

(1999/C 325/168)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0556/99**by Joaquín Sisó Cruellas (PPE) to the Commission**

(12 March 1999)

Subject: Young people's addiction to games machines

The Saragossa Association of Reformed Gamblers (Asociación Zaragozana de Jugadores de Rehabilitación — AZAJER) has reported an increase in the number of teenagers from rural areas addicted to games and slot machines. The Association claims that rural societies do not view slot machines as being particularly harmful, nor is it widely felt that addiction to games machines is an illness that should be treated.

Is there any EU initiative aimed at preventing and treating the problem of addiction to games machines?

Answer given by Mr Flynn on behalf of the Commission

(16 April 1999)

The Commission can inform the Honourable Member that there is no Community initiative aimed at preventing and treating the problem of addiction to games machines.

(1999/C 325/169)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0577/99**by Antonio Tajani (PPE) to the Commission**

(12 March 1999)

Subject: Proposal to include city police among the high-risk groups

On Tuesday, 23 February 1999 five Milanese police officers were admitted to hospital with symptoms of exhaust gas poisoning.

In the light of this latest incident, does the Commission believe that city police officers should be counted among the high-risk groups?

Answer given by Mr Flynn on behalf of the Commission

(14 April 1999)

Article 2(1) of framework Directive 89/391/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work ⁽¹⁾ states that the Directive applies to all sectors of activity, both public and private.

However, paragraph 2 of this Article states that certain specific public service activities, such as the armed forces, the police or the civil protection services, may be excluded, but only where 'characteristics peculiar to [these] activities inevitably conflict with it'. In that event, it is necessary to ensure that the safety and health of workers is guaranteed, insofar as at all possible, in keeping with the objectives of the Directive.

In the light of these provisions, and where characteristics peculiar to the activities carried out by local police officers do not inevitably conflict with the application of the provisions of the framework Directive, the employer must evaluate the risks to which they are exposed and introduce appropriate measures to ensure enhanced protection of the safety and health of these workers. Their identification as a risk group will therefore depend on the type of activity carried out and on the specific conditions under which local police officers have to work.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 183, 29.6.1989.