) the Commission is asking Member States to step up their fight against child poverty, and to use the ESF to support policies such as early childhood education and care, reconciliation of work and private life, labour market integration of lone parents, equal access to social services and deinstitutionalisation of children to community-based care.

3. Last April, Greece had received 46.4% of its total ESF envelope (in terms of advances and interim payments for the 2007-2013 period) whereas the EU average was 53.6% ([4]). ESF spending on children aged 0-17 has been comparitively low, particularly in MSs with a high child poverty rate. The Commission is proposing that in the 2014-2020 programming period at least 25% of cohesion policy resources shall be allocated to the ESF, and at least 20% of this amount to social inclusion. Investments in housing and childcare can also in the current and future period be financed with the ERDF.

([1]) See DG EMPL, Employment and Social developments in Europe 2012, the annex with social inclusion indicators.
([2]) http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/iwp_2013_1.pdf (page 42-46)
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([4]) The latest figures on the absorption of 2007-2013 ESF funds by MSs can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=464&langId=en

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004218/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Adozione delle linee guida in materia di tirocini: ritardo nell'applicazione negli ordinamenti regionali

La Commissione europea nel «quadro di qualità per i tirocini» sottolinea che la qualificazione del tirocinio è fondamentale per l'inserimento dei giovani nel mondo del lavoro.

In Italia nel gennaio 2013 la Conferenza unificata Stato-regioni ha adottato le «linee guida in materia di tirocini», attuando quanto stabilito dalla riforma del mercato del lavoro per stabilire standard minimi uniformi a livello nazionale e per evitare un loro uso distorto.

Le linee guida fissano un'indennità non inferiore a 300 euro lordi mensili e prevedono le seguenti tipologie di tirocini: a) formativi e di orientamento di durata massima di 6 mesi per soggetti con un titolo conseguito al massimo da 12 mesi; b) inserimento/reinserimento nel mercato del lavoro, di durata massima di 12 mesi; c) orientamento/formazione o di inserimento/reinserimento per disabili e persone svantaggiate (di durata massima di 12 e 24 mesi).

Tali linee guida, valide anche per la pubblica amministrazione, non si applicano ai tirocini curriculari o finalizzati alla pratica professionale e all'accesso alle professioni ordinistiche.

Le regioni e le province autonome devono adeguare la propria normativa agli standard delle linee guida.

Considerato che la disoccupazione giovanile in Italia è in continuo aumento (ha raggiunto la cifra record del 37,8 %), e che sono passati 3 mesi dalla firma di tale accordo, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. quali misure intende portare avanti per sollecitare il governo e le regioni al fine di una rapida trasposizione e attuazione delle linee guida;

2. quali sono le migliori pratiche e i migliori strumenti introdotti a livello europeo in materia di tirocini e quali strumenti sono utilizzati per la certificazione e la validazione dei tirocini, vista la loro natura di accordo contrattuale;

3. quali misure intende avviare per dare seguito alla sua proposta relativa alla Carta europea dei tirocini di qualità;

4. quali misure intende avviare per elaborare un «contratto di tirocinio europeo».

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2013)

1. Nella comunicazione del dicembre 2012 «Verso un quadro di qualità per i tirocini [1]» la Commissione sottolinea l'importanza dei tirocini quale strumento per favorire l'integrazione dei giovani nel mercato del lavoro, esprimendo però le proprie preoccupazioni sull'eventuale uso improprio dei tirocini, soprattutto se carenti in contenuti formativi e in assenza di indennità o retribuzione eque.

La Commissione accoglie quindi con favore l'iniziativa italiana di adottare gli «Orientamenti per i tirocini» così da attuare le disposizioni previste dalla riforma del mercato del lavoro del 2012

e promuove anche un uso più efficiente del Fondo sociale europeo al fine di mettere a disposizione maggiori opportunità di tirocinio per i giovani e/o le persone svantaggiate.

[1] COM(2012)728 final.

2. Le prassi ottimali a livello di UE riguardano solo i tirocini transnazionali in corso nell'ambito dei programmi di mobilità europei e includono gli impegni a favore della qualità nel quadro dei programmi di tirocinio Erasmus e Leonardo da Vinci. La Commissione incoraggia l'applicazione anche dei dieci principi fissati nella Carta europea di qualità per la mobilità ([2]) ed ha inoltre individuato, nel suo studio del 2012, varie prassi ottimali a livello nazionale riguardanti un'ampia rassegna delle disposizioni sui tirocini negli Stati membri ([3]).

3. Basandosi tra l'altro sulle risultanze del summenzionato studio nonché sulle correnti prassi ottimali, la Commissione intende presentare un quadro di qualità per i tirocini entro la fine del 2013.

4. Il quadro di qualità per i tirocini stabilirà che alla base di ogni tirocinio debba esservi la conclusione di un contratto di tirocinio in forma scritta contenente determinati elementi essenziali. In questa fase è tuttavia improbabile che detto contratto venga normalizzato a livello di UE.

([2]) I dieci principi/orientamenti della Carta sono i seguenti: (i) informazione e orientamento; (ii) piano di apprendimento; (iii) personalizzazione; (iv) preparazione generale; (v) aspetti linguistici; (vi) supporto logistico; (vii) tutoraggio; (viii) riconoscimento; (ix) reintegrazione e valutazione; nonché (x) impegni e responsabilità.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=fr&pubId=6717.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004218/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Adoption of guidelines for traineeships: delay in their regional implementation

In the Quality Framework for Traineeships, the Commission stresses that a traineeship qualification is vital to increase young people's integration into the labour market.

In January 2013, the Joint State-Regions Conference in Italy adopted 'guidelines for traineeships', thereby implementing the provisions of the labour market reform in order to establish uniform minimum standards at national level and to prevent their misuse.

The guidelines set compensation of at least EUR 300 gross per month, and provide for the following types of traineeship: (a) training and vocational guidance, lasting up to six months, for persons holding a qualification gained no more than 12 months previously; (b) integration/reintegration into the labour market, lasting up to 12 months; (c) vocational guidance/training or integration/reintegration into the labour market for disabled and disadvantaged persons (lasting up to 12 and 24 months).

These guidelines, which also apply to the public administration, do not apply to traineeships included as part of educational studies or in order to gain professional work experience and access to the regulated professions.

The regions and autonomous provinces must adapt their regulations to the standards set out in the guidelines.

Youth unemployment in Italy continues to rise (it has reached the record level of 37.8%), and it has been three months since this agreement was signed.

1. What steps does the Commission intend to take to urge the central and regional governments to transpose and implement the guidelines as soon as possible?

2. What are the best practices and best instruments that have been introduced at EU level with regard to traineeships, and which instruments are used to certify and validate traineeships, given their contractual nature?

3. What steps does the Commission intend to take to act on its proposal for a European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships?

4. What steps does it intend to take to establish a 'European traineeship contract'?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

1. In the December 2012 Communication 'Towards a Quality Framework for Traineeships ([1])' the Commission highlights the importance of traineeships as means to integrate young people in the labour market, but also expresses concerns for possible misuse of traineeships, especially when they lack of learning content and of a fair compensation/remuneration.

Therefore, the Commission welcomes the Italian initiative to adopt the 'Guidelines for Traineeships' as means to implement the provisions of the labour market reform of 2012.

The Commission also promotes a more efficient use of the European Social Fund to create more traineeships opportunities for young and/or disadvantaged people.

([1]) COM 2012 728 final.

2. EU level best practices are limited to transnational traineeships taking place in the framework of European mobility programmes. Such practices include the quality commitments under the Erasmus and the Leonardo da Vinci traineeship programmes. The Commission also encourages the application of the ten principles set out in the European Quality Charter for Mobility. ([2]) However, the Commission identified several national best practices in its 2012 study on a Comprehensive overview of traineeship arrangements in Member States ([3]).

3. Based i.a. on the findings of the above study as well as on existing best practices, the Commission plans to present a quality framework for traineeships by the end of 2013.

4. The quality framework for traineeships will stipulate that the basis for any traineeship has to be the conclusion of a written traineeship contract with certain key elements. However it is unlikely at this stage that such a contract would be standardised at EU level.

([2]) The ten principles/guidelines of this Charter are: (i) information and guidance; (ii) learning plan; (iii) personalization; (iv) general preparation; (v) linguistic aspects; (vi) logistical support; (vii) mentoring; (viii) recognition; (ix) reintegration and evaluation; and (x) commitments and responsibilities.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=fr&pubId=6717.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004219/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Stupro di gruppo ai danni di una minorenne in Turchia

I mass media hanno recentemente divulgato la notizia di una violenza di gruppo avvenuta ai danni di una bambina di 12 anni in Turchia.

L'Unione europea ha sempre dimostrato attenzione verso il tema del rispetto dei diritti umani, requisito indispensabile per aderire all'Unione stessa, secondo quanto si desume dal combinato disposto degli articoli 49 e 6, paragrafo 1, del TUE.

La Turchia ha inoltre ratificato la Convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa sulla prevenzione e la lotta contro la violenza nei confronti delle donne e la violenza domestica ma, come sottolinea Amnesty International nel suo ultimo rapporto, i meccanismi di prevenzione predisposti dal governo turco sono ancora «miseramente inadeguati».

In base a quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è al corrente di quanto su descritto e se ha provveduto a prendere contatti con la controparte turca al fine di fare luce sull'episodio;

2. se e quali azioni siano state o saranno intraprese per porre fine a queste palesi violazioni dei diritti umani fondamentali?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del caso cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare e lo sta seguendo da vicino. La delegazione dell'UE ad Ankara è in contatto con le autorità in merito alla questione.

La Commissione auspica che i responsabili siano consegnati alla giustizia e puniti il più presto possibile.

Le autorità turche hanno adottato misure importanti per migliorare la situazione delle donne in questo paese, aggiornando, nel marzo 2012, la legge sulla protezione delle donne e dei familiari dalla violenza e, nel luglio 2012, il piano d'azione nazionale sulla lotta alla violenza contro le donne (2012-2016). Inoltre, la Turchia è parte contraente di alcune convenzioni internazionali in materia, tra cui la convenzione ONU sui diritti dell'infanzia, ed è stata la prima a ratificare la convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa sulla prevenzione e la lotta contro la violenza nei confronti delle donne e la violenza domestica. La Commissione sostiene gli sforzi compiuti dalla Turchia attraverso progetti finanziati nell'ambito dello strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA).

In quanto paese che sta negoziando l'adesione all'Unione europea, la Turchia è tenuta a garantire la piena conformità ai criteri politici, di cui la tutela dei diritti umani, inclusi i diritti delle donne e la parità dei sessi, rappresentano un aspetto fondamentale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004219/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 April 2013)

Subject: Gang rape of a minor in Turkey

According to recent media reports, a 12-year-old girl has been gang-raped in Turkey.

The EU has always been attentive to respect for human rights, which is an essential requirement for accession to the Union itself, as can be inferred from the provisions of Article 49 in conjunction with Article 6(1) of the Treaty on European Union.

Moreover, Turkey has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence but, as highlighted by Amnesty International in its latest report, preventive mechanisms put in place by the Turkish Government remain 'woefully inadequate'.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation and has it taken steps to contact the Turkish authorities to shed light on this matter?

2. What steps, if any, have been or will be taken to put a stop to these blatant violations of fundamental human rights?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the case the Honourable Member is referring to and follows the case closely. The EU Delegation in Ankara is in contact with the authorities on the matter.

The Commission hopes that the perpetrators will be brought to justice and sanctioned as soon as possible.

The Turkish authorities have taken important steps to improve the situation of women in Turkey. A Law to Protect Women and Family Members from Violence was updated in March 2012. The National Action Plan on Combatting Violence Against Women (2012-2016) was updated in July 2012. Turkey is party to relevant international conventions, such as the UN Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC). Turkey was the first to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. The Commission accompanies Turkey's efforts through projects funded through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

Turkey, as a country negotiating accession to the European Union, needs to ensure full compliance with the political criteria, of which respect for human rights, including women's rights and gender equality is a crucial part.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004220/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Importanti esercitazioni militari nel sito della Rete Natura 2000 di Monte Bivera nel comune di Sauris in periodo di riproduzione della fauna selvatica

Il WWF Friuli Venezia Giulia ha denunciato pubblicamente ([1]) che per la fine di maggio verranno effettuate delle esercitazioni militari a fuoco nel territorio della Carnia, precisamente sul Monte Bivera, nel Comune di Sauris (UD), area della Rete Natura 2000 dove è stato istituito un sito di importanza comunitaria ([2]).

Da quanto si apprende, la Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia nel 2010 ha rinnovato un disciplinare d'uso dell'area all'esercito italiano, bocciato da tutte le amministrazioni comunali coinvolte, che prevede due periodi all'anno per le esercitazioni dei militari: dal primo maggio al 15 giugno e dal 16 ottobre al 31 dicembre, per un totale di circa 20 giorni all'anno.

Detto disciplinare non risulta essere stato sottoposto alle procedure di valutazione di incidenza previste dalla direttiva Habitat 92/43/CEE e dalle norme statali.

In forza di detto disciplinare, fra il 27 ed il 31 maggio 2013, durante alcune esercitazioni militari in detto sito, verranno lanciate bombe a mano e proiettili di mortaio da 120 millimetri che, oltre a causare potenti rumorose detonazioni udibili a distanza di chilometri, causano aperture nel terreno simili a crateri dal diametro di qualche metro.

L'aggravante è costituita dal fatto che tali deturpanti esercitazioni verranno eseguite anche in pieno periodo riproduttivo della fauna selvatica.

Va inoltre considerato che in particolare gli uccelli selvatici tra maggio e giugno si riproducono e che la direttiva Uccelli 2009/147/CE, all'articolo 5, lettera d), prevede il divieto generale di disturbarli deliberatamente, indipendentemente dal grado di protezione dell'area in cui si trovano.

La Commissione è al corrente di queste esercitazioni militari che verranno effettuate senza la valutazione di incidenza ambientale, durante il periodo di riproduzione della fauna e all'interno di un sito facente parte della Rete Natura 2000?

Può la Commissione intervenire presso le autorità italiane al fine di scongiurare la violazione delle direttive Habitat ed Uccelli e i conseguenti gravi danni all'ambiente, alla fauna selvatica in generale ed agli uccelli selvatici?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(3 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente delle attività militari nell'area in questione, poiché figurano nel formulario standard di dati ([3]) riguardo al sito Natura 2000 «Monti Bivera e Clapsavon». Anche le autorità italiane tengono conto di tali attività nelle misure di conservazione ([4]) per tale sito.

Non vi è alcuna presunzione a priori contro lo svolgimento di attività militari all'interno di un sito Natura 2000. Tali attività dovranno essere valutate caso per caso in rapporto alle loro implicazioni per l'integrità del sito alla luce degli obiettivi di conservazione di quest'ultimo. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti garantire che qualsiasi piano o progetto (comprese le attività militari) che possa avere effetti significativi sui siti Natura 2000 sia sottoposto a una valutazione ai sensi dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva 1992/43/CEE ([5]) (direttiva Habitat). In caso di valutazione negativa e di assenza di soluzioni alternative, il progetto può essere autorizzato solo per motivi imperativi di rilevante interesse pubblico ai sensi dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 4, e previa adozione di adeguate misure compensative.

([1]) https://www.wwf.it/client/news_regionali.aspx?root=32796&parent=1949&content=1.
([2]) SIC — IT3320007 Monti Bivera e Clapsavon.
([3]) Disponibile nella mappa interattiva Natura 2000 al seguente indirizzo: http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu.
([4]) Disponibile sul sito web della Regione autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia http://www.regione.fvg.it/rafvg/export/sites/default/RAFVG/ambiente-territorio/tutela-ambiente-gestione-risorse-naturali/FOGLIA203/allegati/norme_SIC_-ZPS/SIC_IT3320007_Monti_Bivera_e_Clapsavon.pdf
([5]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992 .

La Commissione esaminerà le informazioni disponibili e, se del caso, contatterà le autorità italiane per verificare la conformità delle attività militari in questione con la direttiva Habitat.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004220/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Important military exercises in the Natura 2000 site of Monte Bivera, municipality of Sauris, during the wildlife breeding period

The WWF of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region has publicly reported ([1]) that towards the end of May, military firearm exercises will be conducted in the area of Carnia, more specifically on Mount Bivera in the municipality of Sauris (Udine), which is part of the Natura 2000 network in which a site of Community importance has been established ([2]).

Apparently, in 2010, the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia renewed an authorisation for the Italian army to use the area, which had previously been rejected by all the municipalities involved. This authorisation includes two military exercise periods per year: from 1 May to 15 June and from 16 October to 31 December, for a total of around 20 days a year.

The authorisation in question has apparently not been subjected to the impact assessment procedures under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and various government regulations.

In accordance with the authorisation, between 27 and 31 May 2013, during military exercises at the site, 120 mm grenades and mortar shells will be launched. In addition to causing powerful and noisy detonations that will be heard from miles away, these grenades will cause crater-like openings in the ground with a diameter of several metres.

The aggravating factor is that these destructive exercises will be carried out in the midst of the wildlife breeding period.

It should also be noted that wild birds, in particular, breed between May and June and that Article 5(d) of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) provides for a general ban on deliberately disturbing these birds, regardless of the degree of protection of the area in which they are located.

Is the Commission aware of these military exercises that are to be carried out without an environmental impact assessment, during the wildlife breeding period, on a site that is part of the Natura 2000 network?

Can the Commission make representations to the Italian authorities in order to prevent a breach of the Habitats and Birds Directives and the consequent serious damage to the environment, to wildlife in general and to wild birds?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the existence of military activities in the area as this is specified in the Standard Data Form ([3]) of the Natura 2000 site 'Monti Bivera e Clapsavon'. The issue has also been reflected by the Italian authorities in the conservation measures ([4]) for the site.

There is no a priori presumption against military activities inside a Natura 2000 site. These activities will need to be assessed on a case by case basis in relation to their implications for the integrity of the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. It is the responsibility of the relevant national authorities to ensure that any plan or project (including military activities) likely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites is subject to an assessment under Article 6.3 of Directive 1992/43/EEC ([5]) ('Habitats Directive'). In case of a negative assessment and in the absence of alternative solutions, the project can be authorised only for imperative reasons of overriding public interest under Art.6.4 and if adequate compensatory measures are adopted.

The Commission will examine the information available and, if necessary, will contact the Italian authorities to verify the compliance of the authorised military activities with the Habitats Directive.

([1]) https://www.wwf.it/client/news_regionali.aspx?root=32796&parent=1949&content=1
([2]) SCI — IT3320007 Monti Bivera and Clapsavon.
([3]) Available on Natura 2000 Map Viewer at http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu.
([4]) Available on the Website of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region http://www.regione.fvg.it/rafvg/export/sites/default/RAFVG/ambiente-territorio/tutela-ambiente-gestione-risorse-naturali/FOGLIA203/allegati/norme_SIC_-ZPS/SIC_IT3320007_Monti_Bivera_e_Clapsavon.pdf
([5]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004221/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: Gletscherschmelze in Europa und Klimaziele

Nach dem jüngsten Gletscherbericht 2011/12 zieht sich der größte Gletscher Österreichs — die Pasterze am Großglockner — am weitesten zurück, nämlich um mehr als 97 Meter.

1. Wie sieht die Situation diesbezüglich europaweit aus? Liegen der Kommission hierzu neueste Daten vor?

2. Wie sieht die weitere Vorgehensweise bezüglich Alpenraum, Naturschutz und Klimaziele nun aus? Gibt es hierzu neueste Erkenntnisse und Maßnahmen auf europäischer Ebene, um die Bergwelt für die Menschen in ihrer natürlichen Form zu erhalten?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2013)

Laut der letzten Veröffentlichung der Europäischen Umweltagentur (EEA) zu Gletschern (Glaciers Assessment) ([1]) vom November 2012 ist die Gletschermasse fast aller europäischen Gletscher — mit regionalen Unterschieden — zurückgegangen. Die Alpengletscher haben seit 1850 etwa zwei Drittel ihrer Eismasse verloren, wobei seit 1980 eine deutliche Beschleunigung der Entwicklung festzustellen ist; gleichzeitig wurden die norwegischen Gletscher bis zum Ende der 1990er Jahre größer und verlieren erst seit einigen Jahren an Masse. Der Zwischenstaatliche Ausschuss für Klimaänderungen (IPCC) hat bereits darauf hingewiesen, dass sich die Gletscherschmelze nach den Vorhersagemodellen selbst bei Erreichen des ehrgeizigen Ziels des Rahmenübereinkommens der Vereinten Nationen über Klimaänderungen (UNFCCC), die globale Erderwärmung auf maximal 2 Grad Celsius zu begrenzen, im 21. Jahrhundert fortsetzen wird. Davon werden insbesondere die Alpengletscher betroffen sein.

Im April 2013 verabschiedete die Kommission im Interesse einer größeren Klimaresistenz Europas eine EU-Strategie zur Anpassung an den Klimawandel ([2]), mit der die Vorsorge verstärkt und ein EU-weit einheitliches Konzept entwickelt werden soll. Die Strategie berücksichtigt die spezifischen Anfälligkeiten von Gebirgsregionen. Sie strebt den Ausbau der Wissensbasis für die Entscheidungsfindung und die Mobilisierung von technischer und finanzieller Unterstützung für einheitliche Anpassungsmaßnahmen in diesen Regionen an. Mit der Strategie soll das Problem des Klimawandels auch in EU-Politikbereiche und Finanzierungsinstrumente integriert werden, die für Gebirgsregionen relevant sind (z. B. Natur und Biodiversität, Landwirtschaft und ländliche Entwicklung, Infrastruktur).

Im Rahmen der Kohäsionspolitik der EU behandelt das Programm „Alpenraum“ (Europäische territoriale Zusammenarbeit) ([3]) den Klimawandel auf regionaler Ebene und grenzüberschreitend.

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/glaciers-1/assessment
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0069/index_en.htm
([3]) http://www.alpine-space.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004221/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Glacial melting in Europe and climate targets

According to the latest glacier report 2011/2012, the largest glacier in Austria — the Pasterze Glacier on the Großglockner — has retreated the furthest, by more than 97 metres.

1. What is the situation across Europe in this respect? Does the Commission have the latest data on this?

2. What is the way forward with respect to the Alps, nature conservation and climate targets? Are there any recent findings and measures at European level for conserving the mountains for people in their natural form?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

According to the latest Glaciers Assessment, published by the European Environmental Agency (EEA) in November 2012 ([1]), a general loss of glacier mass has occurred in nearly all European glaciers, but with regional differences. While the Alps have lost about two thirds of their ice mass since 1850, with a clear acceleration since the 1980s, Norwegian glaciers were expanding until the end of the 1990s and started shrinking in recent years. As summarised by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), prediction models show that, even under ambitious UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) targets of limiting global climate change to 2 degrees, glacier retreat will continue in the 21st century, impacting in particular upon the alpine glaciers.

In April 2013, the Commission adopted the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change ([2]) to promote a more climate-resilient Europe by enhancing preparedness and developing a coherent approach across the EU territory. The specific vulnerabilities of mountain areas are recognised in the strategy, which will develop further the knowledge base to support decision-making and will catalyse technical and financial support for consistent adaptation action in mountain areas. The strategy will also integrate the climate challenge into EU policies and funding instruments relevant for the mountain regions, including nature and biodiversity, agriculture and rural development, infrastructures.

In the context of the European Cohesion Policy, the European Territorial Cooperation Programme 'Alpine Space' ([3]) is addressing climate change at regional cross-border scale.

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/glaciers-1/assessment
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0069/index_en.htm
([3]) http://www.alpine-space.eu/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004222/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: Von Monsanto beabsichtigte Patentierung von Gurken, Brokkoli und Melonen

Monsanto, ein börsennotierter Biologietechnologie-Großkonzern, beabsichtigt die Patentierung auf Gurken, Broccoli und Melonen. Nach jüngsten Erkenntnissen fanden Großkonzerne wie Monsanto Lücken im Europäischen Recht, um diese Vorhaben möglicherweise auch bald durchzusetzen. Die Patentierung von Lebensmitteln, wie auch Lizenzgebühren für Bauern, können mittel- und langfristig unabsehbare Folgen für die globale Nahrungsmittelversorgung haben.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die offenbar bedeutende Rolle der Europäischen Gesetzgebung im Bereich „Patente" für die Nahrungsmittelsicherheit? Gibt es hierzu neue Erkenntnisse?

2. Ist sich die Kommission einer möglichen Gefahr eines „Lebensmittelmonopols" in der Europäischen Union bewusst, und welche Einschätzung hat sie hierzu?

3. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen kann die Kommission möglichst zeitnah ergreifen, um die betreffenden Lücken in der Gesetzgebung zu schließen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(2. Juli 2013)

1. Die Ergebnisse der Pflanzenzucht lassen sich leicht kopieren, da Pflanzen problemlos vermehrt werden können. Pflanzenzüchter bedürfen eines wirksamen Schutzes des geistigen Eigentums, damit Dritte davon abgehalten werden, ihre Ergebnisse zu kopieren. Dabei darf jedoch der Zugang zu Zuchtmaterial nicht behindert und die genetische Vielfalt nicht beeinträchtigt werden. Das Sortenschutzrecht und das Patentrecht bieten einen solchen Schutz. In den Rechtsvorschriften über den Sortenschutz ist die Zucht anderer Sorten vom Geltungsbereich des einschlägigen Rechts ausgeschlossen. Damit das Patentrecht nicht zum Hindernis für den freien Zugang zu Zuchtmaterial wird, sieht das Übereinkommen über ein einheitliches Patentgericht, das von 25 Mitgliedstaaten unterzeichnet wurde, im Rahmen des Besitzstandes ein Sonderrecht für Züchter vor.

2. Der Kommission ist bewusst, dass die Pflanzenzuchtindustrie in den letzten Jahrzehnten strukturelle Veränderungen durchgemacht hat und dass eine kleine Gruppe hochspezialisierter Pflanzenzuchtunternehmen an der Spitze des internationalen Saatguthandels steht. In diesem Zusammenhang spielten nicht nur die geistigen Eigentumsrechte eine entscheidende Rolle, sondern auch die Fortschritte in der Pflanzenwissenschaft und -zucht, die genetische Veränderung, die regulatorischen Befolgungskosten im Zusammenhang mit GVO, die steigenden Forschungs- und Entwicklungskosten sowie die Notwendigkeit der Marktausweitung und der Erschließung neuer Märkte.

3. Die nationalen Patentgesetze wurden mit der Richtlinie 98/44/EG harmonisiert; ihre wichtigsten Bestimmungen wurden in die Durchführungsverordnungen zum Europäischen Patentübereinkommen (EPÜ) aufgenommen. Die genannte Richtlinie sieht vor, dass Pflanzen patentiert werden können, wenn die Ausführung der Erfindung technisch nicht auf eine bestimmte Pflanzensorte beschränkt ist; letztere sind vom Patentschutz ausgeschlossen. Dies bedeutet, dass ein Patent nur dann erteilt werden kann, wenn sich die Erfindung bei einer ganzen Reihe von Pflanzenarten ausführen lässt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004222/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Monsanto's plans to patent cucumbers, broccoli and melons

Monsanto, a listed biotechnology conglomerate, is planning to patent cucumbers, broccoli and melons. According to the latest reports, large corporations such as Monsanto have found gaps in European law in order to push these projects through, possibly in the near future. The patenting of food and licence fees for farmers may have incalculable medium and long-term consequences for global food supply.

1. How does the Commission view the obviously important role of European patents legislation for food security? Does it have any new information in this respect?

2. Is the Commission aware of the possible risk of a 'food monopoly' being established in the European Union and how does it assess such a risk?

3. What specific action can the Commission take as soon as possible to close the relevant gaps in the legislation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

1. The outcomes of plant breeding are easy to duplicate since it is easy to multiply plants. Plant breeders require an effective intellectual property protection that prevents others from copying their results but at the same time is not hindering access to breeding material and genetic diversity. Plant Breeder's Rights and patent right provide such protection. Under the Plant Breeder's Rights system acts done for the purpose of breeding other varieties are exempted from the right. In order for patent rights not to hinder the accessibility of breeding material the Agreement on Unified Patent Court concluded between 25 Member States also provides for a breeders privilege within the confines of the *acquis*.

2. The Commission is aware that the plant breeding industry has undergone structural changes over recent decades and that the international trade of seed is led by a small group of highly specialised plant breeding companies. Not only the presence of intellectual property rights, but also advancements in plant science and plant breeding, the application of genetic modification, GMO regulatory compliance costs, increasing R&D costs and the need for the expansion of and access to new markets have played a crucial role in this regard.

3. The national patent laws are harmonised by Directive 98/44/EC ('the directive') the main provisions of which have been incorporated into the Implementing Regulations (IR) to the European Patent Convention (EPC). The directive provides that plants are patentable if the technical feasibility of the invention is not confined to a particular plant variety; the latter are excluded from patent protection. This implies that a patent may only be granted if the invention can be carried out in a number of plant species.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004223/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: Virtuelle Währung Bitcoin

Seit etwa drei Jahren gibt es im Internet eine virtuelle Währung, den Bitcoin. Nicht zuletzt aufgrund der Ereignisse in Zypern ist das Vertrauen der Bürgerinnen und Bürger in die „klassischen" Währungen erschüttert worden. Offenbar setzen in der letzten Zeit allen voran Spanier, aber auch Bürgerinnen und Bürger anderer Krisenstaaten, auf diese für drastische Kursschwankungen höchst anfällige und unsichere „Währung", da sie sich hier mehr Sicherheit für ihr Geld erwarten.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission diese neue virtuelle Währung im Hinblick auf die Real- und die Finanzmarktwirtschaft — zahlreiche Online-Shops und sogar erste „reale" Geschäfte beteiligen sich bereits an dieser Währungsform?

2. Auch wenn dieser „Markt" offenbar begrenzt ist: Sieht die Kommission in dieser Entwicklung weitere Gefahren für die „traditionellen Leitwährungen"? Wenn ja: Welche?

3. Mit welchen konkreten Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission, das Vertrauen der Bürgerinnen und Bürger in den Euro wiederherzustellen?

(Mit der Bitte um ausführliche Erläuterung).

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2013)

Der Marktwert der virtuell zirkulierenden Währung Bitcoins liegt bei annähernd einer Milliarde Euro. Dieser Wert ist zwar ansehnlich, im Vergleich zu den im Umlauf befindlichen Euro-Münzen und -Banknoten (900 mal so viel) allerdings doch nicht so hoch. Bitcoins unterliegen wie jedes Zahlungsmittel dem Risiko von Spekulation, Betrug und illegalen Machenschaften. Wegen der noch sehr geringen Akzeptanz solcher virtueller Währungen bei den Nutzern und des kleinen Volumens gehandelter Bitcoins sind die Risiken jedoch bisher relativ begrenzt.

Da die Liquidität von Bitcoins gering und ihre Akzeptanz sehr niedrig ist, kommen sie als Leitwährung nicht in Frage. Darüber hinaus ist die auf einem Algorithmus basierende Bitcoin-Geldmenge strikt begrenzt. Insgesamt können nur 21 Millionen Bitcoins in den Umlauf gebracht werden, was bis 2040 erreicht sein soll. Als Alternative zu den derzeitigen Leitwährungen kommen Bitcoins daher kaum in Frage.

Im Dezember 2012 legte die Kommission in der Mitteilung ([1]) „Ein Konzept für eine vertiefte und echte Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion" ihre Vorstellung von einer starken und stabilen WWU-Architektur dar. In enger Zusammenarbeit mit allen Beteiligten setzt sie sich für eine bessere Wirtschaftssteuerung und die Finanzstabilität im Euroraum ein. Maßnahmen auf EU-Ebene im Rahmen der haushaltspolitischen und makroökonomischen Überwachung und des neuen EU-Aufsichtsrahmens für den Banken- und Finanzmarktsektor sollten dazu beitragen, ein Anwachsen der makroökonomischen Ungleichgewichte in den Mitgliedstaaten zu verhindern und die makrofinanzielle Stabilität in der EU zu stärken.

([1]) 28.11.2012. KOM(2012)777 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004223/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: The Bitcoin virtual currency

A virtual currency, the Bitcoin, has been in use on the Internet for about three years. The confidence of citizens in 'traditional' currencies has been shaken, in particular, because of the events in Cyprus. In recent times, Spaniards in particular, but also citizens of other Member States in crisis, have been relying on this 'currency' that is unsafe and highly susceptible to dramatic price fluctuations, because they expect from it greater security for their money.

1. What is the Commission's opinion of this new virtual currency in relation to the real and the financial market economy — numerous online shops and even the first 'real' businesses are already involved in using this form of currency?

2. Although this 'market' is obviously limited, does the Commission see this development as a further risk to 'traditional reserve currencies'? If so, what is the risk?

3. With what specific measures does the Commission intend to restore people's confidence in the euro?

(Please provide detailed information.)

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The market value of bitcoins in virtual circulation is approaching one billion euro. Whilst being a non-negligible figure, it is still a rather limited value compared to the value of euro coins and notes in circulation, which is about 900 times as big. Bitcoins may, as any financial scheme, represent challenges in terms of speculation, fraud and illegal activities. However, due to the still very limited acceptance of such virtual currencies by users and the low volumes traded, the risks remain relatively limited at this point.

Because of its low liquidity and very limited acceptance bitcoin does not appear to possess the necessary attributes of a reserve currency. Moreover, its supply characteristics, based on an algorithm, severely limit the quantity of bitcoins in circulation. The total amount of bitcoins in circulation is limited to 21 million bitcoins, to be achieved in 2040. This makes bitcoin an unlikely alternative for reserve currencies.

The Commission in December 2012 presented its vision for a strong and stable EMU architecture in the communication ([1]) 'a Blueprint for a deep and genuine Economic and Monetary Union'. The Commission is working closely with all stakeholders to enhance economic governance and financial stability in the euro area. Measures implemented at EU level in the context of fiscal and macroeconomic surveillance and the new EU banking and financial market supervisory framework should contribute to preventing the accumulation of macroeconomic imbalances in Member States and reinforce macro-financial stability in the EU.

([1]) Dated 28.11.2012. COM(2012) 777 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004224/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: Verbesserung der Alphabetisierung von Mädchen in Pakistan

Laut Berichten beträgt die Zahl der alphabetisierten Männer in Pakistan um 70.2 %, wohingegen die Rate der weiblichen Alphabetisierung bei 46.3 %. liegt. Wie bereits in vergangenen Anfragen (E-012667/2011, E-010222/2010) erwähnt, gibt es im pakistanischen Bildungssystem generell immensen Aufhol-, Förderungs- und Verbesserungsbedarf.

1. Sind der Kommission die oben genannten Zahlen und Fakten bekannt?

2. Wenn ja, gibt es bereits Projekte, die darauf abzielen, die Alphabetisierung speziell von Mädchen in Pakistan zu unterstützen?

3. Werden für diese Projekte EU-Fördergelder verwendet?

4. Wenn ja, wie wird die Stellung der Frau in Schul- und Lernmaterialen dargestellt (insbesondere im Hinblick auf Gleichberechtigung und weibliche Rollenbilder)?

5. Kann die Kommission garantieren, dass bei mit EU-Geldern geförderten Bildungsprojekten Mädchen keine Schlechterbehandlung gegenüber Jungen im selben Alter erfahren (auch und insbesondere im Hinblick auf den Zugang zu Schulen)?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(31. Mai 2013)

1. Laut der Wirtschaftsstudie Pakistan für die Jahre 2011-2012 liegt die Alphabetisierungsrate der Männer in Pakistan bei 69 % und die Alphabetisierungsrate der Frauen bei 46 %. Der Global Gender Gap Report (Internationaler Bericht über das Lohngefälle) für 2011 gelangt, was die Männer betrifft, zu demselben Ergebnis, beziffert die Alphabetisierungsrate der Frauen jedoch nur auf 40 %.

2./3./4. Bildung ist einer der Schwerpunktbereiche der EU-Hilfe für Pakistan. Die EU unterstützt Bildungsreformprogramme in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa und in der Provinz Sindh. Die EU-Hilfe zur Umsetzung dieser Programme in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa für den Zeitraum 2009-2014 beträgt derzeit 35 Mio. EUR, während sich die laufende Unterstützung der Programme in der Provinz Sindh für den Zeitraum 2012-2016 auf 30 Mio. EUR beläuft. Eine spezifische gleichstellungsfokussierte Komponente dieser Projekte sind die „Stipendien für Mädchen", die für die Klassen 6-10 bereitgestellt werden, damit die Mädchen auch nach Abschluss der Grundschule weiter zur Schule gehen. Für weitere Einzelheiten verweist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf die Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-000160/2013 und E-000312/2013 ([1]). Das Problem der Darstellung von Minderheiten in Schulbüchern, wie in den vorgenannten Antworten dargelegt, stellt sich auch bei der Darstellung der Rolle der Frau in der Gesellschaft.

5. Gleichbehandlung im Bildungswesen und beim Zugang zu Bildung ist ein wichtiges Ziel der Bildungsreformen, die von der EU unterstützt werden. Wenngleich eine vollständige Gleichstellung in Pakistan kurzfristig nicht erreichbar ist, sorgt die EU dafür, dass sich die Lage durch die Unterstützungsprogramme verbessert und Reformen unterstützt werden, die auch künftig für Verbesserungen sorgen werden.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004224/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Improving literacy among girls in Pakistan

According to reports, the number of literate men in Pakistan amounts to 70.2%, whereas the female literacy rate is at 46.3%. As mentioned in previous questions (E-012667/2011, E-010222/2010), there is, in general, a great deal of catching up to do and an enormous need for support and improvement in Pakistan's education system.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the abovementioned facts and figures?

2. If so, are there already projects in place aimed at supporting literacy, in particular among girls, in Pakistan?

3. Is EU funding being used for these projects?

4. If so, how is the status of women portrayed in school and learning materials (particularly with regard to equality and female role models)?

5. Can the Commission guarantee that girls do not receive less favourable treatment than boys of the same age in education projects funded with EU money (also, and especially, with regard to access to schools)?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

1. The number of literate men in Pakistan, according to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2011/12 is 69% and the female literacy rate is at 46%. As per the Global Gender Gap Report 2011 the male literacy rate is the same but the female literacy rate is 40%.

2, 3, 4. Education is one of the focal areas of EU support to Pakistan. The EU is supporting education reform programmes in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and in Sindh. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa the current EU allocation is EUR 35 million for implementation from 2009-2014 and in Sindh the ongoing support amounts to EUR 30 million for implementation from 2012-2016. One specific gender focused input in these projects is 'Stipends for Girls' which is provided for classes 6 to 10 to retain girls in schools after primary education. For further details the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answers to Written Questions E-000160/2013 and E-000312/2013 ([1]). The problem of the presentation of minorities in textbooks as described in the abovementioned responses is also present with regard to the presentation of the role of women in society.

5. Equal treatment in education and in access to education is an important goal of the education reforms that are supported by the EU. Even though full equality is not achievable in the short term in Pakistan, the EU is making sure that the support programmes improve the situation and support reforms that will continue to do so.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004225/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: Verwendung von EU-Fördergeldern in Tschechien

Laut Medienberichten finden in Tschechien seit Jahren bei EU-Fördergeldern eklatanter Missbrauch und Betrügereien statt; Ursachen sind Korruption und fehlende Kontrolle bei deren Vergabe. Es ist die Rede von einer Unterschlagung von 25 bis 40 % der EU-Mittel für Tschechien. Auf dem Korruptions-Wahrnehmungs-Index von Transparency belegt das Land Platz 47 und wird auch von der eigenen Bevölkerung dementsprechend wahrgenommen.

1. Sind der Kommission die oben genannten Zahlen und Fakten bekannt?

2. Wenn ja, gibt es bereits Pläne für eine striktere und engmaschigere Kontrolle der EU-Mitgliedstaaten bezüglich der Verwendung von EU-Fördergeldern (speziell Tschechien)?

3. Wie wird weiter mit Tschechien verfahren werden, um so eine Situation in Zukunft zu vermeiden?

4. Gibt es generell Maßnahmen der Europäischen Union, um die Korruption in Tschechien zu bekämpfen und einzudämmen?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2013)

1. Die von der Frau Abgeordneten genannten Zahlen wurden in der Presse veröffentlicht und können nicht überprüft werden. Die Kommission weiß von einigen potenziellen Korruptionsfällen und hat geeignete Maßnahmen ergriffen. 2011 wurde die Kommission über Bestechungsvorwürfe gegen den früheren Leiter der Verwaltungsbehörde der Nord-West-Region informiert. 2012 leitete die tschechische Polizei wegen Betrugsvorwürfen Ermittlungen gegen den Gouverneur von Mittelböhmen ein. Auf der Grundlage dieser Informationen und der Prüfergebnisse stellte die Kommission die Zahlungen für die betreffenden Programme ein.

2. Seit 2011 sind gravierende Mängel bei der Verwaltung und den Kontrollsystemen Tschechiens für die Durchführung von Maßnahmen festgestellt worden, die mit EU-Mitteln gefördert werden. Es handelt sich hauptsächlich um Unzulänglichkeiten bei den Verwaltungsprüfungen, Mängel bei der Prüfbehörde und den beauftragten Prüfstellen sowie allgemein Unzulänglichkeiten bei der Handhabung von Unregelmäßigkeiten. Es wurde ein Aktionsplan zur Verbesserung des Gesamtsystems mit den tschechischen Behörden vereinbart. Außerdem nahm die Kommission Finanzkorrekturen für bestimmte betroffene Programme vor.

3. Es sind Vorbeugemaßnahmen wie die Verbesserung der Verwaltungsprüfungen und die Umstrukturierung der Prüfbehörde durchgeführt worden. Sollten neue Unregelmäßigkeiten aufgedeckt werden, können weitere Korrekturmaßnahmen vorgenommen werden.

4. Auf der Grundlage des EU-Antikorruptionsberichts, der ab Mitte 2013 alle zwei Jahre veröffentlicht wird, verfolgt die Kommission intensiv die Umsetzung der Antikorruptionsmaßnahmen in allen Mitgliedstaaten. In diesem Bericht werden die Bemühungen der Mitgliedstaaten bei der Korruptionsbekämpfung bewertet und systemische Probleme beleuchtet, und es wird gute Praxis beschrieben und Peer-Learning gefördert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004225/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Use of EU subsidies in the Czech Republic

According to media reports, EU subsidies granted to the Czech Republic have been the subject of flagrant abuse and fraud for years. The causes are corruption and a lack of monitoring in connection with their allocation. There is talk of the Czech Republic having embezzled 25 to 40% of EU funds. On Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index the country ranks 47 and is also being perceived as corrupt by its own people.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the abovementioned facts and figures?

2. If so, are there already any plans for stricter and tighter monitoring of EU Member States regarding the use of EU subsidies (in particular the Czech Republic)?

3. What further action will be taken in respect of the Czech Republic in order to prevent such a situation from occurring in the future?

4. Is the European Union taking any measures in general to combat and curb corruption in the Czech Republic?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

1. The figures mentioned by the Honourable Member were published by the press and cannot be verified. The Commission is aware of certain potential corruption cases and has taken appropriate measures. In 2011, the Commission was informed about bribery allegations against the former head of the managing authority of the North-West region. In 2012, the Czech police launched an investigation against the Governor of Central Bohemia on charges of corruption. On the basis of this information and the audit findings, the Commission stopped payments for these programmes.

2. Since 2011, important deficiencies in the functioning of the Czech management and control system for the implementation of EU funds have been discovered. The main deficiencies related to weak management verifications, deficiencies in the audit authority and the delegated audit bodies and weak management of irregularities in general. An action plan was agreed with the Czech authorities to improve the overall system. Furthermore, the Commission imposed financial corrections on certain affected programmes.

3. Preventive measures such as the improvement of management verifications and the reorganisation of the audit authority have been implemented. In the event of new irregularities being discovered, further corrective measures can be imposed.

4. The Commission is closely following the implementation of anti-corruption policies in all Member States in the framework of the EU Anti-Corruption Report which will be published every two years as from mid-2013. This Report will assess Member State efforts in fighting corruption, exposing systemic problems, while also identifying good practices and encouraging peer-learning.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004226/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Nachfrage Syrien — Kinder als menschliche Schutzschilde

Kann die Kommission zu ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-005859/2012 zu obigem Thema folgendes mitteilen.

1. Welche neuen (Er-)Kenntnisse kann die Hohe Vertreterin zum Problem „Kinder als menschliche Schutzschilde" mitteilen?

Wie in obig zitierter Antwort mitgeteilt, wurden „Mittel in Höhe von 47,9 Mio. EUR zur Deckung des humanitären Bedarfes in Syrien und in den Nachbarstaaten" bereitgestellt.

2. Sind diese Mittel nun ausreichend? Gelangen sie auch wirklich zu den Bedürftigen?

3. Wenn ja, wie kann es dann sein, dass Österreich es für notwendig hält, seinen Anteil an Hilfszahlungen für Syrien um 2 Mio. EUR zu erhöhen?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(20. Juni 2013)

1. Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin beobachtet die gravierende Situation von Kindern in Syrien aufmerksam.

Die EU arbeitet diesbezüglich eng mit dem Büro von Frau Zerrougui zusammen. Sie hat außerdem ihre Prioritätenliste der Länder, in denen die EU-Leitlinien zu Kindern in bewaffneten Konflikten umgesetzt werden sollen, aktualisiert, nachdem der Sicherheitsrat der Vereinten Nationen (VN) letztes Jahr beschlossen hatte, Syrien in seine „schwarze Liste" der Urheber von schweren Übergriffen gegen Kinder aufzunehmen.

Wie unlängst von Frau Zerrougui festgestellt, finden auch weiter schwere Übergriffe gegen Kinder in Syrien statt ([1]). Der Sicherheitsrat wird dieses Thema spätestens im Sommer 2013 in seiner jährlichen Debatte über Kinder in bewaffneten Konflikten behandeln.

2./3. Seit Ausbruch der Krise wurden insgesamt 561 Mio. EUR ([2]) für humanitäre Zwecke in Syrien und den Nachbarländern bereitgestellt. Allein für die ersten sechs Monate 2013 haben die VN einen Bedarf von 1,5 Mrd. USD für die Unterstützung von 1 Million Flüchtlingen, 4 Millionen Hilfsbedürftigen und 2 Millionen Binnenvertriebenen innerhalb Syriens ermittelt. Anfang Mai waren die Pläne erst zu etwas mehr als 55 % umgesetzt und der dabei zugrunde gelegte Bedarf hat sich inzwischen erheblich erhöht. Bis Ende Mai werden die VN neue Pläne vorlegen und weit höhere Mittel fordern.

Die humanitären Mittel sind alles andere als ausreichend, so dass Angebote der Mitgliedstaaten, ihren humanitären Beitrag zu erhöhen, äußerst willkommen sind. Im Übrigen ist der humanitäre Zugang in Syrien in der Tat erschwert, doch die humanitäre Gemeinschaft ist noch in der Lage, sowohl in den von der Regierung als auch in den von der Opposition kontrollierten Gebiete Hilfe zu leisten.

([1]) Dazu zählen Tötungen und Verstümmelungen, Angriffe auf Schulen und Krankenhäusern sowie der direkte Einsatz von Kindern bei Kampfhandlungen.

([2]) Der Gesamtbetrag von 561 Mio. EUR setzt sich aus 200 Mio. EUR aus dem EU-Haushalt und 361 Mio. EUR bilateraler Hilfe der Mitgliedstaaten zusammen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004226/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Follow-up question on Syria — Children as human shields

Can the Commission provide the following information further to its answer to Written Question E-005859/2012 on the above subject?

1. What new findings or information can the High Representative provide on the issue of Syrian children being used as human shields?

As reported in the answer referred to above, EUR 47.9 million has been allocated 'to address humanitarian needs inside Syria and in neighbouring countries'.

2. Are these funds now sufficient? Are they actually reaching those in need?

3. If so, how is it that Austria considers it necessary to increase its share of aid payments for Syria by EUR 2 million?

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

1. The HR/VP is following closely the terrible situation of children in Syria.

The EU is working closely with the office of Ms Zerrougui on the situation of children in Syria. The EU updated its priority list of countries for the implementation of the EU Guidelines on children and armed conflict after the last year's decision of the UN Security Council to include Syria on the UN 'black-list' of perpetrators of grave violations against children.

As noted recently by Ms Zerrougui, grave violations against children are continuing to take place in Syria ([1]). The Security Council will address this issue latest during its annual debate on children and armed conflict in summer 2013.

2-3. Since the beginning of the crisis, a total of EUR 561 million ([2]) has been allocated to address humanitarian needs inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. Just for the first six months of 2013, a total of USD 1.5 billion have been identified by the UN to address the needs of 1 million refugees, 4 million people in need of assistance and 2 million internally dispaced perons inside Syria. As of beginning of May, these plans are only funded by slightly more than 55% and the needs used to draft these plans have been significantly increased. By end of May, the UN will release new plans and their request for funding will be even greater.

Humanitarian funding is far from being sufficient and Member States offers to increase humanitarian contribution is most welcome. Finally, humanitarian access is indeed complicated inside Syria but the humanitarian community is still able to deliver aid both in government-held and opposition-held areas.

([1]) Violations include killing and maiming, attacks on schools and hospitals and direct use of children in hostilities.
([2]) Total of EUR 561 million: EUR 200 million from the EU budget and EUR 361 million bi-laterally from Member States.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004227/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Einsatz chemischer Waffen in Syrien

Es soll laut jüngsten Berichten Beweise dafür geben, dass es zum Einsatz chemischer Waffen in Syrien gekommen sei.

1. Hat die Hohe Vertreterin vom Einsatz chemischer Waffen beziehungsweise von diesem Bericht britischer Militärexperten Kenntnis?

2. Wenn ja: Was unternimmt die Hohe Vertreterin aktuell und ganz konkret, damit solchen Vorgängen Einhalt geboten werden kann?

3. Welche Maßnahmen unternehmen die Hohe Vertreterin und ihre Dienste, um allfälligen betroffenen Opfern vor Ort Hilfe zukommen zu lassen?

4. Welche Anstrengungen unternimmt die Hohe Vertreterin, um internationale Solidarität gegen das Regime in Syrien zu mobilisieren? Gibt es hierzu neue Erkenntnisse?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(1. Juli 2013)

Gemäß den vorliegenden Informationen aus offenen Quellen ist es tatsächlich möglich, dass chemische Stoffe eingesetzt wurden und dass dies zu einer begrenzten Anzahl von Opfern geführt hat.

Die von VN-Generalsekretär Ban Ki-moon eingesetzte Untersuchungsmission, der Mitglieder der Organisation für das Verbot chemischer Waffen (OVCW) angehören, wird sich darum bemühen herauszufinden, ob chemische Waffen eingesetzt wurden. Sie wird keinerlei Schlussfolgerungen ziehen, von welcher Seite diese eingesetzt worden sein könnten. Es ist zu hoffen, dass das syrische Regime der Mission bald entsprechenden Zugang gewährt.

Die EU hat eindeutig ihre Besorgnis darüber zum Ausdruck gebracht, dass chemische Waffen an Syrien weitergegeben und dort eingesetzt werden könnten und das syrische Regime und andere Konfliktparteien daran erinnert, dass im Falle des Einsatzes dieser Waffen die Verantwortlichen zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden.

Die EU steht bei den humanitären Maßnahmen im Rahmen der Syrien-Krise an vorderster Front und hat zum 31. Mai dieses Jahres 672 Mio. EUR für humanitäre Hilfe zugunsten notleidender Menschen sowohl in Syrien als auch in den Nachbarländern ([1]) zur Verfügung gestellt. Mit diesen Mitteln, die über Partner der EU ([2]) bereitgestellt werden, wird lebensrettende Soforthilfe für alle betroffenen Bevölkerungsgruppen finanziert, einschließlich für die syrischen Flüchtlinge in Lagern und in städtischen Gebieten. Derzeit laufen Bemühungen, weitere Mittel für die Opfer der Syrien-Krise zu mobilisieren.

Die EU hat ihren Dialog mit Russland und den anderen internationalen Akteuren verstärkt, um eine gemeinsame Grundlage für konkrete Schritte im Hinblick auf eine Verhandlungslösung für den Konflikt in Syrien zu finden.

Die EU als Ganzes hat bereits mehr als 800 Mio. EUR zur Bewältigung der Folgen der Syrien-Krise in Syrien selbst und in den Nachbarländern bereitgestellt, davon 626 Mio. EUR für humanitäre Hilfe und 193 Mio. EUR für nichthumanitäre Hilfe.

([1]) Jordanien, Libanon, Türkei und Irak.
([2]) Rotes Kreuz/Roter Halbmond, Organisationen der Vereinten Nationen und internationale Nichtregierungsorganisationen (NRO).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004227/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Use of chemical weapons in Syria

According to the most recent reports, there is said to be evidence of the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

1. Is the High Representative aware of the use of chemical weapons or of this report from British military experts?

2. If so, what action is the High Representative taking, currently and quite specifically, in order to put a stop to such operations?

3. What measures are the High Representative and her services taking in order to send aid to any victims affected there?

4. What efforts is the High Representative making in order to mobilise concerted international action against the regime in Syria? Is there any new information on this?

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

On the basis of currently available open source information, it is possible that chemical substances might in fact have been used resulting in a limited number of casualties.

The investigation by the mission appointed by SG Ban-Ki moon that includes members of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), will seek to determine only whether or not chemical weapons were used and will not draw any conclusions as to the attribution of any use. It is hoped that the Syrian regime will soon agree to the deployment of the mission.

The EU has clearly stated its concerns about the potential use and transfer of chemical weapons in Syria and reminded the Syrian regime and other parties that, in case of their use, those responsible will be held accountable.

The EU has been at the forefront of humanitarian response to the Syria crisis and, as of 31 May, has mobilised over EUR 672 million in humanitarian assistance to people in need, both in Syria and in neighbouring countries ([1]). These funds, channelled through EU partners ([2]), have financed life-saving emergency assistance to all affected populations, including Syrian refugees in camps and urban areas. Mobilisation is currently ongoing to raise more funds for the victims of the Syria crisis.

The EU has stepped up its dialogue with Russia and other international stakeholders aimed at finding common ground regarding the concrete steps to work towards a negotiated solution to the conflict in Syria.

The EU as a whole has already allocated more than EUR 800 million to address the consequences of the Syrian crisis inside Syria and in the neighbouring countries, of which EUR 626 million in humanitarian aid and EUR 193 million in non-humanitarian assistance.

([1]) Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq.
([2]) The Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, the UN family and International Non-governmental Organisations (INGOs).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004228/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: Wirtschaftliche Entwicklung Italiens trotz Fehlens einer neuen Regierung

In Italien gibt es auch sechs Wochen nach den Parlamentswahlen noch keine neue Regierung.

Hat die Kommission Erkenntnisse, inwiefern sich — auch wenn die Regierung Monti bis zur Ernennung einer neuen kommissarisch im Amt ist — dieses „politische Vakuum" nun auf die weitere wirtschaftliche Entwicklung des ohnehin schon wirtschaftlich angeschlagenen Staates auswirkt — und in der Folge auf die Eurozone?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2013)

Am 30. April 2013 hat die Kommission die Bildung der neuen italienischen Regierung begrüßt ([1]).

Ferner hat sie kürzlich ihre neuen Wirtschaftsprognosen für 2013/2014 ([2]) veröffentlicht, die am 23. April 2013 abgeschlossen wurden und auf der üblichen Annahme einer unveränderten Politik beruhen, das heißt, es wurden nur die bis zu diesem Tag verabschiedeten politischen Maßnahmen berücksichtigt.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-392_en.htm?locale=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004228/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Italy's economic development, despite the absence of a new government

It has been six weeks since the parliamentary elections in Italy and, as yet, no new government has been formed.

Does the Commission have any information as to the extent to which this 'political vacuum' will now affect the further economic development of this already economically troubled country — and, consequently, the euro area — despite the fact that the Monti Government will remain in place until the appointment of a new government?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

On 30 April 2013 the Commission welcomed the formation of the new Italian government ([1]).

It also recently issued its new economic forecasts for 2013-14 ([2]), which were closed on 23 April 2013 and are based on the customary no-policy-change assumption, i.e. they do not incorporate any policy measures that had not been adopted by that date.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-392_en.htm?locale=en.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004229/13
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(15 avril 2013)

Objet: Commercialisation de l'absinthe

Étant donné le rejet par le Parlement européen, le 13 mars 2013, de l'insertion de la définition d'une nouvelle catégorie de boisson spiritueuse «absinthe» au règlement (CE) nº 110/2008, il n'existe pas, au niveau européen, de cadre juridique spécifique pour cette boisson. Aussi, quel serait l'impact, en Europe et dans les pays tiers, sur la commercialisation des boissons spiritueuses européennes à base d'absinthe si jamais la Suisse finissait par approuver l'enregistrement, proposé par les producteurs d'absinthe du Val-de-Travers, de «Absinthe», «Fée Verte» et «La Bleu» comme indication géographique?

À cet égard, quelles sont les actions que la Commission pense entreprendre pour défendre les légitimes intérêts des producteurs de l'Union européenne de boissons spiritueuses à base d'absinthe?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission
(14 juin 2013)

Le Parlement européen ayant rejeté le projet de règlement de la Commission établissant la nouvelle catégorie «*absinthe*», les producteurs de cette boisson spiritueuse ne pourront pas faire figurer la dénomination de vente «*absinthe*» sur l'étiquette et seront obligés de continuer de vendre leur produit sous la dénomination de vente «*boisson spiritueuse*». L'indication «*absinthe*» pourra cependant être utilisée en tant que descriptif facultatif.

En Suisse, l'enregistrement des dénominations «*Absinthe*», «*Fée Verte*» et «*La Bleue*» comme indications géographiques (IG) entraînerait en pratique l'interdiction sur le marché suisse des boissons spiritueuses correspondantes, produites hors de la Suisse et portant l'un de ces termes sur leur étiquette. Cependant, l'enregistrement de ces dénominations en tant qu'indications géographiques n'aurait pas d'incidence sur leur utilisation pour des produits commercialisés au sein de l'Union européenne ou dans des pays tiers autres que la Suisse.

La Commission rappelle que cette question a été soulevée dans le cadre d'échanges bilatéraux avec la Suisse, en particulier au sein du comité mixte UE-Suisse sur l'agriculture.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004229/13
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Marketing of absinthe

On 13 March 2013, Parliament rejected the addition to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of a definition of the spirit drink absinthe as a new product category. As a result there is no specific legal framework for this drink in the EU. What, then, would be the impact on the marketing of European absinthe-based spirit drinks in the EU and in third countries if Switzerland were ever to approve the registration of 'Absinthe', 'Fée Verte' and 'La Bleu' as geographical indications, as proposed by absinthe producers in Val-de-Travers?

In that regard, what action does the Commission plan to take to defend the legitimate interests of EU producers of absinthe-based spirit drinks?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

Following the rejection, by the European Parliament, of the Commission draft Regulation establishing the new category '*absinthe*', the EU producers of this spirit drink will not be able to indicate on the label the sales denomination '*absinthe*' and will be obliged to continue to sell their product under the sales denomination '*spirit drink*'. The indication '*absinthe*' will however be possible as an optional descriptor.

The practical consequence of the registration of the terms '*Absinthe*', '*Fée Verte*' and '*La Bleue*' as geographical indications (GIs) in Switzerland is that the corresponding spirit drinks produced outside Switzerland would not be allowed on the Swiss market if they bear on their labels one of those terms. However, the registration of those names as GIs would have no incidence on their use for products marketed in the EU or in third countries other than Switzerland.

The Commission points out that this issue has been raised in the context of bilateral exchanges with Switzerland, in particular within the EU-Switzerland Joint Committee on Agriculture.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004230/13
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(15 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Situación del acuerdo firmado entre la UE y la Republica de Mauritania

En diciembre de 2012 entró en vigor el protocolo firmado entre la Unión Europea y Mauritania por el cual el país africano recibe un total de 140 millones de euros del presupuesto comunitario, cifra que asciende a 220 millones de euros si sumamos la aportación de las empresas armadores, a cambio de un derecho preferente de pesca para la flota comunitaria en aguas mauritanas.

En este acuerdo queda expresamente excluida la flota cefalopodera gallega, con 22 embarcaciones con base en Marín y Vigo, dejando sin empleo a 400 tripulantes, alegando una sobreexplotación de los cefalópodos. Sin embargo, existen informes científicos recientes del Instituto Oceanográfico Español, que certifican un buen estado de esta especie, que han sido ignorados a la hora de establecer las condiciones del acuerdo entre la UE y Mauritania.

Es más, al abordar este tema en el Parlamento Europeo, representantes de la Comisión han incurrido en argumentos contradictorios, ya que en un primer momento se alegó la sobreexplotación de los recursos para, con posterioridad, admitir que la especie estaba recuperada. Entre los días 2 y 5 de abril se celebró una reunión de la Comité Científico Técnico del acuerdo, durante el que la parte mauritana presentó un informe en el que certifica la sobreexplotación de los cefalópodos, informe que fue cuestionado por otros miembros del Comité Científico Técnico.

¿Va a asumir la Comisión como válido el informe presentado por Mauritania que le permite consolidar la exclusión de la flota cefalopodera gallega?

¿Considera la Comisión la pertinencia de valorar otros estudios científicos sobre el estado de los cefalópodos que non sean los presentados a instancias de una de las partes negociadoras?

¿Qué alternativas ofrece la Comisión a la flota gallega excluida y a los 400 tripulantes sin empleo debido a las condiciones de aplicación del acuerdo entre la UE y Mauritania?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de junio de 2013)

Mauritania ha decidido reservar todos los recursos de cefalópodos para su propia flota y no conceder posibilidades de pesca de esta población a ninguna flota extranjera. Aunque por el momento no se fija cuota alguna de cefalópodos en el nuevo Protocolo, la Comisión ha logrado que se incluya esta categoría.

El comité científico conjunto, compuesto por científicos de la UE y Mauritania, se reunió en Rennes en abril de 2013 para actualizar el estado de conservación de todas las poblaciones de peces, incluidas las de cefalópodos, y, en su caso, determinar si existían excedentes. Sus recomendaciones se aprobaron por consenso.

En el caso de los cefalópodos, a pesar de haberse observado algunos signos de recuperación, el comité científico conjunto llegó a la conclusión de que la población de pulpo de Mauritania seguía estando sobreexplotada. No obstante, dicho comité decidió efectuar un estudio para validar un nuevo marco de gestión, basado en un enfoque espaciotemporal, que podría generar un aumento de los rendimientos futuros de esta pesquería. Durante las reuniones con la parte mauritana celebradas los días 23 y 24 de mayo, la Comisión abogó por la participación de los buques españoles en esta campaña experimental. Mauritania aceptó que esta campaña se llevara a cabo en julio, pero sin los buques de la UE. Durante esas reuniones, Mauritania reiteró su postura de no conceder acceso a las poblaciones de cefalópodos a ninguna flota extranjera.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004230/13
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Situation regarding the agreement signed by the EU and the Republic of Mauritania

In December 2012, the protocol signed by the European Union and Mauritania entered into force. Under this protocol, the African country receives a total of EUR 140 million from the EU budget, rising to EUR 220 million if we add the contribution by ship-owning enterprises, in exchange for preferential fishing rights for the EU fleet in Mauritanian waters.

The Galician cephalopod fleet, comprising 22 vessels based in Marín and Vigo, is expressly excluded from the agreement, on the grounds that cephalopod stocks are overfished, leaving 400 crew members out of work. However, recent scientific reports by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography confirming that the species is in a good state of health were ignored when the terms of the agreement between the EU and Mauritania were being laid down.

Furthermore, when this issue was discussed in Parliament, Commission representatives gave contradictory arguments: they first alleged that the stocks were overfished and then later admitted that the species had recovered. A meeting of the agreement's Joint Scientific Committee was held from 2 to 5 April 2013, during which the Mauritanians presented a report confirming that cephalopods were overfished. This report was queried by other members of the committee.

Is the Commission going to accept the validity of the report submitted by Mauritania, which substantiates the decision to exclude the Galician cephalopod fleet?

Is the Commission considering whether it would be useful to evaluate scientific studies on the state of cephalopods other than those submitted at the request of one of the negotiating parties?

What alternatives is the Commission offering the Galician fleet that has been excluded, and the 400 crew members who are jobless as a result of the terms of application of the agreement between the EU and Mauritania?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2013)

Mauritania has decided to keep all cephalopods resources for its own fleet and not to grant any fishing opportunities for this stock to any foreign fleet. Though there is for the time being no quota for cephalopods in the new Protocol, the Commission succeeded in having this category included.

The Joint Scientific Committee (JSC), which is a joint scientific body composed of scientists from the EU and Mauritania met in Rennes in April 2013 with the aim of updating the status of all fish stocks, including cephalopods and possibly identifying the existence of a potential surplus. Its recommendations were approved by consensus.

Concerning cephalopods, although some signs of recovery were noted, the JSC concluded that the octopus stock of Mauritania remains overexploited. Nevertheless, the JSC agreed on a study to validate a new management framework, based on a spatio-temporal approach, that might generate increases of future yields of this fishery. During meetings with the Mauritanian side on 23-24 May, the Commission defended the participation of Spanish vessels in this experimental campaign. Mauritania agreed on this campaign to take place in July but with no EU vessels. During that meeting, Mauritania reiterated its position not to grant access to cephalopods to any foreign fleets.

EUR-Lex (http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu) bietet einen direkten und kostenlosen Zugang zum EU-Recht. Die Website ermöglicht die Abfrage des *Amtsblatts der Europäischen Union* und enthält darüber hinaus die Rubriken Verträge, Gesetzgebung, Rechtsprechung und Vorschläge für Rechtsakte.

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